# Lever

**Modelling informal learning and transversal competences in the voluntary service experience to increase employment and mobility of citizens - LEVER**

**2014-1-IT01-KA200-002618**

# CROSS NATIONAL SURVEY

National systems and experiences in the recognition of non-formal, informal and prior learning, within the voluntary service in Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and Denmark.

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# Executive summary

The Cross National Survey is meant to be the first product of LEVER project. It has been elaborated after a research conducted by the project team, aiming at deeply analysing the state of the art in relation with the topic of recognising competences acquired in formal, non-formal and informal learning, on one hand; its application to transversal competences, on the other one; and, its contextualisation in the voluntary sector. The survey has been conducted in Spain, Italy, The Netherland and Denmark. Poland will be also included in the following version of the document.

The Cross National Survey is structured in 6 chapters, the last of which presents the specific outcomes of the research, based on a comparison of the existing national systems and good practices. They will provide the LEVER model with the necessary information in order to design a mutual trust area within which to develop a shared framework of competence valuation, coherently with all the countries involved.

The data collected in this research have been formalised by all participating members in unified templates in order to keep consistency on the information and make its analysis better focussed.
The Cross National Survey also includes the key references on validating informal and non-formal learning in Europe which the LEVER project refers to.

# 1. About the LEVER project

## 1.1. General scope

The LEVER project is an initiative aiming at "Modelling informal learning and transversal competences in the voluntary service experience to increase employment and mobility of citizens ".

In that respect, the project will produce a European survey to show the level of awareness on the opportunity expressed by both the voluntary service and the labour market.

Furthermore, the LEVER project will collect good practices and examples to feed a shared model of competence/transversal skills certifications, in line with EUROPASS (and even coherent with the new EU Parliament directive on non-regulated professions, 2013/55/UE), fostering the virtuous connection between the voluntary environment and the private one, with a special focus on the Small and Medium sized enterprises; and provide common guidelines to implement the final model.

The project will also stimulate young people and the community to recognize the volunteering experiences as a valid practice for young people personal development and to increase the social cohesion.

## 1.2. Innovative aspects

The key innovative aspects of the project are:

a. To a great extent, LEVER will be a model for measuring and certifying soft skills and will be a standard to use at a transnational level. It will be referred to the European available tools like Europass, ECVET and EQF, in terms of proficiency levels and learning outcomes approach for recognition and validation.

b. The creation of an initial European area of mutual trust with common tools (in the participating countries: Denmark, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland and Spain), where sharing common non-formal, informal learning paths in the voluntary service can lead to a recognition by the market.

c. The standardization to be brought by the model will enable its deployment and recognition, thus reducing the deployment and management costs (e.g. IT system-web site, operational manuals, etc.).

d. Young people will be stimulated to develop experiences in different countries, with the certainty that the feedback they will receive will have the same value in other European countries.

e. The project will involve the Associations as Partners; it is a strong action that aims to build an important bridge between both the non-profit and profit worlds.

## 1.3.   Project deliverables

The project will produce both tangible and intangible deliverables.

On one hand, the **tangible deliverables** will be:

a.  The cross-national survey including a collection of local experiences and practices on:
    -   Recognition of informal, non-formal learning/prior learning and transversal skills, i.e. certification procedures of competences acquired in non-formal, informal learning environments; transversal skills/competence reference standards/frameworks against which to evaluate voluntary service competences; the application of ECVET and EQF systems.
    -   Examples of voluntary service experiences as effective learning paths and sets for the enhancement of competences/transversal skills, as well as virtuous experiences from companies able to integrate voluntary service initiatives into their training programmes.

b.  The LEVER e-book that would include the following:
    -   Summary of the best practices/state of the art detected by the survey; A correspondent table matching the local/national competence certification procedures and the local/national reference standards of competences and skills. This table will be developed at two levels, a general one that identifies correspondences between the overall structures of the local/national standards; and a specific one related to the subset of competences and transversal skills relevant for the voluntary service. The matching will be aimed at mutually recognizing local practices making them transparent and understandable, and creating an area of mutual trust enabling mobility.
    -   Common certification procedure harmonizing the local specificities and related to the correspondent table.
    -   Common reference framework of certifiable competences/transversal skills and related to the correspondent table.

c.  The LEVER web tool:
    -   A web solution addressing users and embedding: correspondent table, guidelines (how to get a certification), competence/transversal skill framework.
    -   It will also record the Competence Certifications acquired by the volunteers, according to Europass, as well as the resources needed for assessment.

d.  The LEVER certificates:
    -   About 70 certifications will be processed in the testing phase. The certifications will be addressed to volunteers interested in recognizing the competence/transversal skills developed during their voluntary service experiences.

- Each partner will recruit volunteers and test the process following the LEVER model guidelines and the local assessments will be documented, and finally store the related pieces of evidence within the LEVER web tool in order to build the e-portfolio of each volunteer involved.
- EC-VPL and FPM, two (2) members of the LEVER partnerships, will play the role of the validation supervisor bodies for those volunteers who will successfully pass the evaluation phase.

e.   The dissemination materials:
- A dedicated community manager will keep alive and updated the LEVER web site, the integrated Facebook and twitter groups as well as the YouTube channel and the WIKIPEDIA.org content.
- One video per country, including the local experience, i.e. the workshops and the testing phase.
- Two articles are planned to document the LEVER aims and results.
- A project postcard and a light brochure with an excerpt of the LEVER eBook are planned by the end of the project.

On the other hand the **intangible deliverables** will be:

a.   Sensitising to non-formal, informal learning and its recognition by validation, as a value for the labour market, employability and voluntary service as learning experience. Population, i.e. young people, families, citizens as a whole, have to appreciate the voluntary service also as a possible pathway to the job market or even to enter vocational training programmes through credits.

b.   The same for the voluntary service associations who can include a specific internal service to be offered to their volunteers, facilitating them to collect the evidence necessary to be assessed and validated; and the enterprises who can use the validation process for recruitment.

c.   Enterprises can even participate in the certification process by providing assessors. Hence, consensus and mutual trust will be created between the different partners in the market.

## 1.4.   Lever project target groups

The project aims to reach a number of target groups, for which all outcomes and products will be conceived. These are:

a.   Volunteers engaged in voluntary service
b.   Voluntary service associations and their operators
c.   Employer associations
d.   Enterprises
e.   Training centres
f.   Certification /Validation bodies for Prior Learning.
g.   Labour Policy makers
h.   Young people, students and families
i.   Teachers

# 2. Purpose of the Cross National Survey (Output O1)

## 2.1.    Main Objectives

a.    Find out the available recognition of informal and non-formal learning (in general and applied to transversal skills) procedures, references and standards/frameworks, against which evaluating voluntary service competences.

b.    Identify examples of voluntary service experiences as effective learning paths for enhancing transversal competences, as well as virtuous experiences from companies which are able to integrate voluntary service initiatives into their training programmes.

## 2.2.    Deliverables

The current report is the first version of output O1.  It is produced after carrying out a survey in each of the countries participating in the project (Italy, Denmark; The Netherland, Spain) except for Poland which will be included afterwards. Additional countries such as UK, France and Germany may be included at the end of the project. This Cross National Survey is made available online and includes with the following contents:

a.    The relationship between enterprises and the voluntary service

b.    To what extent companies/SMEs may include the voluntary service in their internal policies and allow employees to do voluntary work within the working hours

c.    The kind of transversal competences that are seen as relevant in the voluntary service and of interest to companies.

d.    The way voluntary service associations consider this approach, taking into account the real aims of the voluntary service, i.e. the true willingness to help the others for free.

e.    The procedures and models that have been adopted for prior learning recognition in the investigated countries, along with already existing competence frameworks for the voluntary service.

f.    The way in which ECVET has been adopted.

# 3. Cross National survey methodology and tools

In order to conduct the current Cross National Survey, the following approach built on three (3) different and complementary steps has been followed.

## Step 1

The first step consisted in realising a desktop research aiming to describe the available national, regional and local systems for recognising formal, non-formal and informal learning. For this purpose, a template (see annex 2) has been developed and used in all participating countries. The template includes the following dimensions:

- The recognition process in each country
- The qualifications and occupational catalogues available
- The procedures implemented
- The accreditation and certification bodies
- The availability of tutors/assessors/counsellors (who they are; what they do; etc.)
- The role of researchers (Company based from HR; Academy based… as influencer of the process/system improvement)
- Main roles of responsibility for the whole process (who are they?)
- Summative dimension
- Formative dimension
- Reflective dimension
- Labor market perspective (to what extend does the labor market accept and recognize the present recognition process? what does it want from it?)
- Social perspective (i.e. social inclusion; empowerment; self-identity in the society)
- Citizenship

## Step 2

The second step has been dedicated to present a case study of recognising/validating/certifying formal, informal, non-formal and informal learning within the voluntary service, in each one of the participating countries. For this purpose, a template (see annex 1) has been developed and used by all project partners, including the following dimensions:

- Guidelines
- Context and aims
- Processes and procedures
- Quality management
- Results
- SWOT analysis

**Step 3**

A further third step has been devoted to deeper analyse and highlight the transversal competences, the soft skills emerging out of the case studies and arising from other experiences at either local or national level. For this purpose, a template (see annex 3) has been developed and used by all project partners.

# 4. Analysis of the Cross National survey

The research carried out by the project team has produced:

- A comprehensive description of the national/regional systems of validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning in the four (4) participating countries: Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and Denmark.
- A set of case studies on validation of non-formal and informal learning, within the voluntary sector.

An analysis of the obtained results is presented below in two different stages.

## 4.1. Analysis of the national, regional and local systems

The below comparative table on national, regional and local systems for validating formal, non-formal and informal learning shows that several steps have been taken in the different countries and several similarities and learning elements can be shared. The analysis of these elements is presented for each of the defined dimensions within the research:

- The recognition process
- The qualification and professional catalogue
- The procedure implemented
- The accreditation and certification bodies
- The tutor /Assessors and Counsellors availability
- The process responsible figure
- The role played by the researchers
- The approaches used (Summative / Formative / Reflective dimensions)

| | Italy | The Netherlands | Denmark | Spain |
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| **Recognition process** | - Validation of non-fomal and informal learning is relatively new<br>- Encouraged at regional level by national law<br><br>Only some regions have adopted it so far<br><br>- In Lombardy, it has officially started to work since 2012 (DDUO n.9380 22/10/2012) | - EVC in place since 1998<br>- Different stages. Since 2013 more active participation of society | - Act no. 556 of 6 June 2007: "Development of the recognition of prior learning in adult education and continuing training"<br>- Effective since August 2007 | - Organic Law 5/2002, on Qualifications and Vocational Training and Education (VET)<br>- In 2009, Royal Decree regulating at national the recognition of those skills acquired by means of professional experience and non-formal learning is approved |
| **Qualifications and Professional catalogue** | - Regions have owns reference occupational standards.<br>- The National Framework has been recently approved (Interministerial Decree, 30 june 2015) | - Yes, available<br>- Credit systems | - Yes, available<br>- Credit systems for some levels of education | - Yes, available<br>- Continuously up dated, in the basis of labour market needs |
| **Procedure implemented** | In Lombardy:<br>- **Identification - step 1**: the candidate identifies the set of competences to be evaluated from the reference occupational standard (QRSP) and sends the application to the selected certification body<br>- **Identification - step2**: the certification body evaluates the candidate's application and organizes a preliminary interview<br>- **Documentation - step 3**: the candidate develops a portfolio of evidence according to the reference assessment criteria and send it to the selected certification body<br>- **Assessment - step 4**: the certification body contacts the assessor who will evaluate the portfolio; on that basis, a face-to- | - Information and advice for the candidate<br>- Intake of the individual and making individual arrangements linked to the individual's defined career goals. The candidate decides on the choice of qualification and whether to start the EVC procedure or not.<br>- Recognition of competences: portfolio (supported by the coach)<br>- Validation of competences/assessment (by the assessors) | - Identification<br>- Documentation<br>- Assessment<br>- Validation | - **Advice/counselling.** During this stage, an advisor shall guide and advise the applicant in the preparation of the necessary documents<br>- **Assessment.** During this stage, those professional competences for which recognition is sought must be proven. The most appropriate assessment methods shall be used based on the characteristics of the applicant and on the competence unit to be evaluated<br>- **Accreditation of the relevant professional competence.** In this stage, an accreditation for each of the competence units successfully completed is issued |

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| | face assessment will be decided. Assessment criteria help the assessor's evaluation<br>- **Certification release – step5**: the certification is issued by the certification body on the basis of the assessment results. | | | |
| **Accreditation / certification bodies** | - Any accredited private or public body (including Trade Chambers, training institutions or university) | Kenniscentrum<br>EVC: www.kenniscentrumevc.nl | - Ministry of Education<br>- Ministry of Higher Education and Science | - General State Administration (AGE).<br>- The Administrations of the Autonomous Communities<br>- The General Council of Vocational Education and Training |
| **Tutors /Assessors / Counsellors** | - The assessor is a third party. Must not belong to the Certification Body<br>- The tutor is an optional figure | - Yes, available. | - Yes, available | - Yes, available |
| **Process/System responsible figure** | - Certification referent: belongs to the Certification Body<br>- Assessor | Practitioners fulfil various functions:<br>- *assessors:* the professionals who assess individuals when they want to apply EVC for summative purposes;<br>- *portfolio-advisers:* the professionals who help people fill in their portfolio;<br>- *developers/advisors:* the professionals who develop EVC-procedures based on nationals standards; they also advise on this.<br>- *teacher-trainers:* the professionals who train the assessors and advisers | - Educational institutions are responsible for conducting VPL<br>- Trade unions, employers' associations, job centres, unemployment insurance funds, civic education institutions, study committees and "eVejledning" (online guidance service), can play a role in information, identification, guidance and counselling | - Assessment Commission studies the report of the assessor to verify it and decide on:<br>.. The competences that are duly proven.<br>.. Whether it is necessary to provide complementary documentation.<br>.. The professional competences, if any, require the provision of new competence evidence.<br>.. The assessment methods that shall be applied for the obtaining of new evidence of Competences.<br>- The Assessment Commission, once the results of the assessment process have been assessed, shall provide the following information:<br>**..** Competence units duly proven.<br>**..** Competence units not duly proven.<br>**..** Opportunities to complete training in order to obtain the full |

| | | | | accreditation of Vocational Education and Training Degrees or Professional Certificates. |
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| **Role of researchers** | - No official framework<br>- Incidental research | - No official framework<br>- Incidental research | - National Knowledge Centre for Validation of Prior learning (NVR)<br>- Danish Evaluation Institute | - Main research is conducted in an official and permanent manner by the National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL, according to the Spanish acronym).<br>- Some university research is conducted |
| **Summative / Formative / Reflective dimension** | - The three approaches are practiced | - The three approaches are practiced | - Summative<br>- Formative | - The three approaches are practiced |

**The recognition process**

We can say that a substantial work in terms of regulations and procedures have been implemented within the analysed countries, in order to recognise, at general level, formal, non-formal and informal learning. However, it is interesting to mention that the levels of advancement within the process are different. In Italy, for example, a national frame is now available although its development and translation into the ground is being conducted by the different regions. In this sense, Lombardy is one of the regions where an advanced level of implementation has been reached. In Spain, the national regulation is being implemented by all regions with a relatively good level of organisation and pace. The result of this process can already be observed in several economic sectors and for many professional families.

In terms of implementing these procedures to the voluntary sector, the situation is different and is much more developed in The Netherland, for example. On another hand and within these national formal procedures, there was no process opened yet for the voluntary sector, in Spain for example.

**The qualification and professional catalogue**

In all analysed countries, a national qualification framework including a professional catalogue is available. Credit systems are also implemented in some of the countries and in others it is available but only for some of the educational levels. In Italy, The Ministries of Education and Labour are harmonising the local procedures and in Spain, the National Catalogue of Qualifications is continuously updated, on the basis of the labour market needs.

**The procedure implemented**

If we consider the CEDEFOP process of validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning, as a framework for comparison, and which consists of a standardised procedure containing 4 steps: Identification, documentation, Assessment and validation, we can generally affirm that in all participating countries, these steps are identified and followed, with very small variations: in Italy, the identification step is divided in 2 sub-steps (identification of competences on the based on the Reference Occupational standards, and then the validation of the application).

**The accreditation and certification bodies**

First of all it is important to mention that in all participating countries, there is one or a number of accrediting bodies available. Secondly, the main difference resides within the nature of these bodies. When in Italy private bodies as well can be officially accredited by public institutions, such as regions, to play this role (, in other countries like Spain and Denmark, this accreditation role is only played, up to date, by public institutions: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Science in Denmark, and the General State Administration, the regions and the General council of Vocational education and Training in Spain. In the case of The Netherlands, the Kenniscentrum EVC, is the institution devoted to this task and it works under the guidance of the Dutch Ministry of Education.

**The Tutor /Assessors and Counsellors availability**

In all the participating countries, the figure of tutors, assessors and counsellors is available and plays a role within the non-formal and informal learning recognition process.

**The process responsible figure**

The responsible for conducting the recognition process can vary from a country to another. In Spain, an Assessment Commission analyses the report produced by the assessors in order to verify it and make a decision on: the competences that are duly proven, the need to provide complementary documentation, the assessment methods that shall be applied to obtaining new evidences of the competence. Then, the Assessment Commission provides feedback on: the competence units duly proven, the competence units not duly proven and opportunities to complete training in order to obtain the complete accreditation of Vocational Education and Training Degrees or Professional Certificates.

In the Netherlands, the different practitioners involved in the process fulfil various functions: assessors, portfolio advisers, developers/advisors and teachers/trainers. In Denmark, the educational institutions are the ones who are responsible for conducting the whole process, although other institutions like the trade unions, employer´s

associations and civic education committees can also play a role in informing about the process. In Lombardy region, the accredited body itself is responsible on the service delivered to citizens and a Certification Referent shall be officially declared in charge.

**The role played by the researchers**

Research within the field of non-formal and informal learning recognition is a critical area that is conducted by different institutions. In Denmark, this role is played by the National Knowledge centre for Validation of Prior Learning (NVR), while in Spain it is mainly devoted to the National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL), which is a public institution under the authority of the Ministry of Education. In Italy and the Netherland, there is no official framework for research, which is mainly realised in incidental manner by different institutions such as universities or research institutes (also happens in the case of Spain).

**The approaches used (Summative / Formative / Reflective dimensions)**

From the point of view of the approaches used within the process, the three of them (Summative / Formative / Reflective) are observed, in the different stages of the process, in all participating countries, except Denmark where only the summative and the formative approaches are reported to be used.

## 4.2. Analysis of the case studies

The case studies that have been surveyed in Italy (2 case studies), Denmark (1 case study), Spain (1 case study) and in the Netherlands (1 case study), are all related to the voluntary service and all directly focussed on transversal competences. The analysis is presented for each one of the dimensions which the research has carried out:

- The main focus

- The scope

- The target group

- The main objectives

- The main actors

- The official reference or framework (s)

- The set of competences involved

- The specific transversal/soft skills involved

- The synergic areas between volunteering and work life

- The quality procedures implemented

| | FPM<br>Italy | SNS<br>Italy | VIA UC<br>Denmark | EC VPL<br>The Netherlands | Hominem<br>Spain |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *References/Sources (case study)* | **ATTITUDE Project<br>TSO Project** | **COMETA EVOLUTION** | **BISTAD<br>Ongoing project** | **STEUNPUNT SCOUTING GELDERLAND** | **RECONOCE<br>Ongoing project** |
| *Main focus* | Competence recognition | ECVET system implementation | Identification and documentation of competences | VPL procedures | Competence recognition |
| *Scope* | Regional | European | Regional | National | National |
| *Target groups* | Volunteers, Operators from voluntary service associations, companies | Volunteers/ Workers, Workers who intend to move to another EU country, Migrant workers included | Volunteers, Disadvantaged citizens | - Internal: Persons who work as volunteer within scouting and<br>- External: VET-students who can follow a training period in Scouting to get the required competences for summative reasons | Volunteers |

| *Main objectives* | - Defining a specific set of competence and soft skills for volunteers<br>- Recognition of volunteers' competence and relevant soft skills, of interest for enterprises as well | - Defining a specific set of competence and soft skills for social carers (including volunteers)<br>- Recognition of volunteers' competence through a system of mutual recognition of credits which defines a shared correspondence between on-the job competency requirement (country addressee) and training attended (country of origin) | Fostering a VPL process for BISTAD's workers for supporting social inclusion and mobility | - Supporting scouting groups and leaders in valorising what they learn during volunteering<br>- Acknowledging the scouting as a practical learning centre for vocational education (volunteers who have their prior learning validated can be exempted from following certain formal training courses on VET levels 1-4 (i.e. formal training is required in relation to work with children or disabilities)) | - Identify and define the range of competences that are generally acquired through the voluntary actions carried out within the volunteering experience in the field of educational leisure.<br>- Develop a web tool system that will be used by all volunteers to certify/recognise those competences acquired.<br>- Issue a certification, although it is not formal to all volunteers who take part of the process |
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| *Main actors* | - Social organisations/Voluntary associations<br>- Enterprises<br>- Province of Milan | - Social organisations/Voluntary associations<br>- VET providers | - BISTAD's community with disadvantaged/underprivileged citizens and volunteers | - SCOUTING GELDERLAND<br>- Regional Training Institutes<br>- CIVIQ<br>- CITO<br>- Knowledge Centre ECV | - Confederation of Youth Centres Don Bosco.<br>- Federation Didania<br>- ASDE Scouts of Spain<br>- EEA grants (Financing organisation) |
| *Official Reference framework (s)* | - Lombardy Region's QRSP (Regional Occupational Standard Framework) | - DIRETTIVA CREDITI - Umbria's Framework<br>- ECVET system<br>- BESCLO (see Credit Transfer system from LdV ECC project) | - The possibility of VPL identification and documentation of competences are part of the VPL initiative by Ministry of Education in 2004.<br>- The third sector tool for identification and documentation of competences www.frivillighedskompetencer.dk | - Specific framework coming out of the collaboration with CITO and Knowledge Center EVC. | - N.A. |
| *Set of Competence* | ATTITUDE Set of about 25 specific competences, excerpt from Lombardy Region's QRSP | MoU - Memorandum of Understanding, based on ECVET for health and social care services | - N.A. | - N.A. | RECONOCE project has identified 12 specific competences that are acquired during the voluntary experiences. |
| *Specific Soft/transversal skills* | ATTITUDE/TSO set of transversal skills | As above. | - N.A. | - N.A. | RECONOCE project has identified 12 specific competences that are acquired during the |

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| | | | | voluntary experiences. |
| ***Synergic areas between volunteering and work life, that's business organisations*** | - Volunteering experience worth for training specific soft skills<br>- Recognising competences developed in volunteering useful for a more significant CV and job recruiting:<br>"*What people are really able to do*" | - N.A. | - N.A. | - N.A. | - Providing volunteers with a certificate recognising competences developed in volunteering, to help them complete when applying to jobs. |
| ***VPL process*** | 1. Identification: the candidate identifies the set of competences to be evaluated from the reference occupational standard and sends the application to the selected certification body<br>2. Identification: the certification body evaluates the candidate's application and organises a preliminary interview<br>3. Documentation: the candidate develops the portfolio of evidence according to the reference assessment criteria/competence indicators and sends it to the selected certification body<br>4. Assessment: the certification body contacts the assessor who will evaluate the portfolio; on that basis, a final face-to-face assessment will be decided. Assessment criteria/competence | The proposal is essentially based on the ECVET PROCESS developed within the project "Highlight the competences" which is based on four fundamental steps:<br>1. establishment of the correspondence between qualifications (units and credit units) and the learning outcomes interested by the transfer; signing of Memorandum of Understanding – MoU by social partners and competent institutions.<br>2. signing of the Learning Agreement. It will contain a description of the learning outcomes achieved during the mobility period, or even informally acquired on the job in qualitative and quantitative terms (units/unit parts and associated credit points);<br>3. ECVET credits awarding;<br>4. Transfer, validation and allocation of ECVET credits. | 1. Identification<br><br>2. Documentation | 1. Finding out what the individual would like to do with their life: identifying goals and setting ambitions. This step is linked with the CH-Q training.<br>2. Offering competence descriptions for tasks the individual is already carrying out.<br>Adding descriptions of competencies which are 'in the neighbourhood' of these tasks and which relate to the individuals future aspirations. This is the phase where teachers, trainers, career guiders come in to identify the potential for development of each individual. The aim is to empower people rather than exclude them from progressing further, and sensitive assessment mechanisms are used to keep people in the learning system. | 1. The applicant makes the decision to certify those competences (among the 12 competences identified and defined by the RECONOCE model), that he/she thinks he/she acquired during the volunteering experience.<br>2. The applicant completes a self-evaluation template for the competences he would like to certify.<br>3. The applicant applies through the online tool and sends his application to one of the auditors.<br>4. The auditor (who is a member of the organisation where the volunteer has acquired his experience), who previously knows the applicant because he/she has been working as coordinator of volunteers, assesses the application. This |

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| | indicators help the assessor's evaluation<br>5. Certification: certification issued by the certification body on the basis of the assessment results. | he optional tool for the validation of the competences was the 18 Case scenarios: short histories describing real situations that can happen to workers in the social sector. Each scenario has two possible answers; the participant has to choose what he/she would do in that situation. | | | assessment is make on the basis of:<br>a. The self-evaluation completed by the applicant<br>b. An evaluation that he makes on the basis of his knowledge of the applicant.<br>5. If the final evaluation is successful, a certification is issued by the accrediting organisation, to the applicant. |
| *Quality procedures* | - Quality is mainly addressed to the process and refers to the Lombardy Region procedure, steps, forms to be used, etc.<br>- There is an on-line platform where inserting the progress of the process with documents and information, respecting also time schedule | A project quality management plan available | - N.A. | In the case an organisation wants to be a 'learn firm', they have to be recognised by the OVDB (Knowledge centre for learning in practice).They have to proof whether the group leaders are competent in guiding trainees. The competence profiles of the group leader describe the desired competences. These are:<br>- is able to adapt the way of coaching to a person and context<br>- has insight in the qualities and competences of (team)leaders and | - Internal evaluation to be carried out by a commission.     - External evaluation to be made by a quality assurance organisation |

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| | | | | trainees<br>- is able to make a judgement about (team)leaders and trainees on basis of own observations<br>- is able to start and lead a conversation and to listen is able to emphasise with one another. | |
| *Case strenghts / Opportunities* | **Strengths of VPL**<br>- VPL is the right tool to valuing, evaluating, recognising informal competences<br>**Opportunities of VPL**<br>- Building networks/partnerships from the market stakeholders improving employment<br>- Creating excellence assessor networks<br>- Raising awareness and creating a common-social awareness<br>- Inclusion<br>- Alliances | **Strengths of VPL**<br>- Easily application for the social enterprises<br>- Direct focus on soft skills<br>- Social enterprises and Institutions working together<br>**Opportunities of VPL**<br>- The capability to transfer the six transversal competences to other models for credits recognition | **Strengths of VPL**<br>- Identification and documentation of competences: visibility and awareness of competences.<br>- Profit and non-profit environments working together.<br>- Public and private sector working together<br>**Opportunities of VPL**<br>- To improve the visibility and awareness of competences by the individual in the "Bistad"<br>- Developments of new possibilities for the individual working in Bistad.<br>- The experiences from voluntary activities can be of use for the individual in a lifelong learning perspective, both in working life and education/ learning activities | **Strengths of VPL**<br>- The procedures are very flexible, as a result of which it is easier adaptable to specific organisations and individuals<br>- It is voluntary or not obligatory<br>- The focus is especially on the process; aimed at development of the individual and the organisation,<br>- Steunpunt Scouting Gelderland has made the VPL-tools attractive by the briefcase they developed with different options they can use.<br>- Formal recognition on organisational level<br>- Scouting is accepted as a real learning environment<br>- Scouting is able to perform pro-active HRM: steering on their need for competences and the supply of competences available in their 'human | **Strengths of VPL**<br>- Very related and focussed on soft skills and competences.<br>- Online system and "face to face" validation/ certification/ accreditation processes<br>- Based on management by competencies models used in the business sector<br>**Opportunities of VPL**<br>- Capacity to have a significant pilot project to test the model and the tool with a large number of participants (affiliates of the involved associations)<br>- Capacity to certify a large number of people (affiliates of the involved associations) |

| | | | | resources'. **Opportunities of VPL** - Dissemination of the tools developed. The briefcase is extremely portable. When in other regions catalysts can be found, the idea of recognising what is learned in scouting can be used in many other scouting groups. - More collaboration between employers, educational institutes and voluntary organisations. By making these experiences more explicit in voluntary work and clear to employers and educational institutes, valuation of this learning is easier. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Case Weaknesses / Threats* | **Weaknesses of VPL** - It might be very expensive **Threats of VPL** - Low quality certification bodies who are interested in issuing certifications to get public money | **Weaknesses of VPL** - Difficulties in identifying an effective method to impartially evaluate the soft skills, based on acceptable evidences - Institutions are not applying the 18 Case Scenarios tool but only their own systems -  The 18 Case Scenarios tool is not really effective in assessing the competences **Threats of VPL** - If not adopted by Institutions, the model could be only used by | **Weaknesses of VPL** - In establishing procedures and activities the lack of resources **Threats of VPL** - That the external institutions and organisations will not accept the VPL activities. | **Weaknesses of VPL** - In some cases, the procedure is too flexible and does not provide enough grip or certainty. - The competence profiles are built and approved by scouting groups in Gelderland on a national level. Before it can be used in other scouting-regions, the profiles have to be adapted to fit the specific regional needs. - There is relatively little quantitative data. Conclusions from this case | **Weaknesses of VPL** - The system could be seen by the applicants as not being enough agile (time consuming) - The whole system is based on the decision of volunteers to assess and validate the competences that they should first choose by themselves. **Threats of VPL** - If not recognised by other institutions (Businesses, Administrations) it will |

| | | associations and social enterprises without legal bindings | | study are based on qualitative data. More research is needed. **Threats of VPL** - Using VPL within the organisation is very time consuming. Especially in the voluntary sector this could be a threat, because time is scarce. - Organisations that choose to use VPL, and in that sense offer their volunteers more guidance, could eventually withdraw leaders from other groups that do not offer VPL tools. For organisations in other (paid) sectors, this is not a problem. For voluntary work, this is an unwanted side-effect. - There is a reasonable threat that voluntary work gets more formalised by using these VPL tools and procedures. Is this desirable in Voluntary work? The most important aspect of voluntary work is the freedom to explore things and develop own ideas. | only be used by associations and eventually social enterprises. |

| *Reference process for competence recognition* | DDUO 9380 22/10/2012 Regione Lombardia (see GRID1/GRID2) | - DIRETTIVA CREDITI, D.G.R. n. 1492 3/9/2007.<br>- The specific project doesn't recognise competence, but it defines a Credit Validation Process; it's focused to evaluate/certificate skills acquired in a significant activity/learning course by credits so to achieve the qualification require in a country of destination, against the type/level of training attended in the country of origin. | - At present RPL is in a (formal) educational perspective.<br>- A National Action Plan is on since 2010/2011, but a national system for RPL is not available yet (right?) - The Ministry of Education carried out a tool for documentation of competences (2007).<br>- DAEA third sector umbrella organisation has a clear strategy for validation including voluntary sector. | - In the Netherland there is a substantial amount of best practice in the area of the validation of informal and non-formal learning, but no "common practice".<br>- At now, there is no direct connection between the VPL procedure developed in the case and formal certification. It is a formal recognition at organisational level.<br>- Reference: EC VPL procedures/Scouting project (?) [see Grid 2] | - As it is designed at the current stage, there no connection between the RECONOCE recognition process and the formal VPL process in place at national and regional levels in Spain.<br>- However, one of the future developments of the project consists of linking the RECONOCE process with the PREAR (Process of Recognition, Evaluation, Accreditation, Registry of Professional competences), as defined by the ministry of education a and the regions |

Observation:

Additionally to these case studies, it is important to mention that a pilot experience was deployed in Italy by a team formed by Lavops, Fondazione Politecnico and Confindustria Sondrio. The experience was oriented to validating a set of transversal competences selected by the partners among a list provided by Provincia di Milano. The selection was performed considering the competences normally developed in a voluntary context and those considered important for the employers/enterprises. The process was conducted with two volunteers in 3 steps:

- Collection of "external" evaluations by means of a 360° feedback tool and comparison with the "self-evaluation" conducted by each candidate.
- Discussion of the results with the volunteers and the validation team, including representatives from the project partners.
- Issue a "sample certificate", listing the key competences of the candidate that have been highlighted in the 360° feedback tool and the actual discussion with the validation team.

**The main focus**

Several case studies have been identified within the participating countries and they had a different focus. The "Attitude" project conducted within the Lombardy region and, namely, in the Province of Milano (Italy) was focussing on competence recognition as it is the case for the "Reconoce", project under development in Spain. In the Netherlands, the "scouting" case study focussed on non-formal and informal learning recognition procedures, while the "Bistad" project in Denmark is focussed on the identification and recognition of competences. The "Cometa" case study was focussing on implementing the ECVET system.

**The scope**

The scope of the different case studies was either at regional level (Italy and Denmark), National (Spain and the Netherlands) and European (Cometa project).

**The target group**

For all case studies, the main target groups were: volunteers, operators from voluntary service associations, companies (private sector), workers who intend to move to other EU countries, migrant workers, persons who work as volunteers within scouting, VET-students who can follow a training period in scouting and get the required competences and disadvantaged citizens.

**The main objectives**

In all cases, the main objectives versed in defining specific competences for social and volunteering careers, recognising these competences, finding ways for sharing a correspondence between on-the-job competence requirement and attended training. For the specific "Scouting" case in the Netherlands: supporting scouting groups and leaders in valuing their learning during volunteering experiences, was an important objective. For the Spanish "Reconoce" case, the objective was to identify and define the range of competences generally acquired through the voluntary actions and issue a certification to certify them.

**The main actors**

The main actors involved in the case studies were: voluntary organisations, social associations, VET providers, some public institutions (Province of Milan, Bistad´s community working with disadvantaged people), Scouting (The Netherlands and Spain).

**The official reference (s) or framework (s)**

Not all of the identified case studies have taken into account the national/regional/local or European available frameworks, although some of them did. The Lombardy region´s QRSP, the "Direttiva Crediti Umbria´s Framework", ECVET and BESCLO, have been referred for the cases in Italy. For the "Reconoce" case study, no framework has been taken into account.  In Denmark, the third sector tool for identification and documentation of competences has been used. The same applies to The Netherlands, where a specific framework produced in partnership between CITO and the "Knowledge Centre EVC" has been used.

**The set of competences involved**

In several of the case studies, a set of specific competences for the third sector have been identified, such as in the "Attitude" and "Reconoce", where 25 and 12 competences have been defined, respectively.

**The specific transversal/soft skills involved**

The "Attitude" and "Reconoce" case studies identified them, as this was one of the main objectives of these initiatives.

**The Synergic areas between volunteering and worklife**

Some of the cases did identify some synergies such us in the "Attitude" and "Reconoce". This last project established a way to provide volunteers with a certificate that recognises competences developed in volunteering, to help them compete in better conditions when applying for jobs.
The "Attitude" project mentions the fact that volunteering experience is worth for training specific soft skills and also recognising competences developed in volunteering as useful for a more significant CV and job recruiting: "*What people are really able to do*".

**The quality procedures implemented**

The identified case studies included different quality monitoring procedures, although they are quite heterogeneous and not always very clear in terms of their tracking. Some of these quality procedures are internal and others are external, as they are more formal.

## Analysis of the competences and soft skills

| | FPM<br>Italy | SNS<br>Italy | VIA UC<br>Denmark | EC VPL<br>The Netherlands | Hominem<br>Spain |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *References/Sources (case study)* | **ATTITUDE Project** | **COMETA EVOLUTION** | **Department of Education WebTool** | **Manual organisations, VPL General Volunteer Competences** | **RECONOCE project** |
| *Key competences for voluntary context* | Three main clusters of activities linked to related competence areas:<br>1. Core: social-educational support; children /elderly entertainment; events; after-school learning aid; parental /individual guidance; etc.<br>2. Institutional: association promotion; fund raising; etc.<br>3. Internal management: volunteers recruiting; training; evaluation<br><br>Main soft skills emerged and of interest for companies as well:<br><br>PERSONAL ABILITIES:<br>practicality<br>empathy<br>availability'<br>self-control<br>flexibility<br><br>SOCIAL ABILITIES :<br>diversity management<br>listening<br>communicating<br>leadership<br><br>COGNITIVE ABILITIES:<br>information collection and | 1. Understand the importance of finding out the history, preferences, wishes, needs and abilities of the individual(s) you are supporting<br>2. Understand the value and importance of working in partnership with unpaid cares/ volunteers / significant others<br>3. Understand the basic forms of verbal/non-verbal communication and how to use these in your work<br>4. Understand the need to promote the following values at all times: individuality, rights, choice, privacy, independence, dignity, respect and partnership<br>5. Understand why it is important to follow policies and procedures, legal frameworks and the aims and objectives of the organisation you work for<br>6. Constantly monitor his/her activities and ability to apply critically assessment tools/methodologies such as internal and/or external supervision | General third sector relevant competences:<br>1. Social competences<br>2. Learning competences<br>3. Communicative competences<br>4. Creative-innovative competences<br>5. ICT competences<br>6. Self-management competences<br>7. Intercultural competences<br>8. Organizational competences | 1. Working systematically<br>2. Demonstrating reliability<br>3. Dealing with Time and Pace<br>4. Solving problems<br>5. Working in accordance with Health & Safety regulations<br>6. Communication<br>7. Presentation<br>8. Contributing to good work relations<br>9. Cooperation<br>10. Accepting praise and criticism<br>11. Application of Language and Maths skills<br>12. Learning while doing | 1. Negotiation<br>2. Teamwork<br>3. Tact and prudence<br>4. Interpersonal Communication<br>5. Personal and technical reliability<br>6. Organising and planning<br>7. Leading initiatives<br>8. Flexibility (Adaptation)<br>9. Optimism and enthusiasm<br>10. Learning capacity<br>11. Initiative and autonomy<br>12. Analyse and solve problems |

| | organisation<br>problem setting / solving<br>synthesis<br>creative thinking<br><br>ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOR:<br>organisation and planning<br>control and check<br>orientation to results<br>managing unexpected events | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Competences of mutual interest for volunteering and business organisations* | - From voluntary core activity experiences: Project management; team building/ team management; event organisation; training; group/individual coaching<br>- From Voluntary institutional activity experiences: marketing; communication; fund raising; networking with external stakeholders<br>- From voluntary internal management experiences: people raising; company recruiting; personnel development support; Job guidance; training planning | - Understand the need to promote equal opportunities for the individual(s) you're supporting<br>- Understand the need to be reliable and dependable<br>- Understand how to use touch to promote communication – Understand when touch is not appropriate<br>- Understand the limits of confidentiality<br>- All indicators under the heading "Recognize and Respond to abuse and neglect"<br>- Know the symptoms of stress<br>- Understand the need to support and respect diversity and different cultures and values | Depending on the job and based on the above mentioned list. | Top ten for employers:<br><br>- Verbal communication;<br>- Teamwork;<br>- Commercial awareness;<br>- Analysing & investigating;<br>- Initiative/self-motivation;<br>- Drive/results oriented;<br>- Written communication;<br>- Planning & organising;<br>- Flexibility;<br>- Time management<br><br>Other important skills:<br>- Negotiating & persuading<br>- Leadership<br>- Self-awareness<br>- Personal impact/confidence<br>- Lifelong learning<br>- Stress tolerance<br>- Integrity<br>- Independence<br>- Developing professionalism<br>- Action planning<br>- Decision-making<br>- Interpersonal sensitivity<br>- Creativity | - Communication skills: including the ability to communicate clearly and precisely with broad kinds of people, and its ability to develop active listening.<br>- Ability to help others: to establish strategies to achieve objectives, as the ability to teach and transfer knowledge to others.<br>- Adaptability and ability be effective in different environments various tasks, responsibilities and people.<br>- Ability to include negotiation, persuasion and conflict resolution of reaching consensus on solutions. |

# 5. Key references on validating informal and non-formal learning

The LEVER project is strongly rooted within the frame of all those developments that have taken place over the last years in Europe, within the context of competences, lifelong learning and validation of learning, non-formal and informal learning.

## 8 key competences for lifelong learning

On one hand and following recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European parliament and the council of Europe, "Key competences in the shape of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to each context are fundamental for each individual in a knowledge-based society. They provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion and active citizenship by offering flexibility and adaptability, satisfaction and motivation. Because they should be acquired by everyone, this recommendation proposes a reference tool for European Union (EU) countries to ensure that these key competences are fully integrated into their strategies and infrastructures, particularly in the context of lifelong learning".

In this regard, one of the main components of these developments, as part of the lifelong learning strategy, is a reference framework of competences that allow identifying key competences that help individuals prove their "qualification" to successfully perform a given job, build a professional career and play a role in society.

To achieve this goal, CEDEFOP has identified eight key competences within a reference framework. Some of them are transversal /soft competences which the LEVER project will take into account in the further development of its final products. These eight competences are:

1. Communication in the mother tongue
2. Communication in foreign languages
3. Mathematical competences and basic competences in science and technology
4. ICT competence
5. Learning to learn
6. Social and civic competences
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
8. Cultural awareness and expression

It is clearly assumed that these key competences are all interdependent and are specifically oriented to critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision making and constructive management of feelings.

## Validating non-formal and informal learning

On the other hand and in relation to the validation of non-formal and informal learning, it is interesting to mention that several steps have been taken. Tools, guidelines and frameworks, were developed in order to stimulate this area of validation at European level. These steps include:

- The 2004 Common European principles on identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning
- The 2006 Council Resolution on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field
- The 2008 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning
- The Council Resolution on European Cooperation in the youth field (2010- 2018)
- The 2009 European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning
- The 2012 Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning

These initiatives all together go in the same line and aim to state the relevance of validation, through high quality designed processes to facilitate the linkage of learning outcomes achieved through non-formal and informal learning and the existing qualifications frameworks in European member states. They are called to make it possible by 2018, to enable individuals to validate their knowledge, skills and competences acquired via non-formal and informal learning ways, and allow them getting a "full/part qualification".

In terms of the engagement of the different stakeholders, the CEDEFOP guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning notices that this is increasing at different levels: the social partners, private sector, voluntary sector and the public employment services. This is essentially due to the legislations and strategies implemented or being implemented in the different member states. Also and according to CEDEFOP "…for the majority of countries covered in the 2014 Inventory national experts reported that there is a clear allocation of responsibilities with regard to validation, which is a positive trait".

## Validation of non-formal and informal learning in the Voluntary sector

As the LEVER project addresses the Voluntary sector, it is of importance to mention the most relevant research conducted within this sector, especially by CEDEFOP.

It is admitted by experts that volunteering actions have a deep impact on people in terms of competences, understood as a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes. However and very often these competences are not recognised and not valued and therefore, a clear area for validation is offered by this sector. The outcome of this process can be an improvement in personal capacities such as self-esteem and confidence, on one hand, and also the opportunity to access higher professional responsibilities, including developing a career with this same sector (Volunteering), as it is the professional choice of many individuals.

The most visible outcome of this reality is that validation is important not just for the individuals but also for the voluntary organisations.

**LEVER project | Cross National Survey**

It is also stressed by CEDEFOP that "…Increasingly, the importance of implementing measures to simplify validation of informal and non-formal learning is referred to in national and European policies. Some voluntary sector organisations recognise their role in delivering such policies and undertake their own validation initiatives with them in mind….. Youth volunteering is particularly important for considering validation for several reasons. First the whole field is based on activities intended to benefit participants by easing personal growth and competence development."

A large debate on the approaches to follow to validating and certifying non-formal and informal learning within the voluntary sector, is currently taking place. The LEVER project aims to participate to this debate by designing a model that could be used by interested target groups and stakeholders.

# 6. Outcomes of the Cross-National survey (O1)

As part of the research conducted and as a conclusion to this research, a set of competences described as relevant and/or demanded within the voluntary sector, on one hand, and, on another hand, a second set of competences that are seen as relevant within the private sector (businesses), have been identified. The outcome of this research is meant to form the basic input for developing the LEVER model for validating non-formal and informal learning within the volunteering sector.

### Relevant competences for the Voluntary sector

The source of identification of these competences varies from a country to another and can be summarised in the following:

-   In **Spain**, the list of 12 competencies is based on the RECONOCE project ([www.reconoce.org](www.reconoce.org) ), currently under development.
-   In the **Netherlands**, the compendium of competences is based on the Catalogue of the 12 General Volunteer Competences developed by MOVISIE (Netherland Center for Social Development).
-   In **Denmark**, the corresponding competences are based on a web-based tool developed by the Department of Education for the purpose of clarification and documentation of prior learning, in the third sector ([www.frivillighedskompetencer.dk](www.frivillighedskompetencer.dk) ).
-   In **Italy**, several sources have been used as a reference including the QRSP – Regional Framework of Occupational Standards of Lombardy Region,  ; and, finally, the Cometa Evolution project results ([http://www.cometa-evolution.eu/files/cometanavigator.pdf](http://www.cometa-evolution.eu/files/cometanavigator.pdf), [http://www.cometa-evolution.eu/files/cometa2comparisonskillsv3.pdf](http://www.cometa-evolution.eu/files/cometa2comparisonskillsv3.pdf)).

### Main conclusions

1.  Despite some differences in the naming of the competences, there is a strong relationship between the identified competences at national levels and those defined by CEDEFOP and called "8 competences for lifelong learning". This is especially true with those that could be considered as transversal competences. The approach followed consisted in matching these competences with the 8 competences described by CEDEFOP, in order to find out common areas.  The result was that four (4) competences were represented in all the countries. These are:

    -   Communication in mother tongue competence
    -   Learning to learn competence
    -   Social and civic competences
    -   Cultural awareness and expression

2.  A second step, it has been observed that the competences for the voluntary sector, identified in each country, have a large area of synergy and for some of them, they are similar. Therefore, we assume that the competences upon which the Lever model should be built on are the following ones:

    -   **Communication (verbal/non-verbal, presentation, capacity to listen…)**
    -   **Intercultural and diversity management**
    -   **Working under health and safety regulations, and established policies and frameworks**
    -   **Self-management and understanding others**
    -   **Teamwork**
    -   **Initiative and autonomy**
    -   **Problem solving**
    -   **Organisation and planning**
    -   **Innovation and creativity**
    -   **Leadership**
    -   **Learning to learn**
    -   **Results oriented**

3.  In terms of the interaction with National frameworks, it is observed that the situation is quite nuanced between countries, where the reference to transversal competences is not always very clear. The national systems of qualifications and validation do not make a direct mention to this type of competences in a very explicit way. From a leaning program point of view, these transversal competencies are diluted within the syllabus of the different programs

4.  As per the relationship between the transversal competences identified for the voluntary service and those required by business environment, the analysis shows that there are, to a great extent, similarities. From this perspective, the LEVER project can act as a catalyst between both worlds by defining in a clearer way these competences, showing how they can be evaluated in a transparent manner after the volunteering experience and therefore valued by companies, during a recruitment process, for instance.

5.  In terms of the validation process of formal, non-formal and informal learning itself, it is observed that it includes the 4 steps of identification, documentation, assessment and certification in most of countries, except in Denmark, where the assessment step is not available. However, some specificities are observed such as in Spain where there is a large decentralisation of the process to the regions, although the issuing of the formal accreditations is made by a centralised administration, at national level.

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  http://www.lavoro.regione.lombardia.it/cs/Satellite?c=Redazionale_P&childpagename=DG_IFL%2FDetail&cid=1213578493354&packedargs=NoSlotForSitePlan%3Dtrue%26menu-to-render%3D1213285184433&pagename=DG_IFLWrapper

- LEGISLATIVE DECREE January 16, 2013, n. 13, "Definition of the general norms and basic levels of performance for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning  and the minimum standards of service of the national system for the competence certification, in accordance with  the Article 4, paragraphs 58 and 68 of Law 28 June 2012, n. 92. (13G00043) (OJ 39 of 15.2.2013).

- Regional framework for recognition of credits – so called "Direttiva Crediti" and its annexes http://www.regione.umbria.it/lavoro-formazione/sistema-regionale-del-riconoscimento-dei-crediti-formativi-nella-formazione-professionale

- Regional Occupational Repertory and Educational Standard Directory  - Umbria Region http://www.regione.umbria.it/lavoro-formazione/repertorio-completo-dei-profili-professionali

- QRSP Quadro Regionale degli Standard Professionali  - Regional Occupational Standard Framework Lombardy Region http://www.ifl.servizirl.it/site

- Official website of CO.ME.TA. EVOLUTION project (case study) http://www.cometa-evolution.eu/

- CO.ME.TA. EVOLUTION project final evaluation report
  http://www.cometa-evolution.eu/files/cometafinalevaluationreport.pdf

- ATTITUDE Project  - *Volunteering to increase competences and build transversal skills: development and modeling of non-formal, informal, certifiable learning paths (case study)*
  http://www.ciessevi.org/progetti/attitude

- Official web video of the ATTITUDE project final
  results https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxrgiBeQmvc

# Annexes

Grid 1

National, regional, local system for recognising formal, non-formal and informal learning

Grid 2

Case studies

Grid 3

Competences and soft skills

## Grid 1 – National, regional, local system for recognising formal, non-formal and informal learning

Template for describing national, regional and local systems for recognising formal, informal and non-formal learning.

| Dimensions | Description |
|---|---|
| The recognition process in each country (What does it aim at? How is it organised? And what phases does it follow?) | |
| The qualifications and occupational catalogue (Is this kind of catalogue available in your country/region?) | |
| The procedures implemented (How are they structured?) | |
| The accreditation and certification bodies (Who are they and how do they perform their tasks?) | |
| The availability of Tutors/Assessors/Counsellors (Who are they? What is their role? What profile do they have to fulfill this role?) | |
| System/process responsible figure/s (who is he/are they? And to what extent?) | |
| The role of researchers (Are they company based, for example coming from HR? Are they academic people? Do they play any role in influencing or improving the overall system?) | |
| Summative dimension (description of this approach/dimension in relation to the specific competence recognition process in each country) | |
| Formative dimension (description of this approach/dimension in relation to the specific competence recognition process in each country) | |
| Reflective dimension (description of this approach/dimension in relation to the specific competence recognition process in each country) | |
| Labor market perspective (to what extent does it accept/trust the described recognition process? For what purpose it uses / needs it? | |
| Social perspective (Social inclusion, empowerment, self-identity in the society) | |
| Citizenship (What links and what benefits may the recognition process provide at this level) | |

Template for describing national, regional and local case studies for recognising formal, informal and non-formal learning.

**Country** :

**Partner** :

**Case** :

**Target group** :

**Quantity of candidates** :

| | *1.* Guideline | |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Country, region, sector | |
| 1.2 | Date of the case study | |
| 1.3 | Description of case study | |
| 1.4 | Introduction/markers/keywords | |
| 1.5 | initiating organisation | |
| 1.6 | Involved organisations | |
| 1.7 | Target group | |
| 1.8 | Value of the process and outcomes:<br>- Profit (money, esteem, career step, etc.)<br>- Efficiency (timesaving, leaning made to measure)<br>- Enjoyability (investment in learning is fun)<br>[Fill in for initiator and specify if possible also the value for others involved] | |
| 1.9 | The expected outcome, award, qualification or other effect to which validation of informal/non-formal learning is integrated | |
| 1.10 | Status of the award, if it exists (e.g. certification, institutional or professional recognition) | |

| | 2. Context and aims | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Initiator in charge of the action described | |
| 2.2 | Target group aimed by the initiator:<br>- group description (e.g. workers, teachers/trainers, unemployed, etc.); qualitative & quantitative<br>- paid or unpaid work | |
| 2.3 | Aims for the initiator | |
| 2.4 | Aims for the target group pursued by the initiator of the action | |
| 2.5 | What is the problem that has/had to be solved? | |
| 2.6 | What is the opportunity that opened up to solve the problem? | |
| 2.7 | Where and how did VPL become an option? Who initiated VPL? | |
| 2.8 | Why is non-formal and informal learning accepted? | |
| 2.9 | Which other parties or stakeholders are involved to set up the action described? | |

| 2.10 | Which laws & legal texts (e.g. collective agreements) are involved? | |
| 2.11 | Any special agreements or measures involved (on national, sectoral, organisational levels)? | |

| **3. Processes and procedures** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3.0 | Which kind(s) of VPL is involved: personalized, summative and/or formative; Describe why this approach!! | |
| 3.1 | What are the subsequent steps in the validation process? | |
| 3.2 | Describe the elements of learning that will be valuated? (For example: knowledge, skills, ambitions, attitude, generic & specific competences, know-how, performance, experience, etc.) | |
| 3.3 | Which learning environments are involved? e.g. school, workplace, private life, others | |
| 3.4 | What are the steps in the procedure to be followed by the applicant? | |
| 3.5 | How is the applicant informed/contacted? | |
| 3.6 | What tools/instruments/methods are used for identification and recognition of competences? (e.g. portfolio, interview, demonstration, Europass) | |
| 3.7 | What kinds of proof can be submitted? | |
| 3.8 | Which criteria are used to accept candidates for the procedure? | |
| 3.9 | How is informal learning measured and valuated? | |
| 3.10 | What kind of advice/feedback may be made by assessors or mentors, guiders, peers, examiners, etc? Split your answer up in: - certification (summative) - personal development (formative) - other | |
| 3.11 | What is exempted on the basis of VPL? (e.g. courses/ units/modules of study: specific tasks set within units: demonstration of competences) | - |
| 3.12 | Which percentage of a certificate/diploma can be awarded through informal/non-formal learning? (on a scale from 1 - 100%) | - |

| **4. Quality management** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4.0 | What are the indicators for quality in the case? | - |
| 4.1 | Which functions concerning quality management are filled in within the process and procedure? Include the number and required qualifications of each function! e.g. assessor, advisor, instructor, certificatory, guider, etc. | |
| 4.2 | Is there a quality-procedure in any form? | |
| 4.3 | How is the quality of the functions and the procedure guaranteed | |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | in the VPL process? | |
| 4.4 | Which stakeholders are in charge of quality control? | |
| 4.5 | What is main feature of the quality-system: control, trust or both (please explain)? | |
| 4.6 | Which extra measures are taken to guarantee the quality of the procedure? | |

**5. Results**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | Which results were in effect reached?<br>- for the organisation in charge<br>- for the target group<br>- for others (explain) | |
| 5.2 | Validation: summative results<br>Number & types of certification | |
| 5.3 | Validation: formative results<br>Number and types of development-plans or career opportunities | |
| 5.4 | Validation: personalized results.<br>Number and types of outcomes | |
| 5.5 | Effects on other stakeholders and/or knowledge infrastructure | |
| 5.6 | Financial results for the initiator (positive/negative).<br>Specify the type of this result, e.g. less/more absence of leave, less/more learning costs, less/more productivity, less spending on recruitment, outplacement, etc. | |

**6. SWOT**

| **Strengths of VPL in the case study** | **Opportunities of VPL in the case study** |
|---|---|
| | |
| **Weaknesses of VPL in the case study** | **Threats of VPL in the case study** |
| | |

*Grid 3 – Competences and soft skills*

Template for highlighting and describing the main transversal competences and soft skills emerging by the national, regional and local case studies and experiences.

| Dimensions | Description |
|---|---|
| What are the key competences that can be developed within the voluntary context? | |
| What are the key competences that businesses would be interested in when they would find out what people do in voluntary activities? | |
| Are there practical examples of already existing synergy between the voluntary service and businesses? Please provide evidence when they exist. | |