European Inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning

Main outcomes 2016

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Objectives

1 – A trustworthy source of information

2 – Up to date information

3 - Systematic monitoring of progress

4 - Both a country-specific and a thematic dimension

5 – Work together with the guidelines
European inventory process

**Contract**
Dec. 2015

**Data Collection**
Jan.- April 2016

**Quality Assurance**

**Analysis**

**Thematic reports**
April 2016

**First drats**
May 2016

**Final reports**
Sep. 2016

**Publication**
January 2017

#ValidationEurope
KEY FINDINGS

Based on findings from 36 country reports and 4 thematic reports, Member States are gradually placing validation of non-formal and informal learning higher up on their policy agendas.

- Particular progress is noted as regards
  - Guidance, counselling and information on validation
  - Development of equivalent standards

- Particular challenges are noted in relation to
  - to professional development of validation practitioners and
  - prioritisation of disadvantaged groups,
Validation arrangements

Validation arrangements are in place or under development in all European countries covered by the 2016 Inventory.

Validation focus

Validation is mostly used for awarding partial qualifications, credits, gaining exemptions and accessing educational programmes.
Validation opportunities

Validation are gradually (slowly) reaching low-qualified and low-skilled jobseekers, but further progress is needed.

Take up of validation

Data on take-up remains limited. Where it is available, an upwards trend can be observed.

- The development of comprehensive monitoring systems is still at an early stage and not yet a clear priority at the national level in the majority of countries.
Information and Guidance

Information and guidance on is available in most countries, closely related to

- Vocational education and training
- Continuing VET
- Higher education

Less developed for validation outside education and training (skills audits, approaches addressing disadvantaged groups)
Coordination

Greater focus has been paid to ensuring coordination at national level

- 20 countries have established mechanisms at national level to coordinate validation across the broad sectors of education, labour market and the third sector.
- 32 countries have an institution in charge of the coordination of validation at national level in at least one sub-sector of education
Funding

Countries tend to have a number of sources of funding for validation.

- National public funding is the most common source.
- Funding from individuals is the second most common source in all sectors and sub-sectors, except the third sector.
- Private funding sources were reported to have a more limited role.
The link to NQFs

The number of countries where there is a link between validation and the NQF has increased
➢ 28 countries report an explicit link

Standards

Three in four countries use exactly the same standards for validation, in at least one sub-sector of education, as those used in the formal education system
➢ 12 countries use the same standards in all education and training sectors
Commonly used methods

Commonly used methods for validation are

- portfolios,
- traditional tests and examinations play an important role
Skills Audits

There has been an increase in the number of countries which offer skills audits.

- 14 countries now make it standard practice to offer a skills audit to people who are unemployed or at risk of unemployment.
Quality assurance

There is increasing recognition that validation arrangements require specific forms of quality assurance

- The number of countries reported to have in place quality assurance frameworks specific to validation has doubled between 2014 and 2016.
FINAL REMARKS

- Overall, the findings of the 2016 Inventory show that progress towards the Recommendation on Validation is moving forward, but unevenly.

- There has been notable progress in regard to setting up validation arrangements, with all countries now having arrangements in place or planned in at least one (sub-) sector.

- Comprehensiveness is therefore a key issue for the future, as is creating linkages between the sectors (education, labour market and third sector).