



EOSE INFONOTE

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For skills matters!

FEATURED IN THIS NOTE : # GENERIC
INFORMATION ABOUT NFIL #

Principles and guidelines for identifying and validating non-formal and informal learning

Validating Non-Formal and Informal Learning (NFIL) is increasingly seen as a way of improving lifelong learning. More European countries are emphasising the importance of making visible and valuing learning that takes place outside formal education and training institutions, for example at work, in leisure time activities and at home.

Cedefop have defined non-formal and informal learning as follows:

- ⇒ Informal learning - learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure- is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective.
- ⇒ Non-formal learning - learning embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

It is also useful to note the difference between *recognition*, or *identification*, which records skills

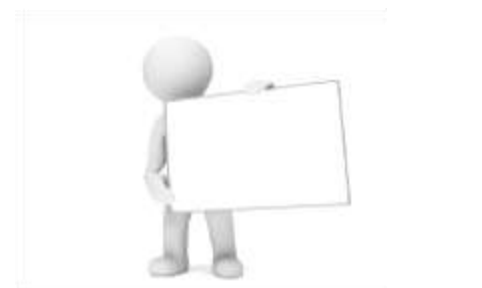
and competences but does not result in a formal certificate or diploma, and *validation* which is based on the assessment of the individual's learning outcomes and may result in a certificate or diploma

Validation of NFIL is expected to:

- ⇒ Support mobility within education and the labour market
- ⇒ Promote access to tailored learning solutions
- ⇒ Promote equality of opportunity
- ⇒ Support disadvantaged groups
- ⇒ Address skills shortages in a sector

All of these expectations directly support the aims of the sport sector which has a new focus on mobility and a longstanding involvement in engaging disadvantaged groups. There are also often reported skills shortages and a qualifications deficit in the sport sector which can partly be addressed through validation of NFIL.

A further link between NFIL and the sport sector is in the realm of volunteering. Validation of the skills and competences acquired through voluntary activities offers an opportunity to gain recognition within the sector.



Implementation in the sport sector

Sport is the sector which gathers the highest number of volunteers and it is important to recognise all their skills and competences. In sport sector validation of non-formal and informal learning is also important in areas of mobility opportunities abroad and education services to elite athletes.

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Good practices in the sector

Concrete and various examples from France, Ireland, Croatia and Portugal on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in sport.

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Implementation in the sport sector

The work plan of EOSE for 2015 had a focus on NFIL in sport and involved both a European round table with 21 participants from 11 countries, and a desk research collating good practice in sport sector from around Europe. At the round table there was commitment to continue the work to produce for the sector a tailor-made, feasible and relevant roadmap for future initiatives around this topic. The sector will work together to identify adapted processes and methodologies that will allow the skills and experience acquired through sport to be given recognition and consideration by employers, formal education and civil society.

Inconsistencies between countries can be detected in the implementation of systems to recognise NFIL, which is probably to be expected where policy and implementation timelines are devolved to the national level.

In terms of national examples Finland can be seen to be leading the way with a culture of validation of NFIL embedded in the education

system. Other examples of particular interest are those related to mobility opportunities abroad (Latvia) education services to elite athletes (Bulgaria) and in sport volunteering (France).

Mainstreaming of the recognition of informal and non-formal learning in sport for society and individuals was considered "Crucial" or "Important" by 88% of the respondents of the EOSE online survey and this was supported by the participants at the European Round table as well. Recognition of NFIL will form a key part of EOSE and the sector's future work in vocational education.

We will in particular focus on realising the recognized benefits:

- ⇒ Developing individual's employability (improved opportunities in the labour market) (75% of the respondents)

- ⇒ Contributing to the retaining of volunteers and staff (HR strategy: Motivation and confidence is improved) (69% of the respondents)
- ⇒ Making people aware of what they know and can do (empowering people) (69% of the respondents)
- ⇒ Improving the quality of the service delivered (development of new skills and shorter educational timespans) (50% of the respondents).



Milestones



- ⇒ 2002 – [Copenhagen Declaration](#). First agreement of Member States to aim to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training through enhanced cooperation at European level.

- ⇒ 2004 - [European principles](#) for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning.

- ⇒ 2008: Establishment of the [European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning](#).

- ⇒ 2012: [Council recommendation](#) of December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, which calls on Member States to put validation arrangements in place by 2018.

- ⇒ 2014: [European inventory on validation of NFIL, Country Reports](#).
- ⇒ 2015: Latest version of [European guidelines](#) for validating non-formal and informal learning



National examples



Finland

Validation of non-formal and informal learning has relatively long and established roots in Finland and the legislation and policies are well developed and detailed. This is the case also in the sport sector and recognition and validation of NFIL is well in use. In vocational and higher education, tutors are enthusiastic about it and it is the law for education institutions to facilitate tailor made programmes.



UK

Recognition and validation of NFIL is achieved in the UK mainly through the process of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which must be in place for all accredited qualifications. As most sport qualifications are accredited on the national framework validation of NFIL is available for most sport qualifications.



FOR MORE INFO

EOSE has developed a State of Play report in 2015. Available on demand.

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Good practices in the sector



Carnet de vie du bénévole	
Topics/Context of the initiative	Validation in the third sector Sport
Name of the initiative (and translation in English):	Carnet de vie du bénévole – The Volunteer's life book
Name of the coordinating/leading organisation	CNOSF (French National Olympic Committee)
Scope of the initiative	National
Countries involved	France
Target group	Volunteers in sport associations.
Approximate number of beneficiaries	Between 1000 and 10000.
Brief description of the initiative	An online tool where the skills and experiences of volunteers in the sport sector are recorded through large variety of fields filled in by the volunteer him/herself: identity, title, associations, community training, know-how, based certificates. Developed as a true bridge between the professional personal volunteering lives, the Volunteer's

	life book is particularly useful in the context of Validation of Acquired Experience (VAE) and allows to better understand the needs in terms of support and training. The system is linked to the national validation scheme.
Outcomes/deliverables of the initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A certificate of skills and competences ➤ A model of volunteer training or placement certificate ➤ A model of volunteer title certificate
Link to the initiative's website or to some outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Presentation of the tool: http://franceolympique.com/files/File/actions/benevolat/cvb/presentation-du-cvb.pdf ➤ User guide: http://franceolympique.com/files/File/actions/benevolat/cvb/guideutilisateur_cvb2008.pdf ➤ Access to the online tool (request an account): http://franceolympique.com/benevoles/CVB/index.php

Applied Lifelong Learning (ALL)	
Topics/Context of the initiative	Validation in the third sector Youth Sport
Name of the initiative (and translation in English):	Applied Lifelong Learning (ALL)
Name of the coordinating/leading organisation	GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association)
Scope of the initiative	European
Countries involved	Every country affiliated to the GAA
Target group	–
Approximate number of beneficiaries	Between 50 and 100
Brief description of the initiative	It will facilitate the advent of the qualification known as Master of Value-Laden Acumen (MVA), an internationally recognised best practice framework for coach/player development & well-being.
Outcomes/deliverables of the initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key Motivation & Vocational Attributes
Link to the initiative's website or to some outcomes	Under development

European Universities Games Zagreb - Rijeka 2016	
Topics/Context of the initiative	Youth Sport
Name of the initiative (and translation in English):	European Universities Games Zagreb - Rijeka 2016
Name of the coordinating/leading organisation	European Universities Games Zagreb - Rijeka 2016 (www.eug2016.com)
Scope of the initiative	National
Countries involved	Croatia
Target group	Youth
Approximate number of beneficiaries	Between 100 and 1000
Brief description of the initiative	The European Universities Games (an event scheduled to take place in the cities of Rijeka and Zagreb in July 2016 with more than 5500 students from 45 European countries and 300 different universities) is the unique opportunity to promote the core ideas of different initiatives such as Europe2020 and Erasmus+ Programme. EUG 2016 Volunteers Programme is developed to equip young people with knowledge, skills and competences that will improve their employability and career prospects, learning performance, increase self-esteem and self-confidence, leave positive

	<p>and long lasting effects on volunteers and organizations involved and create long lasting legacy.</p> <p>Volunteers will have an opportunity to get engaged in all EUG 2016 departments. By actively participating in activities related to EUG 2016 implementation, volunteers will gain experience in organization of international events, develop effective communication skills, and learn about EU core values, opportunities offered through Erasmus+ Programme and European Voluntary Service.</p> <p>EUG 2016 Volunteer program actively encourages: "recognition of the value in sport, emphasising the dependence of sport organisations on volunteer inputs". Indeed through public camping, EUG2016 will improve "perception of volunteering and raise awareness about the benefits and opportunities of volunteering" and promote positive images of volunteering.</p> <p>On the basis of the Recommendation for the recognition of extracurricular activities, together with University of Rijeka, one of the main project partners, a document entitled "Planning, Organizing and Recognition of extracurricular activities through ECTS: How to identify, valorize and quantify results of informal and non-formal learning through ECTS" has been prepared. Following above mentioned, University of Rijeka and EUG 2016 are launching open course for students who will take part in Games as volunteers. The engagement of volunteers-students from the University of Rijeka during the EUG2016 will be evaluated by ECTS credits within the scope of the open course.</p>
Outcomes/deliverables of the initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A course for volunteers at the University of Rijeka; ➤ Volunteers will be awarded with ECTS credits for their participation in EUG 2016
Link to the initiative's website or to some outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ European University Game website: www.eug2016.com

RVCC - Reconhecimento, validação e certificação de competências	
Topics/Context of the initiative	Validation for specific target groups Promotion / raising the profile of validation Sport
Name of the initiative (and translation in English):	RVCC - Reconhecimento, validação e certificação de competências (Recognition, validation and certification of competences)
Name of the coordinating/leading organisation	Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional - ANQEP (The National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training)
Scope of the initiative	National
Countries involved	Portugal
Target group	Sport coaches
Approximate number of beneficiaries	Between 100 and 1000
Brief description of the initiative	Recognition, validation and certification of competences for coaches engage in further training. To obtain qualifications for vocational training for coaches
Outcomes/deliverables of the initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Completion of secondary education
Link to the initiative's website or to some outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Website of the National Agency: http://www.en.anqep.gov.pt/

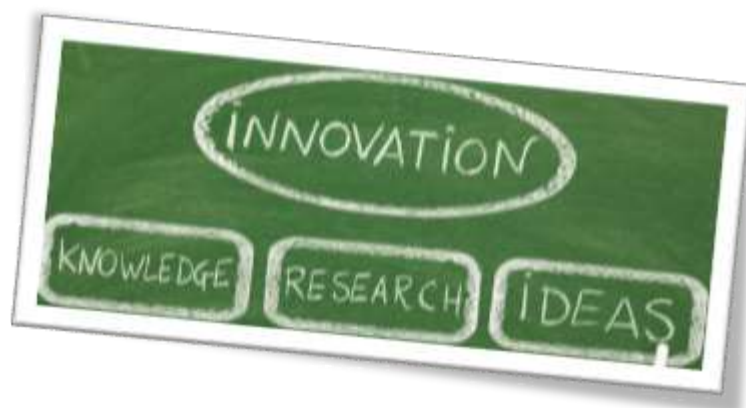
Key ideas and facts

The European Commission, Member States, and the social partners, have established common European tools and principles for vocational education and training. Namely:

- ⇒ European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- ⇒ European credit system for VET (ECVET)
- ⇒ Europass
- ⇒ European quality assurance framework for VET (EQAVET)
- ⇒ Principles and guidelines for identifying and validating non-formal and informal learning
- ⇒ Principles on lifelong guidance and counselling

These tools and principles constitute an integrated framework, their implementation will increase transparency of qualifications, support mobility and benefit citizens by providing a systematic way to validate and document their knowledge, skills and competence. All are based on learning outcomes which make it easier to understand what the holder of a certificate or diploma knows, understands and is able to do.

The EQF and ECVET operate at the systemic level to make easier the recognition of qualifications across Europe. By supporting quality assurance, EQAVET provides a basis for confidence and trust in national VET qualifications and their international



comparison through the EQF. Europass, ECVET, validation and guidance support individuals looking for a job or applying for training.

All of these tools and principles have had an impact on the sport sector at the European and national level.

DOWNLOADS

To go further

Cedefop (2014), *European Inventory on Validation: 2014 Update*
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning/european-inventory>

Cedefop (2015), *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3073>



Latest developments

European Commission Sport Unit Expert Group

With the introduction of the new EU Work Plan for sport 2014 - 2017, the Sport Unit in DGEAC of the European Commission updated its structure and set up five reformed expert groups to look at particular areas related to sport policy. One of the Expert Groups is for Human Resource Management in Sport, which deals with education, training, employment and volunteering in sport. This Expert Group

continues to take an active interest in the implementation of national qualifications frameworks in the sport sector and the relationship between national sport federations and requirements for education from international federations.

Sector Skills Alliances (SSAs)

Sector Skills Alliances are an initiative designed to promote European cooperation within a specific sector of the economy. SSAs

develop vocational skills from the perspective of labour market needs, ensuring cooperation between education and employment.

In the sport sector EOSE led a Consortium supported by the Directorate-General Employment and Social Affairs to carry out a feasibility study on setting up a Sector Skills Council for skills and employment for the sport and active leisure sector in the EU (the designation of council later changed to

alliance with the launch of a new funding programme under Erasmus+ KA2 in 2016). This was supported by the whole sector.

European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)

The EC through the DG Employment and Social Affairs has launched a new portal and database to support employment and

recruitment services in all member states as they seek to tackle unemployment and assist job seekers. The system is called ESCO.

The ESCO classification system identifies key occupations in the labour market and categorises the skills, competences and qualifications relevant for the EU labour market and the education and training pathways.

In the sport and active leisure sector 25 occupations have been defined under the headings of: Sports coaches and instructors; Sport managers and operations; Sportspeople, Fitness; and outdoors. This work would be greatly enhanced by the work of an SSA.



EOSE INFONOTE

EOSE is an international organisation working towards the development of the sport and active leisure sector, expert in building bridges between the worlds of education and employment and ensuring the development of a competent workforce with the right skills.

Its vision has been defined as "A sport and active leisure sector that is playing its full part in the economic, health and social development of Europe and its member states." And its mission consists in "facilitating and supporting the development of the sport and active leisure sector workforce, to ensure people working and volunteering in the sector have the right skills to perform and enable the sector to fulfil its potential as a social, health and economic driver".



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