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“Transferring methods for validation of informal learning to VET institutions in the field of sustainable agriculture”

**National implementation strategy
for converting current non-
formal courses into formal
courses and validating the
previous learning.**

Proposal for Greek Strategy

Language version: English

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1. CONVERTING NON-FORMAL COURSES.

1.1. The aim of course

The strategy on implementing the conversion of non-formal/informal learning into formal incorporates, hereby presented, is meant to include specific courses in order accomplish the above. The objective of these courses will be to apply the certification and validation process of non-formal-informal training or prior experience, related always to sustainable agriculture, into a well defined job profile which will be embedded into a job role and will meet the criteria of the national Qualification Framework (in the case of Greece: Hellenic Qualification Framework). The level of achieved knowledge within the aforementioned framework will be of level 4, while the learning outcome would be to attend to develop all knowledge, skills and competencies described by the HQF.

The above are strictly developed within the regulatory framework for the certification of qualifications, i.e. the learning outcomes of non-formal education and informal learning, in response to labour market needs and priorities and in liaison with the accreditation of inputs, i.e. providers, trainers, occupational profiles and curricula standards as encountered within the Greek VET conditions.

1.2. Split up the different knowledge parts of the current course into units/elements/learning objects

Within the national implementation strategy of non-formal & informal learning conversion to formal one, developed by Agroskill project, it is estimated as appropriate to define several levels of grouping knowledge and learning objects for the courses. A proposed structure would be to define Learning Units (LUs) which will contain Learning Elements (LEs), corresponding to the courses, as defined in academic level and, thereafter, each element will contain the knowledge and learning objects.

The above should provide a framework of compliance with the Hellenic Qualification Framework and the certification paths developed by the national organization for the Certification of Qualifications and VET. Therefore, the suggested strategy of validation incorporates a proposal for rational structuring of courses, which will incorporate the Knowledge, skills and Competencies approach, adapted by HQF as imposed by EQF, with the units/elements/learning objects which will assure a smooth development and accomplishment of learning outcomes.

1.3. Define the average needed time for achieving knowledge to fulfil the requirements

The strategy suggested for implementation in national level, following as well the defined define framework of certification path, already developed by the Greek national Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and VET, and would incorporate an academic semester of courses provided by a VET institution. This period would correspond to a courses workload of 30 ECTS points (European credit transfer system), which besides the attendance incorporates the additional workload by the participants to achieve the learning outcomes of the course

Alternatively to the above, in the case of validating prior learning which have been acquired through professional experience, the suggested strategy would incorporate documents certifying occupation related to the job profile to be validated.

1.4. Define exam/assignment for each unit/element

The process of validating non-formal/informal and prior learning must incorporate a proof of learning outcomes of the attendants following the learning process. In order to come in accordance with the national Qualification Framework developed by the Greek national Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and VET, the above should incorporate i) a theoretical exam; ii) a practical exam.

In the first part of exams the methods and tools to be used is justifiable to include multiple choice tests in written form. The practical exams could incorporate the accomplishment of certain tasks core-related to the learning outcomes of the non-formal/informal learning to be validated.

Such proof of learning outcomes, in the form of exams should be executed (organized and implemented) by the national Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and VET. Collaboration of VET institutes should be foreseen in order to provide practical solution to exams accomplishment

1.5. Calculate the given ECVET points according to country specific standards

The European Credit System for Vocational Education & Training (ECVET) has been recognized by EU member states as the need for the establishment of a European tool that describes qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes during VET mobility schemes and promote the necessary conditions for ECVET implementation. ECVET development is strongly linked to the achievement of the priorities of the "Europe 2020" Strategy at a European level and it is also linked to the evolution of VET systems, towards the adoption of work based learning and the revision of qualifications and educational standards.

ECVET is closely connected with the other European instruments and principles that enhance lifelong learning and mobility in Europe. European Qualifications Framework/National Qualifications Framework), EQAVET, ECTS, Europass and the validation of non-formal and informal learning are parts of this process. Moreover, ECVET's strong linkage to the methodology principle of learning outcomes facilitates this interaction. In Greece, the State Scholarships' Foundation (IKY), acting as the Hellenic National Agency of the Lifelong Learning Program, implements and coordinates the "National Team of ECVET Experts Action", under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. The Action is being funded by the European Commission within the respective grant agreement signed between the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency



(EACEA) and IKY. The ECVET framework in Greece is considered under development, within the National Legal Framework and the national policies developed with a strong emphasis on the National (Hellenic) Qualifications Framework, based on best practices emerged from examples of projects, strategies in progress in other European countries, through the testimonies and case studies put forward by experts.



1.6. Prepare a document for participant that show exactly what learning objects / elements / units are fulfilled and what are not fulfilled

Within the implementation strategy of validation of non-formal/informal learning it is proposed to be foreseen a document-certificate which will demonstrate the progress of learning outcomes, in terms of objects / elements / units accomplished by the applicant. The structure this document it is strongly indicated to be in a sense which will certify the gradual obtainment of the learning outcomes and not merely in pass/fail sense in order to give the opportunity of gradual accomplishment of learning outcomes.

2. VALIDATION OF NON FORMAL PREVIOUS LEARNING KNOWLEDGE.

Searching for proper authority to contact and check for requirements

In Greece, the certification and validation system of the formal and non-formal learning is being supervised and managed by the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. This Ministry is the body that took over the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework and the creation of a National Network of Lifelong Learning, pursuing the qualitative upgrading of the Lifelong Learning in Greece, the rationalisation of the system of identification and certification of the qualifications and the consolidation of a broader “culture of learning”, which focus on the citizen and its needs.

The main umbrella public organizations are the General Secretariat for Lifelong learning (Ministry of Education, GSLLL) and the National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Training (EOPPEP).

EOPPEP is the responsible institution for the development of Life-Long Learning (LLL), the National Qualification Framework and the relevant recognition of competences of professional qualifications. More precisely, its work is to develop and implement the National Accreditation & Certification System for non-formal education, including initial



and continuing vocational training and adult education, and provide scientific support to Vocational Guidance & Counseling services in Greece.

For the conversion of non-formal/informal to formal learning and the validation of prior learning EOPPE will be the main organization to contact and check for requirements.



2.2. Steps of Validation/Accreditation

2.2.1. Counselling (help of advisors to collect documentations)

Validation and accreditation of non-formal/informal/prior learning performed by EOPPEP incorporates the active contribution of the social partners such as the national body on Man Power Employment Organization (OAED) and the opinion of the professional associations or scientific associations is the entity applying procedures for the certification of qualifications for awarding degrees of Specialization for the graduates of "Class Apprenticeship".

The documentation to be collected includes the drafting and approval of the certification regulations of a specialty, which incorporates a short description of the occupational activity, occupational analysis activities, and database of examination items for the certification exams. Then an approval and publication in the official State gazette of the regulatory framework for certifying training is required in order to regulate in detail the conditions and procedure for certification of training of graduates of non formal education and professionals without a recognized professional title, classifying them in one of the levels of NQF.

2.2.2. Evaluation (help of committee)

The next step in validation/accreditation of non-formal/informal/prior learning incorporates the matching of the certification of vocational training graduate bodies and non-formal education of professionals.

2.2.3. Accreditation/Certification

The final step of the validation/accreditation of non-formal/informal/prior learning includes the granting of a vocational education and training certificate, otherwise called Specialization Degree. That is considered the most important part for awarding a degree of Specialization for the graduates of Class Apprenticeship.

3. VALIDATION OF INFORMAL PREVIOUS LEARNING KNOWLEDGE

Providers of initial vocational training in the Greek education system are termed as providers of “non-formal education”; this sector of provision is not related to the European concept of ‘non-formal’ as it is understood in the context of the Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning. Therefore in the following chapter the description of the several steps of the validation of informal previous learning knowledge coincides with the one of non-formal learning knowledge.

3.1. Searching for proper authority to contact and check for requirements

As described previously, the Greek certification and validation system of the formal and non-formal learning is being supervised and managed by the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. This Ministry is the body that took over the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework and the creation of a National Network of Lifelong Learning, pursuing the qualitative upgrading of the Lifelong Learning in Greece, the rationalisation of the system of identification and certification of the qualifications and the consolidation of a broader “culture of learning which focus on the citizen and its needs.

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