



2016 – 2018 ValCoVol: Validation of Competences Acquired in Volunteering

Berufsorientierte Validierung von Kenntnissen aus ehrenamtlicher Arbeit

www.valcovol.eu



WHITEPAPER

for Recognition of Competences Acquired Through Volunteering



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1.0 Introduction

Volunteering is an opportunity, not only to be socially active and to take on responsibility for civil society, but it is also a way to gain skills and competences. Actually, **volunteering is a way to improve social inclusion and it is also a way to (re-)enter the labor market**. Meanwhile, volunteering is accepted as a valuable learning environment,

- for those who regard volunteering as part of their social responsibility, e.g. by engaging in parish work or relief organizations,
- for those looking for social contacts and activities, e.g. elderly persons, pensioners,
- for those who fall out of the formal educational sector, e.g. after having dropped out of school during youth,
- for those who find it difficult to re-enter the labor market, e.g. after long-time of parental leave, unemployment or because of missing skills.

Many people have gained skills in volunteering that are of great value to society in general and to the labor market in particular. There, often these skills and competences are not appreciated because they were not acquired and validated within the framework of formal qualification. However, in order to meet the **increasing social demands of a working environment**, relevant competences must not simply lie idle. The validation of non-formally and informally acquired competences therefore gains **relevance in lifelong learning**. Consequently, for all volunteers it is a matter of social appreciation as well as employment effects to get their gained competences adequately validated.

1.1 Validation of gained competences

Most of the involved countries in the **ValCoVol** partnership already have convincing schemes for the validation of volunteer work. They are identified for Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Slovakia, and Slovenia in the following parts of this publication. Although the **ValCoVol** partnership does not claim to be exhaustive in its coverage of these initiatives and projects, the number and content provide an assessment of the situation in these countries in general. **What is usually lacking are certification procedures to ensure that such knowledge equals skills and competences gained in formal education.**

It is a matter of social recognition and appreciation to offer those active in voluntary work an opportunity to access the employment market with clearly identified skills.

1.2 Voluntarily acquired competences as an invisible potential

Europe is a community of nations full of social changes that present great challenges to people: on the labor market, they must respond to the shortage of skilled workers and changing skills requirements. In civil society, people are confronted with political and cultural changes. They need appropriate civil society competences in order to be able to react appropriately. **Many people already have skills that are relevant to the labor market and/or society - but these are mostly not transferred to corresponding formal qualification.** Sometimes the individuals themselves are not even aware of them. Lack of formal qualification might be a reason, that people are also denied access to further education and/or the labor market. In this way ValCoVol is an attempt to make existing competences of citizens more visible, understandable and thus better usable.

1.3 Recognition of competences gained in caring for refugees

Since 2014, voluntary work has gained additional recognition by thousands of volunteers Europe-wide who were engaged in supporting refugees. This may not have been a continuous phenomenon in all European Member States, but it is undeniable that the number of volunteers active in refugee care has increased enormously since 2014.

In **Germany** only, up to eight million volunteers were involved in refugee care in 2015. 66% of them are estimated to have been active since 2015, the year with the highest number of refugees. During this peak of the refugee stream, a particularly large number of people were involved in the care of refugees. Some more data reveals insight in the “profile” of these volunteers: 72% of refugee workers in Germany are female, 75% of the refugee helpers are younger

than 60 years. 88% of the refugee helpers have a university degree or advanced technical college entrance qualification.¹

In **Austria**, the provision of care for refugees arriving in 2015 was also largely supported by voluntary work²: One in four Austrians was involved in helping refugees (23.1%). Here as well was a difference depending on the level of education: While 19.8% of the compulsory school graduates committed themselves to refugees, the proportion of those with highest school education or a university degree was 32.1%.

There are numerous examples of people leaving their jobs to give support, be it in housing, catering or in administrative tasks. As a rule, they report many new experiences, abilities that they themselves have discovered.

But in the rarest of cases, the newly acquired knowledge was adequately recorded and evaluated in order to give the volunteers a benefit from their commitment. For many, this may not have been important enough because they then returned to their "normal life". Others found new professional opportunities through their voluntary work. For others, their voluntary work meant entering paid employment, as many new jobs were created linked to refugee care. Fact is that some European member states have used the framework conditions of refugee care as an economic stimulus and thus created jobs.

¹ EFA-Studie 2: „Strukturen und Motive der ehrenamtlichen Flüchtlingsarbeit (EFA) in Deutschland“, Eine Studie des Berliner Instituts für empirische Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (BIM) - Structures and motives of voluntary refugee work (EFA) in Germany", a study by the Berlin Institute for Empirical Integration and Migration Research (BIM), Humboldt-Universität Berlin, August 2016

² See Medienservicestelle Neue Österreicher/innen: http://medienservicestelle.at/migration_bewegt/2015/12/02/freiwilliges-engagement-in-oesterreich/

2.0 Explanation of Terms

2.1 What does validation of non-formally and informally acquired competences mean?

Validation of non-formally and informally acquired competences means that an individual's learning outcomes are recorded, documented, evaluated and certified. The learning outcomes correspond to a certain standard. They are statements about what learners know, understand and are able to do after a learning process is complete. It is irrelevant how these learning outcomes, i. e. knowledge, skills and competences, were acquired.

One possible objective of the validation is the recognition of competences: an official body certifies in this case that the acquired learning outcomes correspond to a certain formal vocational qualification.

In this context, **non-formal learning** refers to learning that takes place through systematic action (in terms of learning objectives and periods) but is not part of the formal education and training system.

Informal learning, on the other hand, refers to everyday learning at the workplace or in leisure time, which is not organised or structured in terms of learning objectives and times and may be unintentional from the learner's point of view.

3.0 About ValCoVol

Volunteers often have the difficulty of communicating an employer what knowledge and key qualifications they have acquired. Employers, in turn, often find it difficult to identify the knowledge gained when reading credentials of volunteer organizations, since these certificates usually describe the activities done, but not the acquired competencies.

ValCoVol was a project co-funded by the European ERASMUS+ programme 2015 – 2018. It brought the needs of volunteers and the interests of employers together by offering examples and best practice for the meaningful validation of competences for both sides.³

ValCoVol offers

- an overview of 39 European projects, initiatives and methods for the validation of non-formal and informal learning achieved through volunteering. At the same time, instruments, models and systems are identified that validate the key competencies acquired in an honorary post. You will find the collection of these projects, initiatives and methods for validation here: www.valcovol.eu/best-practice
- an online interactive forum for networking, exchange of experience and good practice, and supporting ideas, foster exchange and assist initiatives that contribute to the European society as a whole. On the **ValCoVol** homepage you will find access to several online fora and two communication tools – Google Translate and Skype Translator – including a video with a guided tour to one of these instruments. Please feel free to use it for getting in touch with any of the best practices identified on the project page.
- this “*Whitepaper for recognition of competences acquired through volunteering*” which gives an overview about the current situation in the partners’ countries, and presents the initiatives, projects and materials with explanations. This English version you can also find in German, Slovene, Slovak, Italian and Czech on the **ValCoVol** homepage.
- an easily adaptable template (“Key Competences Template”) for volunteer organisations to identify competences of volunteers rather than describe volunteer work (see chapter 5). This template gives employers meaningful information on competences of job applicants gained in voluntary work.

ValCoVol targets

³ Browse through the collection of best practice and many other useful information at www.valcovol.eu and get inspired!

- volunteers who need a meaningful document about their expertise gained in volunteering for entering the paid employment market,
- organisations which work with volunteers and have to issue certificates on their activities,
- employers who want to learn what kind of expertise job applicants have gained in voluntary environments and tasks.

The methodology focuses on bringing together most relevant instruments on one platform and developing instruments for quick access in order to make the best use for volunteers of their gained knowledge in the application stage for paid jobs.

ValCoVol partners herewith state that the outcome of this project is highly relevant for volunteers working in refugee organisations since 2014: Many of them support those organisations and should benefit of their efforts and engagement by getting a meaningful proof of their newly gained qualification for future employment.

4.0 Summary of Findings

The acquisition of vocational and trade-related education takes place both as a formal competence acquisition at institutions of vocational qualification (institutions of vocational training and further education, technical colleges and universities) as well as in a non-formal and informal way through experience knowledge. Through a steadily growing and differentiated task spectrum in the work process as well as through voluntary commitment outside the work process, people acquire experiences and abilities that go far beyond the competences in formal qualifications.

Binding regulations for the validation of non-formally and informally acquired competences are a central component of a permeable education system. Although politically required, however, implementation is hesitant, although agreement on a certification process is urgently required in view of the EU Council's recommendation to have introduced corresponding regulations by 2018 at the latest. Overall, the main findings of the **ValCoVol** project show the urgent need for a Europe-wide certification of informal and non-formal learning.

The difficult approach to standardised forms of recognition is already evident in the comparison of the European member states that participated in **ValCoVol**: In the **Czech Republic** efforts to obtain certification exist, but are by no means characterised by great enthusiasm. In **Italy** a national competence certification system for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning has been established with the Legislative Decree 13/2013 and the National Framework for Regional Qualifications (QNQR), D. I. 30 June 2015. However there are still some obstacles to the full acceptance of these procedures in the volunteering context. The picture in a country like **Slovenia** is completely different. The long tradition of recognition of informal learning, which plays a role in public awareness since primary school age, is surprising. In **Germany**, on the other hand, many initiatives have already dealt with this topic, numerous accompanying studies have been carried out which support clear certifications. However, a joint initiative of all 16 federal states has not yet been successfully completed. **Austria** and **Slovakia** have numerous individual initiatives, but here there is a lack of implementation of a mandatory certification framework, too.

The identified good practice examples target mainly teachers, counsellors, social workers and youth workers. About half of the 39 good practice also target future employers which may be seen as an indicator for the relevance of informal and non-formal learning for employment. The broad variety of good practice types cover training and learning material, tools of all kind,

projects and different models. In this respect, the collection of good examples and initiatives presented here can be an encouragement to take up the recognition of non-formal and informal learning at national level and to finally provide certification.

5.0 The “Key Competences Template” for Employers

As a general rule volunteers get a confirmation for their work. These documents do not follow common rules like e.g. the European CV or the EUROPASS, but are up to the organisations how they draft it. Information given is mostly basic and descriptive without referring to knowledge and skills clearly gained in the voluntary work. This is a serious gap because the credibility of knowledge and skills is difficult to judge for employers. A template of validated skills - which is one of the objectives of **ValCoVol** - will add credibility to certificated voluntary work and could be a starting point for a certification process.

All partners in the **ValCoVol** partnership work close to the employment market. They are well aware of validation instruments that have been developed in several European countries. However, from the employment market point of view, employers are not interested to dig deep into mainly descriptive documents in a job interview, but need a short and clear identification of knowledge and skills gained in voluntary work.

A template with this rather basic, but hugely useful information might help job seekers to better show the knowledge and skills gained in their voluntary work. Often the value of voluntary work is not clear enough for possible employers, which limits the benefits for volunteers of their engagement as soon as they step into paid employment.

ValCoVol clearly addressed this need by developing a template to show instruments, models, and schemes which validate and identify the key competences that have been gained by volunteers, make them accessible in different European languages, AND turn it into a practical tool for employers. This easily adaptable template (“Key Competences Template”) for volunteer organisations aims to identify competences of volunteers rather than describe volunteer work. This template gives employers meaningful information on competences of job applicants gained in voluntary work.⁴

In the following chapters you can have a look at the language versions of the template. They are drafted to be easily copied on the business paper of volunteer organisations. All templates can be downloaded for free here: <http://valcovol.eu/project/>

⁴ For German speaking representatives of volunteer organisations the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Konsumentenschutz) offers a so called “Proof of voluntary activities”-template (version available since 2017). <http://www.freiwilligenweb.at/de/freiwilliges-engagement/freiwilligennachweis>

5.1 The “Key Competences Template” for Employers in English

Confirmation of Key Competences of Skills Gained by Volunteers

(Please copy this sheet on your business paper and delete instructions highlighted in yellow after finalising this sheet)

Volunteer	Confirming Organisation
Name	Name
Address	Address
Date of birth	Department / project
Telephone	Contact person
E-Mail	Telephone
	E-Mail

Activities, tasks and responsibilities of the volunteer

Area or activities

Description of work (preferably up to 10 lines)


Duration: from ... until ...

Frequency: hours per day, days per week, ...


Total working time: hours, days, weeks, months, years

Key competences gained in the volunteer work (Please identify or delete respective competences)

- Problem solving
- Information and communication technology
- Digital skills
- Motivation and dedication
- Ability to motivate others
- Accuracy
- Reliability
- Entrepreneurial thinking



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This template is provided by ValCoVol, the European project on
validation of competences acquired in volunteering. Read more:
www.valcovol.eu

- Time management
 - Ability to express effectively
 - Ability to attentively listening
 - Creativity and innovation
 - Critical thinking
 - Analytical thinking
 - Conflict management
 - Communication in the mother tongue
 - Communication in a foreign language *(please identify which languages were used during the volunteer work)*
 - Mathematical literacy
 - Handcraft skills *(please identify which skills were used during the volunteer work)*
 - Intercultural skills *(please identify which skills were used during the volunteer work)*
 - Read and understand instructions
 - Ability to make decisions
 - Take responsibility
 - Adaptability and flexibility
 - Team work
 - Leadership
 - Empathy
 - Willingness to learn
 - Ability to handle and process information
 - Presentation Skills
 - Ability to work independently
 - Planning and organization of work
 - Active approach / take initiative
 - Working under pressure
 - Efficiency
 - Competencies to meet clients' needs/ Service skills
 - Include more if applicable
-

Additional remarks

(Please bear in mind that there is a "language of certificates": Standard formulations can contain encrypted messages between the lines. Other information is hidden behind seemingly neutral or positive statements in a testimony. Therefore, be careful with formulations. Relevant publications or Internet pages provide assistance in this regard.)

Place and date of issue

Signature and stamp

The volunteer together with a representative of the organisation provided this proof.

5.2 The “Key Competences Template” for Employers in German

Bestätigung über erworbene Schlüsselkompetenzen während der freiwilligen Mitarbeit

(Bitte kopieren Sie dieses Blatt auf Ihr Geschäftspapier. Löschen Sie die gelb unterlegten Anweisungen vor dem Ausdruck)

Freiwillige/r

Name
Adresse
Geburtsdatum
Telefon
E-Mail

Ausstellende Organisation

Name
Adresse
Abteilung / Projekt
Kontaktperson
Telefon
E-Mail

Aktivitäten, Aufgaben und Verantwortlichkeiten des/der Freiwilligen

Arbeitsbereiche:

Kurze Beschreibung:

Dauer: von ... bis ...
Häufigkeit: Stunden pro Tag, Tage in der Woche...
Umfang: Stunden, Tage, Wochen, Monate, Jahre

Kompetenzen, die durch die Mitarbeit erzielt wurden

(Bitte identifizieren Sie diese oder löschen Sie die entsprechenden Angaben)

- Problemlösung
- Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologien
- Digitale Fertigkeiten
- Motivation und Hingabe
- Fähigkeit, andere zu motivieren
- Genauigkeit
- Verlässlichkeit
- Unternehmerisches Denken
- Zeitmanagement
- Fähigkeit, sich genau auszudrücken
- Fähigkeit, genau zuzuhören
- Kreativität und Innovation
- Kritisches Denken
- Analytisches Denken
- Konfliktmanagement
- Kommunikation in der Muttersprache
- Kommunikation in einer Fremdsprache **(bitte geben Sie an, welche Fremdsprache(n) während der Freiwilligentätigkeit verwendet wurden)**
- Mathematisches Grundwissen
- Handwerkliches Geschick **(bitte geben Sie an, welche Tätigkeiten während der Freiwilligentätigkeit ausgeübt wurden)**
- Interkulturelle Fertigkeiten **(bitte geben Sie an, welche Fertigkeiten während der Freiwilligentätigkeit verwendet wurden)**
- Lesen und Verstehen von Anweisungen
- Entscheidungen treffen

- Verantwortung übernehmen
- Anpassungsfähigkeit und Flexibilität
- Teamwork
- Führung
- Empathie
- Bereitschaft zum Lernen
- Fähigkeit, Informationen zu verarbeiten
- Präsentationsgeschick
- Fähigkeit zu selbständigem Arbeiten
- Planung und Organisation von Arbeit
- Aktiver Zugang / Initiative ergreifen
- Belastbarkeit (Arbeiten unter Druck)
- Effizienz
- Kundenorientierung
- Fügen Sie bei Bedarf weitere Kompetenzen hinzu

Zusätzliche Bemerkungen:

(Bitte bedenken Sie, dass es eine "Zeugnissprache" gibt: Standard-Formulierungen können verschlüsselte Botschaften enthalten, die zwischen den Zeilen stehen. Hinter scheinbar neutralen oder positiven Aussagen in einem Zeugnis verstecken sich andere Informationen. Gehen Sie deshalb sorgsam mit Formulierungen um. Hilfestellung dazu geben einschlägige Publikationen oder Internetseiten.)

Ort und Datum der Ausstellung

Unterschrift und Stempel

Dieses Dokument wurde gemeinsam vom/ von der Freiwilligen und einem/einer Vertreter(in) der

Organisation ausgearbeitet.

5.3 The “Key Competences Template” for Employers in Italian

Validazione delle competenze chiave e delle abilità acquisite dai volontari

<p>Volontario/a</p> <p>Nome</p> <p>Indirizzo</p> <p>Data di nascita</p> <p>Telefono</p> <p>E-Mail</p>	<p>Ente che valida</p> <p>Nome</p> <p>Indirizzo</p> <p>Progetto</p> <p>Persona di contatto</p> <p>Telefono</p> <p>E-Mail</p>
--	---

Attività, compiti e responsabilità del volontario


Area di attività

Descrizione del tipo di mansioni richieste (preferibilmente non più di 10 righe)


Durata: da ... a ...

Frequenza: ore al giorno, giorni alla settimana

Tempo totale di lavoro: ore, giorni, settimane, mesi, anni



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Competenze chiave ottenute col lavoro volontario

Tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione

Competenze digitali

Motivazione e dedizione

Capacità di motivare gli altri

Affidabilità

Pensiero imprenditoriale

Capacità di esprimere efficacemente

Capacità di ascoltare con attenzione

Creatività e innovazione

Pensiero analitico

Comunicazione nella madrelingua

Comunicazione in una lingua straniera: inglese e spagnolo

Leggere e comprendere le istruzioni

Capacità di prendere decisioni

Adattabilità e flessibilità

Lavoro di squadra

Empatia

Disponibilità ad imparare

Capacità di gestire ed elaborare le informazioni

Capacità di presentazione

Pianificazione e organizzazione del lavoro

Altro

Luogo e data:

Firma e Timbro:

Il Volontario assieme al rappresentante dell'ente rende noto questo documento.



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Delving into the project by VALCOVOL, the European project for
validation of competences acquired in volunteering. Read more:
www.valcovol.eu

5.4 The “Key Competences Template” for Employers in Slovene

POTRDILO O KLJUČNIH KOMPETENCAH PRIDOBLENIH V OKVIRU PROSTOVOLJNEGA DELA

(Prosimo, kopirajte spodnjo vsebino v obrazec, ki ga v vaši organizaciji uporabljate za izdajo potrdil in ob koncu rumena navodila v oklepajih izbršite.)

PROSTOVOLJEC/PROSTOVOLJKA:

Ime in priimek:

Naslov:

Datum rojstva:

Telefon:

E-naslov:

ORGANIZACIJA:

Naziv:

Naslov:

Področje dela/projekt:

Kontaktna oseba:

Telefon:

E-naslov:

AKTIVNOSTI, NALOGE IN ODGOVORNOSTI PROSTOVOLJCA (opis naj ne obsega več kot 10 vrstic):

Klicken oder tippen Sie hier, um Text einzugeben.

Čas trajanja: od _____ do _____

Delovni čas: _____ ur na dan/teden/mesec (podčrtajte)

Delovna doba: _____ ur/dni/tednov/mesecev/let

KATERE KOMPETENCE JE PRIDOBIL V ČASU PROSTOVOLJNEGA DELA: (označite le kompetence, ki

jih je kandidat v okviru prostovoljnega dela razvil, ostale pa izbršite):

- ~~Sposobnost reševanja problemov~~
- ~~Informacijsko pismenost~~
- ~~Računalniško pismenost~~
- ~~Digitalno pismenost~~
- ~~Motiviranost in predanost~~
- ~~Sposobnost motiviranja drugih~~
- ~~Natančnost~~
- ~~Zanesljivost~~
- ~~Podjetniško razmišljanje~~
- ~~Učinkovito upravljanje s časom~~
- ~~Sposobnost jasnega izražanja~~
- ~~Sposobnost aktivnega poslušanja~~
- ~~Kreativnost in inovativnost~~
- ~~Kritično razmišljanje~~
- ~~Analitično razmišljanje~~
- ~~Sposobnost reševanja sporov~~
- ~~Sposobnost pisnega in ustnega izražanja v materinem jeziku~~
- ~~Sposobnost pisnega in ustnega izražanja v tujem jeziku (tu navedite, katere tuje jezike je prostovoljec uporabljal pri svojem delu)~~

- Matematična pismenost
- Račne spretnosti: *(tu navedite, katere račne spretnosti je prostovoljec razvil pri svojem delu)*
- Medkulturne kompetence: *(tu navedite, katere medkulturne kompetence je prostovoljec razvil/uporabljal pri svojem delu)*
- Razumevanje navodil in ustrežna izvedba v praksi
- Spособnost odločevanja
- Pripravljenost prevzeti odgovornost
- Prilagodljivost in fleksibilnost
- Veščine timskega dela
- Vodstvene sposobnosti
- Empatija
- Pripravljenost za učenje novih znanj in veščin
- Spособnost sprejemanja velikega števila informacij
- Spособnost učinkovite predstavitve
- Samostojnost
- Spособnost načrtovanja in učinkovite izvedbe
- Samoiniciativnost
- Spособnost dela pod pritiskom
- Produktivnost in učinkovitost
- Spособnost prepoznavanja potreb in interesov udeležencev
- Dodajte svoje:

Priporočila:

(Upoštevajte, da obstaja "skriti jezik delodajalcev" značilen zlasti za nemško govoreče države: v navidez nevtralnih ali pozitivnih izjave o zaposlenemu so skrivajo opozorila, zakaj ne zaposliti posameznika. Zato bodite previdni pri formulacijah svojih stavkov. Več informacij o tem lahko dohijete na internetu pod geslom „skriti jezik delodajalcev“.)

Datum in kraj:

Podpis in štampiljka:

Činnosti, úlohy a povinnosti dobrovoľníka/čky

Oblasť činnosti

Opis práce (najlepšie do 10 riadkov)

Kedy: od ... do ...

Ako často: koľko hodín denne, koľko dní v týždni, ...

Celkový pracovný čas: koľko hodín / dní / týždňov / mesiacov / rokov

Zručnosti nadobudnuté dobrovoľníctvom (Označte alebo vymažte z nasledujúceho zoznamu)

- Riešenie problémov
- Používanie informačných a komunikačných technológií
- Digitálne zručnosti
- Motivácia a odhodlanie
- Schopnosť motivovať ostatných
- Presnosť
- Spoľahlivosť
- Podnikateľské myslenie ➤ Time management
- Schopnosť efektívne sa vyjadrovať
- Schopnosť pozorne počúvať
- Kreativita a inovácia
- Kritické myslenie
- Analytické myslenie
- Riešenie konfliktov
- Komunikácia v materinskom jazyku
- Komunikácia v cudzom jazyku (uvedte, ktoré jazyky dobrovoľník/čka používal/a počas dobrovoľníckej práce)
- Matematická gramotnosť
- Remeselnícke zručnosti (uvedte, ktoré zručnosti dobrovoľník/čka využíval/a počas dobrovoľníckej práce)
- Interkultúrne schopnosti ((uvedte, ktoré schopnosti dobrovoľník/čka využíval/a počas dobrovoľníckej práce)
- Schopnosť porozumieť inštrukciám
- Schopnosť prijímať rozhodnutia
- Prebrať zodpovednosť
- Adaptabilita a flexibilita

– 3 –

- Tímová práca
- Vedenie
- Empatia
- Ochota učiť sa
- Schopnosť spracovávať a vyhodnocovať informácie
- Prezentačné zručnosti
- Schopnosť pracovať nezávisle
- Plánovanie a organizácia práce
- Aktívny prístup
- Práca pod tlakom
- Efektivita
- Schopnosť reagovať na potreby klientov
- V prípade potreby doplňte ďalšie relevantné zručnosti

Ďalšie poznámky

Miesto a dátum

Podpis a pečiatka

Tento formulár bol vyplnený organizáciou v spolupráci s dobrovoľníkom/dobrovoľníčkou.

5.6 The “Key Competences Template” for Employers in Czech

Potvrzení dovedností nabytých dobrovolnictvím

(Pozn. .: Vytiskněte toto potvrzení na hlavičkový papír a po dokončení vymažte pokyny zvýrazněny žlutou barvou)

Dobrovolník / čka

Jméno

Adresa

Datum narození

Telefon

E-Mail

Organizace

Název

Adresa

Oddělení / projekt

Kontaktní osoba

Telefon

E-Mail

Činnosti, úkoly a povinnosti dobrovolníka/čky

Oblast činnosti

Popis práce (nejlépe do 10 řádků)

Kdy: od ... do ...

Jak často: kolik hodin denně, kolik dní v týdnu, ...

Celkový pracovní čas: kolik hodin / dnů / týdnů / měsíců / let

Dovednosti nabyté dobrovolnictvím (Označte nebo vmažte z následujícího seznamu)

- Řešení problémů
- Používání informačních a komunikačních technologií
- Digitální dovednosti
- Motivace a odhodlání
- Schopnost motivovat ostatní
- Přesnost
- Spolehlivost
- Podnikatelské myšlení
- Time management
- Schopnost efektivně se vyjadřovat
- Schopnost pozorně poslouchat
- Kreativita a inovace
- Kritické myšlení
- Analytické myšlení
- Řešení konfliktů
- Komunikace v mateřském jazyce
- Komunikace v cizím jazyce (uvedte, které jazyky dobrovolník/čka používal/a během dobrovolnictví)
- Matematická gramotnost
- Řemeslnické dovednosti (uvedte, které dovednosti dobrovolník/čka využíval/a během dobrovolnictví)
- Interkulturní schopnosti (uvedte, které schopnosti dobrovolník/čka využíval/a během dobrovolnictví)
- Schopnost porozumět instrukcím
- Schopnost přijímat rozhodnutí
- Probrat odpovědnost
- Adaptabilita a flexibilita
- Týmová práce
- Vedení
- Empatie

- Ochota učit se
 - Schopnost zpracovávat a vyhodnocovat informace
 - Prezentační dovednosti
 - Schopnost pracovat nezávisle
 - Plánování a organizace práce
 - Aktivní přístup
 - Práce pod tlakem
 - Efektivita
 - Schopnost reagovat na potřeby klientů
 - V případě potřeby doplňte další relevantní dovednosti
-

Další poznámky

Místo a datum

Podpis a razítko

Tento formulář byl vyplněn organizací ve spolupráci s dobrovolníkem / dobrovolnicí.

6.0 Certification of informal and non-formal skills

6.1 State of play in Germany

The identified nine good practice from Germany show that implementation strategies for the validation of non-formal and informal learning are currently being worked on in different projects and institutions. Education experts in research and application as well as counsellors who work in practice with potential target groups know and work with individual training material and tools that is already on the market in a great variety.

The relevance of non-formal and informal learning in education policy is out of the question. However, there is rarely reference to the German qualification framework (DQR) yet and it seems that there is no coordinated approach that binds together activities and initiatives in different federal states.

While formal learning is an intended, goal-oriented, organized and structured process for which the success is documented by a certificate, the results of non-formal and informal learning processes cannot be demonstrated in this way. Non-formal learning is, from the learner's point of view (and of the teacher's), an intended learning process, which, however, is embedded as a learning element in mostly practical activities. The intended learning is subject to less stringent regulations regarding temporal structure and organization. An explicit follow-up test that is shown in a certificate or certificate with a qualitative assessment, is generally not carried out.

Informal learning takes place both in the workplace, in everyday life and in leisure time. It is not intended as learning. The learning effects that might arise are without a planned and purposeful strive.

In Germany, the formally acquired knowledge aims at a professional use and acknowledgment, as certificates demonstrate this. At the same time, both the developments on the national labor market and the European free movement of persons require that all existing compulsory employment competences are made visible and comparable. Whatever the nature of the competency acquisition, existing knowledge and abilities are, they are to be documented, recognized and formally acquired. With the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the respective national implementation (the German Qualifications Framework DQR), the prerequisites for the European-wide comparability of qualifications were created. EQF and DQR are expressly designed to classify existing qualifications; regardless of the type of education, they have been acquired. This includes non-formal acquired education as well as informal education.

In order to adequately represent non-formal and informally acquired competences, valid procedures for the competency assessment are required at the operational level. Formal educational approaches (test, examination, etc.) are not always optimal for this purpose. Above all, in continuing vocational training, it is often necessary to complete advanced training courses in order to obtain formal proof of existing knowledge.

6.2 State of Play in Austria

Until a few years ago, the recognition of informally acquired competences played only a minor role in Austria. Among other things, the reasons for the low level of interest are:

- the well-functioning dual system with highly formalized educational routes that guarantees the training of young people and the reproduction of knowledge and skills to a sufficient extent;
- the social partners and the business sector's bodies are involved in determining training standards in the dual system and are therefore only moderately interested in procedures for the recognition of competences that have not been formally acquired, as they fear that their influence will diminish;
- the Austrian educational and economic culture is strongly geared towards initial vocational training and is oriented towards vocational profiles that prescribe defined qualifications. It is therefore based on the recognition of formal qualifications as evidence of skills and competences.

While national education initiatives and action plans exist in other countries and the recognition of non-formal and informal competences is also well advanced, the debate in Austria is only slowly getting underway. For example, a number of coordination workshops have been held at ministerial level, focusing on measures against exclusion and the recognition of competences. Moreover, there have been and still are a number of top-down and bottom-up initiatives. There is no system of competence recognition across the federal states so far with an appropriate legal basis, nor is there a competent authority that works on the basis of clearly formulated, standardised and transparent criteria.

However, a number of legal initiatives have been implemented in recent years to validate non-formally acquired knowledge:

- Under certain conditions, the Vocational Training Act also offers those who have not undergone the dual tandem of vocational school and in-company training, or who have only partially completed the dual system of vocational school and in-company training, the possibility of an apprenticeship examination and the recognition of training.
- According to the amendment of the Industrial Code 2002, the right for certain trades can also be obtained instead of certificates by providing an "individual qualification certificate". Furthermore, admission to the master craftsman's examination now requires a minimum age of 18 years only.
- In the admission to the vocational maturity test, practical knowledge acquired in working life is placed on equal terms with school knowledge. The university entrance examination offers limited admission to the university, provided that you are at least 20 years old and have four years of professional education and training. External examinations can also be taken at vocational schools, whereby qualifications not formally acquired are recognised by a formal qualification. Furthermore, there are personnel certifications according to the European Standard 45013, which certifies certain competences for persons, as well as market certifications such as the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) or language certificates.

In the economy, methods of identifying and recognising informally acquired competences have so far been used rarely. Companies deal only marginally with the methodology of informal learning, but there is a growing interest in the development of skills among their employees and in learning arrangements that enable informal learning (job rotation, e-learning, etc.).

Informal learning has not yet established itself as a significant focus in Austrian universities. Apart from the Danube University Krems, there is hardly any extensive research on informal learning. In non-university research institutions such as the Institute for Educational Research of the Economy (IBW) and the Austrian Institute for Vocational Training Research (ÖIBF), informal learning is attracting increasing interest, especially in comparative studies in the field of education and with a view to the recognition of acquired knowledge and competences.

Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that stakeholders in the volunteering sector, such as the president of the Austrian "Volkshilfe", repeatedly emphasize the need for recognition of volunteer work as professional training, while politicians, such as the former Chancellor Christian Kern, focus in their proposals to promote volunteering more on financial aspects, e.g. the right to exemption of three days per year with continued payment of remuneration for those who work in blue light organisations.

6.3 State of Play in Italy

All institutions identified in the Italian research agree that volunteering can be an opportunity not only for personal and emotional growth, but also for a professional one, thanks to the activities that allow the development and the increase of competences required also by the labor market. Most of them have developed projects oriented to validate and certify these competences.

Contemporarily a national competence certification system for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning has been established with the Legislative Decree 13/2013 and the National Framework for Regional Qualifications (QNQR), D. I. 30 June 2015.

However, the spread of these validation and certification practices within the voluntary sector finds various **obstacles**. The first one is the **prejudice of the superiority of formal training**. European studies reveal, in fact, a certain reticence by parts of voluntary organizations to present their activities as a growth possibility not only human but also professional, fearing they can negate the thrust and the perfect reason of volunteering (as a free activity), at the expense of a desire for professional growth.

The second obstacle that makes the certification of competences a difficult process in this context is the **excessive bureaucratization** of this procedure, often managed in a centralized way by national or regional authorities, and that scares the social workers and volunteers.

Best Practices

In Italy, many experiences have been carried out by the **network of Service Centres for Volunteering**, members of CSVnet. Many other initiatives have been launched by the **regional administrations**. Some regions have moved on the level of consultation or of framework legislation, others preferred a more experimental approach identifying specific projects or needs to test the feasibility of validation processes.

An important resource to deepen the knowledge of the Italian state of play is the **website Va.Li.Co.** (Validazione Libretto Competenze - Validation of the Competences Booklet) developed by INAPP (Istituto Nazionale per l'Analisi delle Politiche Pubbliche - National Institute for Public Policy Analysis). The site is divided into two main sections. The first one (Training Booklet) describes the Citizens' Training Booklet, which is a tool designed to collect, summarize and document the different learning experiences of working citizens as well as the skills acquired by them: in school, training, work, volunteering, daily life. Its aim is to improve the legibility

and spendability of skills and the employability of people. The second one (Competences Validation) contains a vast repository of documents taken from the most interesting validation practices identified in the survey conducted in the context of the research "Recognition of non formal and informal learning", which included a screening of projects promoted from 2004 to 2010 by Associations, Training Bodies, Research Institutes, Foundations, Regions and Local Authorities.

Recently it has been enriched with the link to the MOOC "Competences Identification Validation" which is aimed at those who already carry out or intend to participate in various ways in the activities and services of the validation and certification systems as they have been structured in our country starting from Legislative Decree 13/2013 and in the National Framework for Regional Qualifications (QNQR), D. l. 30 June 2015.

National competence certification system

In 2013 the Republic President issued the Legislative Decree No 13, which deals with the definition of general rules and essential performance levels for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and minimum service standards of the **national competence certification system**. In 2015 it was integrated by the Ministerial Decree for the establishment of an **operational framework** for the national recognition of regional qualifications and related competences (QNQR – Quadro Nazionale delle Qualificazioni Regionali), as part of the National Qualifications Framework.

The overview of the operational framework is summarized in the next table⁵.

Services	Information and guidance	Identification	Validation	Certification
Goals	Inform and guide the citizen with respect to the service offered	Retrace the experiences and identify those qualifications and competences potentially to validate or certify	Confirm the actual possess of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.	Certify the competences learned in formal settings (output from training) and non-formal and informal contexts (output from validation)
Method	Reception and individual or group information	Individual interviews on: activities, competences identification and making of a dossier	Assessment by at least technical examination of the Dossier. Optional direct assessment	Direct assessment: technical interview or situation test
Attestation		Transparency document (first party)	Validation document (second party)	Certificate (third party)

⁵ CEDEFOP, 2016 update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning, E. Perulli

Outcome		Competences identified and put into transparency	Competences (or skills and knowledge) validated	Competences of the National Repertory certified
Designated function		Side by side support for identification and outlining of competences	Function: Planning and implementation of evaluation activities Function: Execution of evaluation activities of curricular and professional contents	Commission or collegial body
Operators		The phase is carried out by a " Dossier counsellor "(EQF 4) with specific verified requirements that applies the appropriate methodologies.	The phase is handled by an " Assessment method expert " (EQF 5) who is in charge of the evaluation process. In the case of direct evaluation, there is always an " Assessment sector expert ", who is the contact person and responsible for the evaluation content, who operates in coordination with the "Method Expert".	Commission or a collegial body to ensure compliance with the principles of third party, independence and objectivity of the process

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The Italian NQF is not yet fully implemented. It is possible to search the various repositories in the website of the "Atlante del Lavoro e delle Qualificazioni" (Atlas of work and qualifications) at URL http://nrpitalia.isfol.it/sito_standard/sito_demo/index.php.

It is divided into four sections:

- University
- Secondary school
- Vocational education and training
- National framework for regional qualifications

The best implemented section is the National Framework for Regional Qualifications.

National Programme of Competence Validation for volunteers in the civil service under the Youth Guarantee

The first concrete national application of the new validation framework outlined in the Decree on the National Framework for Regional Qualifications, adopted in June 2015, is the National Programme of Competence Validation for volunteers in the civil service under the Youth Guarantee.

The programme has been initiated in 2015 and is aimed at validating the competences of 5,666 volunteers involved in 1,137 projects in the Civil Service (CS) in 11 Regions within the Youth Guarantee Programme.

6.4 State of Play in Slovenia

The central organization for volunteering in Slovenia is the **Slovenian philanthropy**, which coordinates the Slovenian Network of Voluntary Organizations, supports voluntary organizations in the establishment and implementation of volunteer programs and the acquisition of volunteers. **The Service for Non-Governmental Organizations at the Ministry of Public Administration** systematically monitors the field of volunteering. **Movit Institute** carries out the tasks of the National Agency in EU programs in the field of youth, and awards accreditations in the field of EVS - European Voluntary Service. **The Youth Council of Slovenia** promotes volunteering among young people by organizing a competition for the Best Volunteer since 2002. **The Voluntariat Institute** promotes the ideas of peace, social justice, sustainable development, international cooperation, and solidarity through volunteer work and voluntary projects. This is the best address for information related to volunteering abroad. The Volunteering Act, adapted in 2011, systemically regulates the field of volunteering in Slovenia and provides basics for the recording of voluntary work and guidelines for the preparation of a certificate for volunteers.

The gender structure of volunteers in Slovenia according to the latest data for 2016 showed that women are dominant among volunteers (171,507 or 55,82%). The largest number of volunteers come from the age group between 30 and 60 years (102,543 or 33.4%) and most volunteer hours were spent in the field of social activities. These working hours were mainly done in societies that provide social assistance, counseling and programs for people with disabilities, people with special needs or minorities. The second largest number of volunteer hours is done in educational area. Mostly, these hours are carried out in additional school activities that are not part of the curriculum or as peer learning assistance. Some of them are also extracurricular

activities that are recognized in the context of additional accreditation points. On the third and fourth place are hours done in cultural and sports areas. This volunteering is connected with the societies in rural areas, where most of the inhabitants are members of firefighting, cultural and sport societies. They also work in NGO projects and programmes, where they do not have enough financial resources for new employments.⁶

Strategic documents, such as *Strategy of lifelong learning in Slovenia 2007* and *White Paper 2011* provide the basis for the evaluation and recognition of informal and random learning in formal education. However, problems in practice arise from the lack of vertical career orientation in the education system and poor integration between the school system and the labor market, which prevents young people to gain more work experiences during their education period. High schools in Slovenia for the purpose of validation of informal and occasional gained skills and knowledge use the same legal framework, called Rules for Assessment of Knowledge in Vocational and Secondary Vocational Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 79). However, in practice there is very little recognition at the time of the high school. The one that is, is mostly connected with the enrolment from primary to secondary school program or with the transition to another program or school.

Much more processes of evaluating non-formal knowledge is recorded at the time of adulthood. The Nefiks or the informal index has been due to the problems that young people experience when they need to proof their work experience, designed to "translate" their skills and knowledge into the "language of employers". University of Ljubljana has also recognized Nefiks as an appropriate tool for the implementation of informally acquired knowledge at faculties, but problems again arise in practice. The rules for validation turn out to be designed too general and problems come with different interpretation on what can be validated and approved. In the recognition of informally acquired competences in the economy field the mentioned certificate "My experience" is a good best practice example. It aims at recognizing the work experience acquired with student work. Since September 2012, 135.000 young people in Slovenia have been using it. 35 % of employers have asked for it, when they were searching candidates for student work and later for full-time employment. Recording tools such as the already mentioned Nefiks-informal index, certificate "My experience" and Youthpass are well available and well recognized among young people. However, they do not enjoy enough formal recognition, which reduces their useful value in relation to employers and educational institu-

⁶ Source: <http://www.prostovoljstvo.org/o-prostovoljstvu/prostovoljstvo-danes>

tions, the two most common addressees in relation to which individuals would like to demonstrate competences and experience gained through non-formal education. Since 2007 work experiences that were acquired outside the employment field (e.g.: work or authorship contract or student referral) can be taken into consideration for jobs in public administration. Then, this has the same level of relevance as the workplace for which the candidate applies.

6.5 State of Play in Slovakia

In Slovakia, there are several initiatives and several institutions that are working on promoting and supporting the volunteering work and a few of them are also detecting and validating the competencies or skills acquired in volunteering.

For example, at some schools, they are accepting volunteering as a part of the practice part of the studies. Other schools have this incorporated in their curriculum and are therefore motivating young people to become volunteers – for example the High School Gymnazium Jura Hronca has a subject called CAS (creativity, action, service), where in the Service part the students are required to perform a volunteering activity, which would be of a service to the society and then they contemplate in which ways it was beneficial to themselves and to the society.

There is also one initiative that promotes the importance of volunteering and the gained skills in wide public. The organization IUVENTA created a “Declaration on the Recognition of Contribution of Non-formal Education in the youth work” in 2013. It is a tool that promotes non formal education and links all of those who realize that non-formal education is to play an important role in the education of the young generation. It was a significant milestone, when important partners were attracted to promote non-formal education in the youth work. It is a document, in which all of those convinced would publicly and officially declare their support of NFE in youth work and willingness to cooperate.

This organization also performs the Project KomPrax (Practical Competencies), which is a set of learning programs for young people, where they can acquire new skills and competencies. After successfully completing the training, each participant is listed in a database of volunteers, where there is recorded the level of competencies that he/she reached in the training. Participants can decide, to whom they will make this information available and to whom they will

present the acquired competences. Thus, it is a simple tool for the employers and educational institutions, where they can check the level of acquired competencies.

Concerning a nation-wide initiative, there is a relatively new project V-Skills for Employment (D-zručnosti pre zamestnanie), which is an online tool that allows volunteers to recognize, describe, prove, and validate competencies acquired through volunteering. In this initiative, the volunteers evaluate their gained skills themselves and support their self-assessment with photos, videos, documents and other outputs and results of volunteering. The completed form is then verified by a local coordinator in the organization, where the mentioned activities were carried out. The acquired competencies are then assessed by the Commission at Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, which issues a certificate with the specified competences. There is a structured form containing 34 possible competencies, from which the volunteer chooses those that are applicable to his/her experience. The coordinator of the volunteer then confirms these gained competencies and the University issues the certificate.

6.6 State of Play in Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, there is a nation-wide portal: National Register of Qualifications, which provides an overview of nationally recognized vocational qualifications in the Czech Republic, which can be obtained by validation of non-formal and informal learning. By law, it is not essential whether a particular skill or knowledge has been learned at school, self-study or in practice. The important thing is what you really have the competence. To obtain a qualification outside the school, you need to pass examination led by the National Qualification System. Qualification and assessment standards are developed for each of the sub-qualifications to allow the candidates to be examined. Candidates for qualification can register at an authorized person, take the exam and get a nationally valid certificate. Full details of qualifications approved so far are available at www.narodni-kvalifikace.cz .

There is also available a self-evaluation tool, which can guide the volunteers through the process of detecting competencies that they have gained through activities with children and young people but also how to develop and how to “translate” the gained competencies into the language of potential employers. There was also developed a Czech tool - Personal Competency Portfolio. The purpose of this portfolio is to realize knowledge, competencies, soft skills, experience, education in the field of leisure and non-formal education, practice, and also

to learn to name it and then present it to educators and employers, and thus increase the volunteer's labor market value and success in life.

In addition, there exists a self-evaluation app, which offers the volunteers the opportunity to track their own personal growth and translate their experience in terms of soft skills. The on-line app IM-PROVE scores the competences of the individual volunteers. It helps the volunteers to self-reflect the competences they developed during various volunteering activities (work camps, youth exchanges, trainings, national projects, EVS, internships...) in various roles (participants of the project, leaders, managers, trainers, facilitators...). The volunteers record their volunteer experience, then their experience is transformed into competences and the volunteers can create a plan for their personal development.

There also exist different certificates, which are issued by organisations working with volunteers, but they mostly comprise of descriptions of the assigned work and not the gained competencies.

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- Matúš Jakub, CARDO – Slovak national volunteering center

8.0 Attachments: Best Practice

8.1 Best Practice from Slovakia

1. *Declaration on the Recognition of Contribution (Slovakia)*

The organization IUVENTA has already conducted many trainings for young people in gaining competencies through non-formal education, but they perceived it as very important that the public, the potential employers and also the institutions in formal education understand the importance of non-formal education, which also can be gained through volunteering or through trainings. That is why they created a “Declaration on the Recognition of Contribution of Non-formal Education in the youth work” in 2013. It is a tool that promotes non formal education and links all of those who realize that non-formal education is to play an important role in the education of the young generation. It was a significant milestone, when important partners were attracted to promote non-formal education in the youth work. [Read more](#)

2. *Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award (Slovakia)*

Duke of Edinburgh learning programme (DofE) is a programme led on high schools, where the students plan, organize and realize their personal development in 4 areas: talent, sport, volunteering and adventurous expedition. After successfully completing the learning program and the set goals, the participants receive a certificate validating the gained competences. This certificate is applicable in the admission procedure for some of the world’s universities, particularly those from English-speaking countries. Successfully managing the program can also attract a future employer, given that the certificate itself is a proof of the young person’s honest work to develop his/her own competencies. [Read more](#)

3. *V-competences (Slovakia)*

D-zručnosti (V-competences) is a tool for validating and certifying the competences gained through volunteering. It is used nation-wide and certified at one place – Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica. The volunteer fills in an online form, which suggests the possible competences that can be gained through volunteering. Then the local coordinator of volunteers approves this information and he/she submits the form to the University. There is a committee that approves and issues the certificates 4 times a year. [Read more](#)

4. *EUPA NEXT (Slovakia)*

EUPA NEXT focuses on the validation of non-formal and informal learning and its connection with formal education through the use of a formal accreditation system (ISO). It aims to develop a methodology for certification of non-formal and informal learning of non-regulated professions and at the same time to develop an EU certificate for administration personnel. One of the objectives of this study is a practical guide for validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning for unregulated professions. [Read more](#)

5. *KomPrax (Slovakia)*

The Project KomPrax (Practical Competencies) is a set of learning programs for young people, where they can acquire new skills and competencies. After successfully completing the training, each participant is listed in a database of volunteers, where there is recorded the level of competencies that he/she reached in the training. Participants will be able to decide to whom they will make this information available and to whom they will present the acquired competences. Thus, it is a simple tool for the employers and educational institutions, where they can check the level of acquired competencies. [>>read more<<](#)

6. *Reference for Volunteers (Slovakia)*

Eight NGOs from Germany, UK, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Malta and Bulgaria, all working with volunteers, formed the Grundtvig Learning Partnership “References for volunteers”. The partners have developed a European format as a basis for a **professional reference letter** for volunteers in NGOs. The key product of this partnership was a European **Guideline for NGOs** working with volunteers on how to identify and document the skills, know-how and expertise of their volunteers in a manner which is understood, recognised and valued by local, national and European employers. The Guideline is available for a free download from this website. [Read more](#)

8.2 Best Practice from Germany

7. Study: „From Competences to Job Chances“ (Germany)

In Germany – as in other European countries – discussions are taking place about how vocationally relevant practical knowledge can be better identified and certified. Up until now, it has been mainly formal training courses which have opened up opportunities in the education system and on the labour market. By contrast, competences acquired informally in work or leisure time or in further education without receiving a formal qualification have carried less significance, despite often being more beneficial to one’s vocational competence than formally certified knowledge. This study („Recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Germany“) is an outcome of the Bertelsmann Foundation’s „Continuing Education for All“ project. The project aims to provide an education system that is also accessible to people with low formal qualifications. [Read more](#)

8. Validation procedures for recognition – formal and informally acquired competencies in Germany- A manual for consultants (Germany)

The manual is a guide for consultants who are trained in the application of a certain validation procedures and who help aspirants to acquire non – formal and informal knowledge by means of the validation tool in order to gain the recognition of continuing vocational training. At the same time, it is also suitable as an accompanying material in the training of consultants in the validation process. It complements and supports the curriculum of counseling and is part of the training concept. The manual is a work result of an innovation transfer project, which has adapted and tested a validation system for recognizing non-formal and informally acquired competencies. A system developed by the Swiss Association for Continuing Education (SVEB) has been successfully applied to the validation of non-formal and informally acquired occupational competences on the conditions and requirements of the German education system. The manual is an outcome of the project “ConCert („Development and preparatory measures for the implementation of a Validation system for advice and recognition of formal and informally acquired competences“). [Read more](#)

9. Recognition of non-formal and informal skills (Germany)

This report to the Board of the BIBB has been prepared to assist the players in vocational training in the discussion about the inclusion of the results of non-formal and informal learning in the German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DQR). To this end, essential ideas, concepts and terms relating to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning are briefly presented. The main objective of the report is to provide an understanding and a conceptual clarification on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, reflecting the state of international and national discussion, recommendations and procedures. Additional objectives: to provide a documentation of examples from neighboring countries, to provide suggestions for further discussion in Germany, to stimulate innovation, and to take a critical look at the steps of further work. [Read more](#)

10. Recognition of informally acquired professional skills – Toolkit (Germany)

This toolkit would like to help (potential) workers find employment. The award of qualifications is a form of social recognition because it makes competences visible and gives them validity, which ultimately is the goal of this approach. It may be that the non-formal or informally acquired competences do not immediately lead to a qualification. This can, for example, be the case if, in an evaluation of the competences, it is found that there are still gaps which have to be closed. The main objective of the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes is, however, to give the persons concerned an official qualification / certificate. [Read more](#)

11. EffectVPL – Effectiveness of VPL Policies and Programmes for Labour Market Inclusion and Mobility – Individual and Employer Perspectives (Germany)

The Erasmus+ project “Effectiveness of VPL Policies and Programmes for Labour Market Inclusion and Mobility – Individual and Employer Perspectives” (EffectVPL) seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of validation programmes in terms of how the recognition of prior learning benefits the individual. The focus thereby is placed on if and how validation procedures and programmes support individuals’ labour market inclusion, employability and further learning pathways. Through introducing biographical perspectives into the validation process and identifying the role of employers for validation and recognition of prior learning (VPL), the project seeks to enhance the effectiveness of VPL practice in Denmark, Germany, Poland and Turkey. In addition, the project reviews the advancement of VPL policies and programmes

over the project period. The results of the review, empirical investigations and several company case studies will be channelled into the on-going VPL policy dialogue and also be reflected in a jointly developed training module to support VPL practitioners. [Read more](#)

12. Destination eValidation (Germany)

The aim of this ERASMUS+ funded project (2014 – 2015) was visualization, documentation and recognition of acquired competences in the field of volunteering and developing an online tool for validation of volunteering competences. The Destination eValidation (DesTeVa) project wanted to find a way to recognise and validate volunteers' informal learning and experiences in a way that they could be used to help a volunteer find employment, either as an unemployed person or as an economic migrant to a new country. The validation tool has been completed and is already used for validating volunteering skills. [Read more](#)

13. ValidVol – Validation of Volunteers (Germany)

ValidVol (Validation of Volunteers) had been launched 2014 – 2015 to recognise and accredit learning and skills development of individuals working in the voluntary sector. The project was funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme under the Grundtvig sub-programme and involved five European partner countries: Italy (UniTS), Spain (Agora), Greece (KMOP), Austria (BFI) and the United Kingdom (NWRC). It contributed to the creation of systems, models and schemes which validate and clearly identify the key competences gained from their experience as volunteers. The target group of ValidVol consisted of senior volunteers aged over 50 who are involved in voluntary services and wish to reinforce their employability, because they are either retired, under employed or unemployed. The project looked into the significant experiences of non-formal and informal learning through volunteering across Europe, and motivated senior volunteers to be involved in further adult learning activities, which were expected to facilitate or improve their employability. The ultimate goal of the ValidVol project was to develop a system to validate the key competences acquired during senior volunteering. [Read more](#)

14. “Validierung informellen Lernens im Ehrenamt” – vOlue (Germany)

The objective of this Grundtvig_Learning partnership in the „Lifelong Learning“ program of the EU (duration: 01.08.2009 – 31.07.2011) was to exchange views and validation possibilities of informal learning at European level and to place volunteer engagement as a setting for non-formal learning processes. Objectives: (1) increased awareness of non-formal learning in voluntary settings, (2) critical analysis of existing methods and strategies that identify learning effects in voluntary activities, make them visible and useful in the sense of professional orientation, (3) structuring and quality development during the validation and recognition of learning effects in voluntary work. [Read more](#)

15. GRETA – Fundamentals for the development of a cross-carrier recognition procedure for the competences of teachers in adult education/further education (Germany)

Course leaders, lecturers, trainers – in short teachers – make a significant contribution to the quality and success of continuing education programmes. However, what it means to be able to „teach“ in adult education does not yet exist in general standards. In addition, there is still too little recognition of professional teaching. The research and development project GRETA aims to create the basis for a cross-carrier recognition procedure for the competence of teachers in adult and further education. This is a major step towards professionalization in this educational sector. [Read more](#)

8.3 Best Practice from Austria

16. Certification for individuals at public accredited bodies (Austria)

The certification bodies for personnel, accredited by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economics, Family and Youth, are able to recognize and certify informal learning. Many of the certifications are in the field of joining technology: welding, soldering, bonding. But also in the areas of occupational health and safety, quality, project management, environmental or educational management persons can be certified. [Read more](#)

17. Continuous Education Academy (Austria)

The Austrian Academy of Continuous Education is a partnership institution for adult education in Austria, which verifies and certifies the competences of adult educators according to defined standards. wba issues „Certified adult educator“ (wba certificate) and „Graduated adult educator“ (wba diploma). [Read more](#)

18. Competency Balance (Austria)

KOMPAZ is oriented towards the quality standard of the company CH-Q (the Swiss Qualification Program for the Career) and is a conceptual framework for the certification of persons on four levels. [Read more](#)

19. RIVER – Recognition of intergenerational volunteering (Austria)

Senior volunteering plays a key role in our society and demands exposure and recognition! Yet reliable and convincing methodologies for the assessment and validation of the impact and outcomes of senior volunteering are missing. By developing a tailor-made competence assessment system the project RIVER aims at making learning outcomes of senior volunteering visible and thus add to senior volunteers' motivation and sense of achievement. [Read more](#)

8.4 Best Practice from Slovenia

20. Learning diary (Slovenia)

The method of teaching was developed by Andragogic centre in Slovenia as a new tool for identifying and evaluating an individual's knowledge, skills and competences. Learning Diary can be defined as a document containing t. i. notes on individual learning activities. It is a tool for the formative evaluation of competences and helps a candidate to get a realistic picture of skills and is/her current „learning situation“. [Read more](#)

21. Personal profile based on reflective reports (Slovenia)

Structure and content of the 'personal profile' is similar to the 'portfolio'. Important difference between portfolio and personal file is that a personal profile contains candidate's statement of qualifications, which is based on the candidate's personal reflection on its learning activities and learning achievements. Personal profile can be therefore defined as a device for the summative evaluation of the competencies and means a document that records the individual learning outcomes in terms of their recognition, either for professional purposes or for education and training. Personal profile are prepared by candidates in cooperation with a counsellor, who provides professional support. [Read more](#)

22. Tool for self-assessment of competencies: biographical method (Slovenia)

It is a systematic and chronological display of an individual educational path. The educational biography collects and analyses the different ways of acquiring knowledge and competence development in different life circumstances. This method has a special value in the detection

of hidden knowledge and it is suggested to be used in the initial phase of the evaluation process – diagnosis or CV preparation. It could be drawn in the form of a structured essay, guided interview or preferably a combination of both. Use of biographical method is particularly suitable in situations where individuals find themselves in a completely new and unpredictable situation, such as new job, transition from public to private sector and many others. [Read more](#)

23. Questionnaire for the evaluation of key competence “learning to learn” (Slovenia)

This is a questionnaire for the identification and evaluation of the key competence “learning to learn”. It is a self-assessment questionnaire for adults, which help identify and evaluate different types and levels of competences in the field of “learning to learn”. The aim is to enable adults to become more self-aware of how they need to learn to be to be successful in their professional and private lives. [Read more](#)

24. Electronic portfolio (Slovenia)

Electronic portfolio (EP) is a web application, which was developed at Andragogic centre in Slovenia for identification and recognition of non-formal learning. Portfolio is designed in a way, that candidates can be presented entirely with all applications and learning activities achieved in the working and private life. It may consist of various documents: of those, which are about individual qualification prepared by others (e.g.: teachers, counsellors, employers), reflections about learning activities, especially learning achievements and candidate’s products, projects or other forms of copyrighted work. Electronic portfolio allows creativity and the presentation of individuality. [Read more](#)

25. Model of validation and recognition of non-formal knowledge in the field of adult education (Slovenia)

Slovenian model of validation and recognition was developed under the ACS project “*Literacy and the identification and validation of non-formal learning*”, which was funded by the European Social Fund and the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Literacy from 2011 to 2014. It includes 4 stages:

- admission of candidates (information, motivation, identification purpose)
- identification, documentation, evaluation, checking (using different tool)
- validation (certificate constructed portfolios, etc.).
- recognition (certification in nationally defined systems).

The model is based on the comparative analysis of similar models in European countries (France, Netherlands, Norway) and includes two additional services: continually informing and counselling at all levels, which has proved to be especially useful with the less educated adults. [Read more](#)

26. My Experience (Slovenia)

»Moje izkušnje/My Experience« is a tool for validation and recognition of working experience, gained by student work for students and secondary school pupils. The certificate »Moje izkušnje/My Experience« includes past experiences and competences in order to support young people in increasing their employability. On the other hand, »Moje izkušnje/My Experience« gives employers an easy and credible review of all working experiences of a pupil/student during the studies. Youth can access the »Moje izkušnje« electronically as a digital portfolio and export the certificate to PDF file or print it out. [Read more](#)

27. NEFIKS (Slovenia)

Nefiks is recognized as one of the most relevant recording systems of informal knowledge in Slovenia. It follows the trend at EU level (Europass, Youthpass) and national rules for recognition of informal knowledge. It is also well known abroad: e.g. Flemish Oskar system for the recognition of non-formal knowledge is based on the results of NEFIKS. The system is updated continuously according to the latest theories and the needs of the labour market. [Read more](#)

28. Rules on Procedure and Criteria for the Recognition of Informally Acquired Knowledge and Skills (Slovenia)

This practice represents 11 of 24 articles of “Rules on Procedure and Criteria for the Recognition of Informally Acquired Knowledge and Skills”, which was adopted by the Senate of the University of Ljubljana on 29th May 2007. It provides a detailed overview of the validation process that faculties (members of University in Ljubljana) use for the recognition of competences, which students gained in non-formal education trainings and projects. [Read more](#)

29. Youthpass (Slovenia)

certificates and can be issued in several languages. It is available for projects funded by Erasmus+: Youth in Action (2014-2020) and Youth in Action (2007-2013) programmes. It is a part of the European Commission’s strategy to foster the recognition of non-formal learning. Youthpass supports the reflection upon the individual non-formal learning process and outcomes and also aims at supporting the employability of young people and of youth workers

by raising their awareness of and helping to describe their competences, and by documenting their acquisition of key competences on a certificate. [Read more](#)

8.5 Best Practice from Czech Republic

30. Key to Life (Czech Republic)

This set of self-evaluation tools guides through the process of detecting competencies that people have gained through activities with children and young people (whether in the position of active participants or employees of an organization), but also how to develop and how to “translate” the gained competencies into the language of potential employers. [Read more](#)

31. IM-PROVE application (Czech Republic)

This international project “Upgrade Yourself” was aimed to create **an on-line app on the basis of a learning journal** offering volunteers the opportunity to track their own personal growth and **translate their experiences in terms of soft skills**. The on-line app IM-PROVE scores the competences of the individual volunteers. It helps the volunteers to self-reflect the competences they developed during various volunteering activities (workcamps, youth exchanges, trainings, national projects, EVS, internships...) in various roles (participants of the project, leaders, managers, trainers, facilitators...). The volunteers record their volunteer experience, then their experience is transformed into competences and the volunteers can create a plan for their personal development. [Read more](#)

8.6 Best Practice from Italy

32. Certification of competences: what meaning and what path in volunteering? (Italy)

This is an article published by Alessia Zanotti, Doctoral Schools in Human Capital Formation and Labour Relations ADAPT, University of Bergamo, which summarizes the difficulties and chances of certifying competences acquired in volunteering. [Read more in the first article of this document](#)

33. Recognition and validation of competences acquired through volunteering (Italy)

As part of the document „Recognition and validation of competences acquired through volunteering: good practice in Italy“, chapter 15 5.1 provides descriptions of some best practices

for recognition and validation of competencies in the Italian volunteering field and in the informal and non-formal learning. [Read more in the second article of this document](#)

34. EVVIVA – Experiences and the Value of Voluntary Work: Valorisation of Learning Outcomes (Italy)

Ciessevi, the Voluntary Services’ Centre in Milan, has started a research – initiative called “EVVIVA – Experiences and the Value of Voluntary work: valorisation of Learning outcomes”. The aim is to explore within the different associations in Milan and its province (Italy) practices and tools for the valorisation of learning strategies within a voluntary context and promote among associations different tools to detect and document the competences that volunteers have acquired. Following the link dedicated to these issues, you can find further information on this topic, European regulations and more useful links. [Read more in the third article of this document](#)

35. Voluntary work for a curricula (Italy)

This articles summarizes, why associations should invest time, energies and resources to recognize their own volunteers’ competences. [Read more in the fourth article of this document](#)

36. Experiences of non formal and informal learning validation (Italy)

This article summarizes specific indications about competences and their enhancement, recognition and certification. [Read more in the fifth article of this document](#)

37. VA.LI.CO Validation of the Booklet of Competences (Italy)

This article informs about useful support mechanisms and tools in the design and implementation of validation practices of expertise from experiences. [Read more in the sixth article of this document](#)

38. Guidelines for a Methodology for the collection and validation of competences (Italy)

These guidelines offer steps for a useful evaluation tool for coordinators of services. [Read more in the seventh article of this document](#)

39. Guidelines for the validation of experience competences (Italy)

The Guidelines are a methodological effort to integrate and lead to „common factors“ both the indications provided by the European Commission and Cedefop, as well as the numerous experiences of validation of experience acquired in Italy, sharing the same language and the same methodological approach. [Read more in the eighth article of this document](#)

9.0 Further Reading

In German language

- A short introduction into the background of non-formal and informal learning is provided on the homepage of the Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa beim Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung; see <https://www.na-bibb.de/themen/validierung-von-kompetenzen/> (in German only)
- Five Good Practice for non-formal and informal learning (additional to the good practice identified in this collection) are identified here: <https://www.na-bibb.de/themen/validierung-von-kompetenzen/good-practice/>
- “Kompetenzen anerkennen”, Reihe BWP – Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis, 6/2017
- A broad range of publications offers the German Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung: <https://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/de/publication/series/list/3>
- Für deutschsprachige Vertreter/innen von Freiwilligenorganisationen bietet das österreichische Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Konsumentenschutz einen sogenannten “[Nachweis über freiwillige Tätigkeiten](#)” als Vorlage an (Version 2017). Dieser Nachweis berücksichtigt auch erworbene Kompetenzen.

In Italian language

- Va. Li. Co. is the INAPP website dedicated to the validation of skills. The training booklet with a wide collection of best practices: <http://librettocompetenze.isfol.it/validazione-delle-competenze.html>
- European Social Fund: “*Validation of expertise from experience: approaches and practices in Italy and Europe*”, updated edition 2013, ISFOL: <http://librettocompetenze.isfol.it/materiali/Validazione-competenze-da-esperienza-approcci-pratiche-in-Italia-in-Europa.pdf>
- CSVnet - Association of Voluntary Service Centres. A comprehensive overview of activities in the context of volunteering, including best practices in validation of competences: <http://www.csvnet.it/>

In Slovenian language:

- Žnidaršič, H. et al. (2012): *Ensuring the quality of recognition of non-formal and informal knowledge*. Ljubljana (online publication) Available here: http://www.cpi.si/files/cpi/userfiles/Publikacije/zbornik_Zagotavljanje-kakovosti_5.pdf
- PIN Praxis and information Network: *Recognition of informal and non-formal learning; Guidelines and materials for trade union representatives in enterprises* (online publication). Available on: <file:///P:/Valcovol%20project/Material/Naiconalne%20raziskave.pdf>
- Andragogic Center of Slovenia (2011): *Professional basis for systemic education of evaluation and recognition of informal and inventory obtained knowledge in education of adults*. Ljubljana (online report). Available here: http://arhiv.acs.si/porocila/Strokovne_podlage_za_sistemsko_urejanje_vrednotenja.pdf

In Slovak language

- <http://volwem.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/clanok-0-10/Dobrovolnictvo-%E2%80%93-cesta-k-zamestnaniu.html>
- <http://www.dobrovolnictvo.sk/>
- <https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/Projekty/Dobrovolnictvo.alej>
- <https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/Projekty/Neformalne-vzdelavanie.alej>

In English language

- <http://volwem.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/clanok-0-11/Volunteering-%E2%80%93-Way-to-Employment.html>
- <http://www.civil.eu/>
- http://references-for-volunteers.eu/index.php?article_id=1

10.0 The ValCoVol Partnership

Kultur und Arbeit e.V. , Bad Mergentheim – Berlin / Germany

www.kultur-und-arbeit.de

E-C-C Verein für interdisziplinäre Bildung und Beratung, Würnitz / Austria

<http://www.e-c-c.at>

INTEGRA INSTITUTE, Institut za razvoj clovekovih potentialov, Velenje / Slovenia

<http://www.eu-integra.eu/>

QUALED občianske združenie pre kvalifikáciu a vdelávanie, Bratislava / Slovakia

<http://www.qualified.net>

KTP Spolecnost pro kvalifikaci na trhu prace, Oslavany / Czech Republic

<http://www.ktp-qualification.eu>

Università delle LiberEtà del Fvg, Udine / Italy

<http://www.libereta-fvg.it>

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