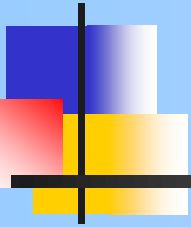




Asia-Europe Meeting
ASEM Education and Research Hub
for Lifelong Learning

The validation of competencies as a way of professional development of adult educators



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Overview

Validation of competences

European developments for validation pathway

Status of adult educators

Professionalization pathways

Validation as professionalization pathway of adult educators

Developments for validation of ALPs competencies

Further needs



Validation of competences

- viable alternative to formal certification;
- tool to strengthen the permeability of formal qualifications systems
- bridge different learning pathways
- support individuals in reflecting upon their knowledge, on what they are able to do, and what they have achieved in different biographical contexts
- **motivation to participate:** valuing people's potential and capabilities, empowering them, and showing them the benefits of their learning
- **meta-level of self-evaluation and self-reflection;** transfer into different learning contexts; reflective way of acting



European developments for validation pathway

- Essential element of the national policies on education, training and employment
- 2004: European Council adopted common European principles for identifying and validating non-formal and informal learning
- CEDEFOP: European inventories on the national developments; sharing of good practices (2007, 2008)
- 2007 – Portuguese presidency – listed critical issues: credibility, quality assurance mechanisms, multi-speed process, links with formal path etc.
- 2009: European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning (CEDEFOP)
- individuals are the central point of the validation process.



Status of adult educators

- Little attention paid to defining the contents and processes of initial training and continuing professional development of staff working in adult learning, compared with teacher at pre-university level
- Few education/training systems for adult education professionals (Switzerland, Austria, UK); different regulative national bodies
- ALPs manage their own professional and personal developments
- Increased efforts in the last five years of bringing the situation of adult learning professionals (ALPs) into the focus
- No entry requirements, not a regulated field
- Attempts to map competency profiles, according with different roles.
- Occupational standards for trainer (trainer of trainers) and for evaluator of competencies, career councillor etc., professions recognised as such
- Low professional status; professional identity
- Attractiveness of the career prospects and steps.



Professionalisation pathways

Three main professionalisation pathways:

- a) the academic one (higher education)
- b) through the professional training system
- c) the validation of prior learning and experiences (assessment centres)



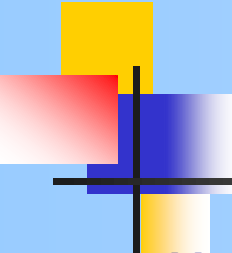
Validation as professionalization pathway

- Builds on the existing competencies acquired by experience, on the job, in different learning contexts; tailored to experienced trainers
- validation – integral part of national qualification system, with clear link between validation procedures and introduction of outcomes-based qualification framework
- enhance self-esteem, self-reflection
- building up the professional portfolio in a systematic way
- awareness of gained competences and experience,
- further CPD opportunities, as helps identifying aspects to be improved
- upgrading competencies
- helps the teacher to reflect upon the effects of his/her didactic behavior on the students
- low costs
- short time for gaining a certificate.



Influences of validation for teaching

- Focus on learning outcomes
- Competency based designed curricula
- Evaluating from different perspectives, with different methods, by different people
- Holistic approach of valuing learning occurring on different life contexts
- Practicum: transfer of theory into practice; reflections
- Validation – a competency all ALPs should master: identifying the prior learning experiences and competencies; reflect on the impact of their behavior
- Reduce costs and time spent on training, shortcuts



Developments for validation of ALPs competencies

- Mapping the competency profile of adult learning professionals-Alpine2, European Commission
- Developing tools for validation of informal and non-formal psycho-pedagogical competencies of adult educators -eg. VINEPAC project
- Flexible professionalisation pathways for adult educator by developing tools to enable him/her, via the validation process, to access easier at master level (7th level of EQF - Flexi-Path project)
- Identifying the trends into the competency profile of adult educators (OF2Teach)
- Comparative research on the use of Validpack in Europe and Asia
- Research on perceptions on labor market on the certificate of competencies received as result of validation process
- Research on the impact of the validation process on further CPD
- Developing tools and methodologies for validating the competencies of ALPS, trainers, councilors etc.



Further challenges

Different competency profile of ALPs, and national regulations regarding the validation process and professionalization of ALPs

Training of staff responsible for validation

Research on impact of the validation for further CPD

Better awareness about this alternative path

Enhance quality and credibility (methodologies, instruments)

Reference to a standard – define standards for different expert levels

Professionalization of practitioners (councilors, evaluators..) – developing tools to get validated the competencies of different ALPs



Thank you!

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Additional information:

Alpine 2 (2010)- Key competency for adult education professionals:

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/2010/keycomp.pdf>

Validation of pedagogical competencies of adult educators,

VINEPAC (2008): www.vinepac.eu , www.capival.eu,

www.backwork.eu (for councilors)