

Check list for the territorial analysis of the receiving territories and aimed at the definition of the Transfer Plan for the creation of a service of validation of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts

CONDITIONS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL CONSENSUS

Questions for the Lecce Province and ABU

The Services for the “valorization of competences acquired in non formal and informal contexts” need to be directed and designed according to the specific sectors and professions.

The main goal of these services is in fact to increase the strength of the people to enter or re-enter the labor market.

Therefore, the utility value of the validated learning outcomes cannot be separated from their significance (usability) on the labour market.

That being said, you are asked:

- For which of the following purposes do you think that is important on your territory to promote a system of validation of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts? (indicate by making a cross – multi choices are possible)

enable the person to obtain accreditation of prior learning (credits, exemptions to attend the course) to use in formal systems.

Remark: for access to formal learning

enable the person to obtain recognition (attestation of competences by a third party aiming at enhancing the employability), which can be used on the labour market to search or look for a job

Remark: e.g. for unofficial recognition by a potential employer (useful for job application).
Not for official recognition (see last page)

enable the person to obtain a license required for the exercise of specific professions (Patents, Licenses, etc.) to get access to this profession

Remark: possible only with formal tests, exams

for the right of citizenship (e.g. in Canada or Australia where immigrants must demonstrate a suitable level of linguistic knowledge and specific professional skills to ask access to the country) to get access to the society

enable the person to get greater self-awareness, so as to be able to continue his/her own professional choices and career development as conscious and concrete as possible. (personalised lifelong learning; for update or upgrade someone’s competences)

Remark: *self-awareness of qualification level for definition of further training pathways and motivation for further learning*

x enable non-represented groups in the society to get access to learning and working opportunities (social inclusion)

Remark: *useful for social inclusion measures of long-term unemployed and recipients of social benefits but also for procedures of formal recognition of foreign professional degrees (documentation).*

□ to enable regional/local authorities to support policies for regional development and programs for reducing poverty.

- Starting from the indicated purposes, in your reference context, which sector and what professions (1 or 2) could be taken as a reference to test the services?

Indicate data that allow us to highlight the power of choice with respect to the demands of the labor market.

We will select the professions “Specialist - Warehouse Logistics” (Fachkraft Lagerlogistik/ 3 years of formal initial training) and “Warehouse Specialist”/ Fachlagerist / 2 years training) as a reference (both professions are recognized by the German Vocational Training Act).

Specialists in warehouse logistics accept goods, control them and store them properly. They put together supplies and tour schedules, load and ship goods. They are also involved in the optimisation of logistic processes. Specialists in warehouse logistics are employed in all industries and in companies with own storehouses. Warehouse specialists are trained under a reduced programme. They can add one additional training year for acquiring the higher degree of a specialists in warehouse logistics.

There are no standardized access conditions for the employment of warehouse workers. It requires no technical knowledge and work can be started unskilled. Non-formal training takes place on the job at the workplace. Here, the unskilled worker acquires important basic skills. But warehouse logistics is getting more and more complex. Much of the stock is now managed with the help of computerized systems. Formally unskilled workers are not allowed to handle such complex systems without being licensed for it. Mainly physically heavy work remains with him. But low qualified workers are not able to fulfil such heavy work for long years and have no career perspective without formal vocational degrees.

A formal degree as a Specialist in Warehouse Logistics or as a Warehouse Specialist could open new professional careers. There is a continuing and growing demand in qualified workforce for complex logistic functions under conditions of globalisation, further optimisation of just-in-time deliveries and many others. At the same time the demand in unskilled workforce will further shrink.

In Berlin, there is a demand of 27.400 qualified workers in the traffic and logistic branch (January 2013)

- Who are the stakeholders related to the sector (mentioned above) and to the indicated professionals that are appropriate to inform and involve, so that the utility value of what has been achieved by the people through the services can be recognized?

For example, would it be possible to build a path to inform the companies with regard to the characteristics of the service, so that should the person present to them, they know the value of the attestation they have in their hand?

The regional Employment Service plays a major role in this respect. It issues, e.g. further training vouchers for effective individual trainings of (short-term) unemployed people in order to eliminate knowledge and skills deficits for a quick reintegration into the labour market. The procedure will help to identify competences and to design intensive individualised training programmes.

Employers may use the procedure for internal further education purposes (planning)

- Which forms of communication do you recommend as an information-strategy?

ABU cooperates on a continuous basis with the regional employment service and jobcentres. It is a member of the local employers' association MHWK and of various regional networks

- Who are the people to whom the service could be addressed?
Please provide information on the main characteristics of the target group you are thinking of; justify why you consider it a target group to which to address the service.

a) The service could be addressed to unemployed people:

- Short term unemployed need immediate support for a quick reintegration into the labour market. Longer absence leads to a devaluation of skills and a loss of social competence. The service could support an individualised design and implementation of demand driven training (e.g. for available jobs) or in preparation for a final professional degree examination (IHK).
- Long-term unemployed and returnees (after a longer absence from the labour market) lack self-esteem and motivation. Former competences are devaluated. Often, they are not aware of their situation, competences and potentials. The service could help to provide a realistic picture, to develop self-esteem and to design learning pathways for the preparation for a new job.

b) Occupied, formally low qualified workers may document their non-formally/ informally acquired skills as a good basis for designing learning pathways with the aim of a formal recognition (professional degree).

c) Personnel Departments may use the service for internal further training activities. It helps to analyse the training situation and to plan further activities for the staff development.

CONDITIONS OF TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY

The services for the “valorisation of competences acquired in non formal and informal contexts” require the adoption of specific devices aimed at supporting the transparency of skills. Looking through the list of catalogs, you can see all the devices used in the experience of the Veneto Region, Province of Treviso and Lepido Rocco Association.

- Starting from this, in your context, for the sector/ sectors and Professionals identified for testing, are there professional standards?

Yes. There are official training curricula (theory and practice) and modules with descriptions of competences for the initial vocational training in the professions “Specialist - Warehouse Logistics” and “Warehouse Specialist”. They are in accordance with German Federal Vocational Training Law (BBiG) and relevant throughout Germany. The professional standards are defined there.

- Are there certain professional groups that are already organized and can be involved, for instance career guiders, trainers or assessors? If they are not yet organized, could it be an added value to organize such professional groups with their own function-standards and role in the validation-process?

ABU’s trainers (with expert knowledge/ skills), methodologists and advisors who are familiar with competence assessment methods and instruments.

- Are there criteria or indicators that need to be taken as a reference (for example because they are imposed by a specific regulation of the sector) in the assessment of competences?

The training curricula contain descriptions of knowledge and skills to be acquired during the training.

- Are there registration devices in use in your area that would be good to adopt in the realization of the service?

Yes, ABU applies registration procedures, in particular for the demands of adult learners that are interested in a second chance modular training (Modulare Nachqualifizierung – modular subsequent training) in preparation of external IHK examination for formal professional degrees.

CONDITIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL FEASIBILITY

The certification is the final act of the recognition process, through which a competent authority issues a certificate to the person, as a result of a process of evaluation and validation of skills which asserts that they have been acquired. When the competent authority is an institution, usually this process is regulated and provides specific methods of acquirement; in general terms, however, it is always the competent authority which defines the conditions for the issue of the certificate.

These terms and conditions are to protect the value of use and the usability of the issued certificate.

- Which is the competent authority to whom the service is potentially connected? *Consider the indicated sector and professional.*

The competent regional authority for recognition of vocational training degrees is the Berlin IHK Chamber of Commerce and Industries (for the professions concerned). Participation in an examination (theory and practice) is the main condition for the issue of professional degree certificate. For the time being, there are no procedures of skills recognition beyond participation in these formal examinations. In the case of work experienced adults it is the so-called “external exams” (special access procedure to examinations for vocational learners who have not progressed through the dual VET).

- What do we want to issue to the persons who participate in the testing as a result of the process of evaluation and validation of their skills?

Under these conditions, a skills assessment sets the starting point for an effective preparation for the external examination at the Chamber of Trade and Commerce. This is the only way for obtaining a nation-wide recognised formal professional degree in correspondence with the German Federal Vocational Training Act.

ABU will issue an “ABU certificate” with the results of the competence assessment. This is a useful document for the design of continued training pathways (in preparation of IHK examination), for job seeking purposes and for others

- What does the release of this certificate mean in your context? What conditions must be met?
- Assessment/ Valuation under continuous work process.
- Participation in examinations.
- Assessment by professional experts.
- If no certificate can be issued, what can be released to people? *In fact, it is important to raise the problem of the commitment asked to the people participating in the testing and therefore envisage something that will help them to pursue their professional goals.*

See above (ABU certificate). Despite the fact, that participation in the assessment procedure does not lead directly/ automatically to the recognition of the professional degree, the outcomes result in useful recommendations for further learning in relation to the sought professional degree.

- What can be proposed to enhance the value of use and the usability of the achieved attestation if the certification is not releasable?

See above. Target-performance-comparison.

CONDITIONS OF OPERATIONAL FEASIBILITY

The professionalism of the operators who support the person and who intervene throughout the way which leads to the validation of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts is one of the key elements which guarantees the quality and thus lays the foundation for the credibility and usability of the content of the devices.

Therefore, it is crucial for the implementation of the services to provide an adequate didactic support to the professionals who are involved in various ways in the service, so that they can do so in a professional and focused way.

- Which is the institution where you plan to activate the service? Please describe its function, role and tasks in society.

ABU Akademie für Berufsförderung und Umschulung gGmbH, Berlin

ABU gGmbH is a certified provider of vocational training, guidance and labour integration. Established in 1990, ABU employs 180 full-staff members at present. Appr. 1200 participants learn for technical, commercial and service oriented professions with the aim of their effective labour market integration. An important group of clients is formally low qualified adults, incl. long-term unemployed and migrants. For its training, guidance and integration work ABU applies target group specific competence assessment methods and tools: long experience in assessment of potentials of pupils and young adults under initial vocational training is extended now to the target group of adults without professional degrees. Its innovative second chance training offers for formally low qualified adults open new career prospects to these clients. The proposed methods and instruments will be transferred, adapted and applied for these needs.

- Who are the operators that you consider necessary to involve? What is their professional background in terms of competences and validation of competences acquired in non formal and informal contexts? *We need information which make us understand the characteristics and skills of these operators. Consider that there is not much time available in the project to train the operators; therefore it is necessary to make a focused selection and aimed at motivated staff. You can think of different types of professionals involving in the validation-process: managers, assessors, trainers, guiders, communicators, developers, researchers, animators, counselors, etc.*
- Branch experts: vocational trainers with professional background in Warehouse Logistics (ABU is offering initial vocational training and second chance training for the profession “Specialist - Warehouse Logistics” (Fachkraft Lagerlogistik)
- Certified trainers/ teachers in potential and competence assessment procedures
- Quality management responsible
- How would you prefer to organize the quality-care of the validation-process? Through a top-down or a bottom-up system? Top-down is by legislation/rules and bottom-up is by the organized professionals groups themselves.

We would prefer a top-down approach with quality guidelines to be followed and an auditing/ evaluation exercised by independent staff (internal) not directly involved in the four phases of the procedure. Further, a feedback from participants should be envisaged (questionnaire)

- In the procedure carried out in Veneto region, in the evaluation commission there are involved experts in the profession with the task to express an assessment of professional competences.

In accordance with the professionals you selected, who might be involved as an expert of the profession? Think about how to intercept and involve other such professionals.

Vocational trainers with professional background in the selected profession would be involved (see above).

General Remark

Generally speaking about the conditions in Germany, the procedure will be a useful instrument for identification/ documentation, evidence/ assessment of learning outcomes and validation/ confirmation by a competent (but not officially recognised) body.

For the time being, it is not realistic to expect the authorised body to issue on this basis an officially recognised certificate/ diploma recognising learning outcomes with regard to the professional degree (accord. to the Federal Vocational Training Law). This recognition is the exclusive responsibility of the regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Chambers of Crafts and some specialised chambers. Recognition of a professional degree is the result of successful participation in final examinations (theory and practice)

At the same time, a certificate issued by the institute carrying out the procedure (here ABU) is a useful document for defining learning pathways in preparation of the mentioned official examination, for job applications in the labour market etc.

List of transferring objects

For further consultation aims, it would be useful to get the complete set of the materials.

Materials of special interest are:

Step 1

- Individual Portfolio of evidences
- Hand-book of citizen's competences
- Structured Questionnaire incl. Instructions for filling in the structured Questionnaire

Step 2

- Guidelines to manage the interview
- List of evidences
- Checklist to analyse the evidences

Step 3

- Competence descriptors - Logistic (specifically storehouse)
- Complexity levels - Logistic (specifically storehouse)
- Performance indicators – Logistic (specifically storehouse)
- List of key questions to support an interview - Logistic (specifically storehouse)