

VET TEAMS CONFERENCE

«Horizontal Recognition and Validation of Learning Outcomes»

28 September 2021

Nicosia, Cyprus

Conference Report

Prepared by CADRET team
(Charalambos Vrasidas and Demos Michael)



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Introduction

The Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes (IDEP), as part of the National VET Teams network and the consultations for the establishment of a robust national system for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, organised a conference titled “Horizontal Recognition and Validation of Learning Outcomes”. The Conference took place on the 28th of September 2021 in the Landmark Hotel, Nicosia.

The main objective of the Conference was to examine best practices from other countries and develop links of cooperation among national stakeholders for the establishment of a comprehensive framework for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in Cyprus. The event was supported by CARDET, within the framework of the centre's involvement in developing the National Lifelong Learning Strategy 2021-2027, in partnership with the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA). The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth set the Conference under the auspices of the Ministry, declaring that the validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning is a national political priority.

As part of the exchange of experience and best practices, the Conference hosted six experts from Malta, Ireland, Estonia, Belgium, Finland, and Greece. Three of them enriched the Conference with presentations on practices and methods implemented in their countries as successful examples. The other specialists facilitated the workshops. Generally, their input was significant for the achievement of the Conference objectives.

The Conference was attended by 93 participants including officials and representatives from national public and private bodies related to education and training as the key stakeholders in the field. More precisely, the conference was held with the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth (MoECSY), the Ministry of Labour, Welfare, and Social Insurance (MLWSI), Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), Employers and Industrialists Federation (OEB), Youth Board of Cyprus (YBC), Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC), Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA), Cyprus Chamber Of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), secondary and post-secondary education institutions, Technical Schools, Universities, and other organizations. The conference programme is presented in Annex 1.

Proceedings

The Conference commenced with a short welcome speech by Mr Andreas Kashiouris, Vice President of IDEP, who emphasized that collective effort is required for the establishment of a comprehensive system for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. Subsequently, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth, Mr Prodromos Prodromou, underlined the benefits that such a system has to offer to a knowledge-based society and shared the political commitment to support any efforts on the part of the Ministry. Following this, Dr Stylianos Mavromoustakos, Director of IDEP, set the Conference's thematic framework and objectives, highlighting that other countries' examples can be particularly useful to build capacity and progress as a country.

Four presentations followed outlining the basis of a fruitful and pertinent Conference. Dr Nicoleta Ioannou from the European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office of MoECSY, and Dr Charalambos Vrasidas, Executive Director of CARDET, shared the developments on the National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2021-2027, referring to its key strategic objectives and priorities. Professor Joachim James Calleja, Principal and CEO of Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, and President of EfVET, in an insightful presentation, shared some key messages learned from the efforts of Malta in establishing the national system for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Basic concepts that derived from his presentation is the importance of linking learning outcomes with the qualifications as demanded by the labour market, and the student-centred approach in education for cultivating a lifelong learning culture. Mrs Kulli All shared the successful example of Estonia emphasizing the proactive approach on aligning the curricula with occupational standards, qualifications (NQF) and their level descriptors. She also described how Estonia decentralized its system delegating duties and obligations to educational institutions, and how the non-regulated character of the labour market was managed in this process. In the last presentation, Mrs Andrina Wafer, Head of Access and Lifelong Learning, Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland (QQI), explained how Ireland has managed to overcome serious challenges by shifting perceptions into political power, and eventually, by converting policies into practice. She also referred to the great amount of attention, energy, and resources needed to ensure

system's quality and sustainability. Common ideas resulted from Malta, Estonia, and Ireland examples were:

- a) the importance of building a robust infrastructure including legal and institutional arrangements, funding, and links with NQF;
- b) the attention to be paid to the 3 Ts: Trust, Transparency, and Transferability;
- c) the courage and resilience to overcome the ongoing challenges that always occur;
- d) the shift of ownership transforming stakeholders into shareholders, and
- e) the change of well-established perceptions that might block the processes.

After the presentations, participants were divided into three groups to work on specific topics proposing solutions and actions for the establishment of a comprehensive framework for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in Cyprus. The discussions followed the four-stage model of validation as proposed by the European guidelines: Identification, Documentation, Assessment, and Certification. A summary of results from each workshop was presented to the plenary. The Conference closed with a productive panel discussion, where participants had the opportunity to address questions on specific concerns. The panel was comprised of Dr Elias Markatzis (Head of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education of MoECSY), Mrs Kulli All, Prof. James Calleja, and Dr Stylianos Mavromoustakos. Overall, the Conference closed with many useful ideas to be exploited for the establishment of a comprehensive system for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in Cyprus.

Workshops

The main objective of the workshops was to examine best practices and propose actions for the establishment of a comprehensive validation framework in Cyprus. Participants had the opportunity to collaborate and exchange ideas on existing and potential mechanisms and arrangements that may effectively enable this process, considering the current contextual characteristics and good practices of other countries. The participants were divided into three workshops to approach the topics from a different perspective, as presented below:

| Workshops | Coordinators |
|--|--|
| A. Transfer and Recognition of LO to professional qualifications | Mr. Panayiotis Anastasopoulos <i>General Director p-consulting.gr Board of Directors EfVET</i> |
| B. Procedures for the recognition and the mechanism for the transfer of LO from non-formal education | Mr Raimo Sivonen <i>Principal of Kainuu Vocational College</i> |
| C. Certification Mechanism of LO in informal education | Mrs. Gina Ebner <i>Secretary General of European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)</i> |

All workshops addressed the same topics based on the four phases of non-formal and informal learning validation as proposed by the European guidelines¹. As it is well explained, validation starts with the identification of an individual's existing competences which were acquired through prior learning and working experience. This phase requires a notable level of awareness by individuals on their skills and knowledge. The tools in this phase should be characterized by an "open to the unexpected" approach due to the diverse and numerous not-identified-yet competences. Documentation usually follows or is merged with identification. It involves the collection and provision of evidence on the knowledge, skills, and competences obtained. For a sufficient insight, it is recommended to present several formats of evidence. Identification and documentation phases are either initiated by the individual and/or with the guidance of an advisor/counsellor. Probably, the most essential

¹ Cedefop (2015). *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 104. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/008370>

and complex phase of validation is assessment, where learning outcomes are compared to specific reference points and standards. This phase implies any form of evaluation to demonstrate that learning outcomes meet the requirements. A common challenge during the assessment is ensuring transparency and quality. The final phase refers to certification. This step is essential to grant individuals' competences with a real and recognizable value. Certification can be offered in various formats and functions as the 'currency' for retaining the profits of prior learning. Through this cycle, a lifelong learning culture is infused into society, as staying the loop of learning continuously pays off for individuals.

Workshops' outcomes are presented aggregated per validation phase. Although groups approached validation process from a different perspective (i.e., professional qualifications, non-formal, or informal learning), they reached to similar conclusions. The results reflect the purpose of forming a roadmap of actions, mechanisms, and arrangements. Recommendations also refer to synergies among, within, and between the relevant stakeholders, as a basic objective of the Conference. Moreover, the interrelations among the four stages were easily detected. The challenges of coordination and effective management had been exclusively discussed in every stage of validation. Also, the requirements of transparency, reliability, and credibility were mentioned as horizontal challenges associated with all phases.

A. Identification

Participants highlighted the importance of informing learners about new opportunities and raising their awareness about competence validation. The key during this process is communication and reach out. This could be mainly achieved through the National Qualifications Authority («Εθνική Αρχή Προσόντων»), as the governing body of the CyQF. Information could be also infused into the society engaging more actors i.e., other public authorities, communities, career services and advisors, NGOs, education and training centres, academic institutions, schools, parents, and learners per se.

As a starting point, participants discussed the possibility of developing a digital tool that could function as an informative instrument for the process of validation. The same software could also be utilised as a large-scale 'screening' self-assessment tool, to inform learners about their current competence level. However, it was clearly stated that this would not be sufficient because of the non-standardized character of non-formal and informal learning. Specialized

knowledge and competences cannot be identified through uniform procedures. Therefore, a blended solution, where personalised guidance from advisors accompanies the standardized tool, was more appealing to the majority. Such an approach takes into consideration the different and diverse needs of individuals and fields of expertise. However, the advisors should be well trained on the system and processes in order to give accurate and sufficient information. The purpose is to enable an effective progression of individuals to the following phases without comebacks.

Relevant shareholders that could be involved in these phases are the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), the guidance and advising services of Ministries (MoECSY and MWLSI), Universities' careers and liaison offices, and youth actors such as the Youth Board Council (YBC). It was also emphasized that accessibility is crucial in this phase because it is the 'entrance' of the validation 'pipeline'. Lifelong learning involves all age groups. Therefore, the whole society could be involved as beneficiaries. A learner-centred approach was recommended and extensively discussed as each individual is equipped with unique competences and needs. The discussions reached the conclusion that enabling recognition of prior learning and achievement promotes a lifelong learning culture for society.

B. Documentation

Documentation is usually embedded in the identification phase and conducted with the guidance of an advisor. However, participants considered it most appropriate, the evidences to be collected by learners. In addition, they proposed a digital solution for this phase as well, where individuals would be able to upload their evidence and create a digital portfolio. Relevant formats of evidence mentioned during the workshops were Curriculum Vitae (CV), work samples, references, letters of recommendations, videos, and other certifications. It was also recognized that practical skills cannot be easily evidenced through a digital system. For this reason, practice demonstrations seemed an appealing solution during the phases of assessment.

One of the most important issues in the validation process is ensuring quality through all phases. Evidence during the documentation phase should meet certain criteria and standards. According to the participants, these criteria and standards should be established in close collaboration with employers and education providers. They also need to reflect the National Qualifications Framework (CyQF). Therefore, potential shareholders during this phase are

public authorities, employers, and institutions of secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education.

On the other hand, participants mentioned thoughtful preconditions for the effective operation of this phase. For example, the development and alignment of occupational standards with learning outcomes appear to be a great challenge. Also, the Cyprus Qualifications Framework (CyQF) should be sophisticatedly utilized to enable learners 'levelling up'.

C. Assessment

Assessment is probably the most complex, costly, and critical phase of the validation process. This is where learners' knowledge and capacities presented and match with certain criteria and standards for qualification. For this reason, assessment should reflect the real market status quo i.e., the labour market requirements, demands, and needs. Participants mentioned that the exploitation of the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) of HRDA could be beneficial in this process. This competence-based system of vocational qualifications currently assesses and certifies individuals on whether they can carry out a specific occupation in real or simulated working conditions.

Assessment can take the form of written and oral examinations, or practical demonstrations if needed. However, it is recognised that methods could be designed based on each learner and their specific set of competences. In any case, any sort of assessment has to be quality assured with the same value and credibility as in formal settings. This way, assessment methods need to correspond to the high-quality qualification standards and strong criteria. Trust and reliability are key elements during this process, therefore, procedures should be conducted with transparency.

It was also mentioned that a legislative framework should encompass this process and set protective measures. In brief, participants referred to the eligibility of evaluators, either these are individuals or organised bodies. Responsible assessment providers should be officially certified, open for any external control, and operate with transparency as in other systems (e.g., ISO17024 for bodies operating certification of persons, DIPAE for tertiary education etc.). Last, proactive measures and mechanisms should be in place to avoid conflicts of interest among shareholders.

D. Certification

First, it was set clear by the participants that validation of skills is a modern world need. It is demanded by the labour market and the society for individuals to proof their skills and competences. It also serves to enhance the quality of education provision. Certification embodies the added value for learners, and represents the currency to exchange into professional opportunities.

Two different views were mentioned by the participants regarding the operational process of this phase. The first option was to authorize VET providers to certify learners upon their prior and current learning. This way a greater extent of flexibility is given to the system, although firmer quality assurance control is needed due to the decentralized authorization. The second option was to implement certification centrally. In this case, the participants proposed a new independent authority responsible to certify each individual. Recognizing the wide range of qualifications and specialized professions, this authority could set assessment mechanisms by delegating certain projects to external counsellors and experts for special cases.

Participants mentioned that certifications, either in the form of a diploma or a license, should not be equal to those awarded by the professional associations or formal educational institutions. However, they can be the stepping stone as partial qualifications (e.g., micro-credentials) towards the next qualification level. Existing mechanisms that can be exploited during this process is the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), and the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) of HRDA. It was also pointed out that certificates could represent in-between stages of the CyQF qualification levels, in an effort to give wide and official recognition.

The value of certifications highly depends on their transferability and portability. Therefore, all stakeholders, either coming from the industry (e.g., employers, professional associations) or the education sector (e.g., formal education institutions, VET providers), should equally recognise the 'value' and importance of each certification. However, the system should convince that outcomes are of high credibility by establishing high quality and reliable standards.

Panel Discussion

The Conference closed with a productive panel discussion where participants had the opportunity to address questions on specific concerns. The panel was comprised of Dr Elias Markatzis (Head of the Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education of MoECSY), Mrs Kulli All, Professor James Calleja, and Dr Stylianos Mavromoustakos. Several key messages were derived from this fruitful discussion, with the most notable mentioned below.

Professor James Calleja started with some lessons learned from Malta's efforts on establishing the national validation system. First, he emphasized that this process requires resilience and capacity building, meaning that people and organisations should be able to 'swim into vague waters'. It is a process of establishing something new, where uncertainty is inevitable. Secondly, he highlighted the importance of adopting a new mind-set when it comes to education. The one-size-fits-all education unsurprisingly leads to failure for many of learners. It stigmatizes individuals producing negative attitudes towards learning, and the education system fails itself. Therefore, learning should be the objective of the new approach. Professor Calleja concluded that new concepts and approaches might need some time to be absorbed. It is important to show patience and not rush on concepts that people are not ready to accept.

Mrs Kulli All, when asked about the obstacles that Estonia faced during the initial phases of developing its system of recognition of prior learning (RPL), mentioned the non-regulated character of the national labour market and the conflicts of interest among stakeholders. She explained that many employers did not appreciate the benefits from this system with the argument that they can assess, validate, and hire staff on their own. Heading to the solutions, she explained that a persuasive strategy approaching important employers with the power to influence, demonstrated beneficial. When backed up with the support of these enterprises, it is always easier to convince a larger number of employers. To better manage conflicts of interest (e.g., of educational institutions and employers), authorities speeded up and extended the dialogues proposing alternative solutions.

Dr Stelios Mavromoustakos was asked to mention the main differences between the Cyprus educational system and other systems in Europe, in an effort to understand why things sometimes do not proceed that fast. First, he ably said that we initially need to separate 'comparing to' and 'learning from'

other countries. Each country needs to find what policy is suitable and relevant to apply based on its contextual characteristics. However, an important reason that hinders the improvement of the national educational system is the lack of a long-term vision. This is mainly due to the change of leadership/governing political party every few years. Therefore, it seems hard to set a common target for education to achieve as a country. On the other hand, Cyprus has a strong professional learning structure, which reaches level 5 or 6 in the Qualification Frameworks in some cases.

Mr Elias Markatzis affirmed that he is optimistic when asked how realistic is to actually establish a system for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in Cyprus. He confirmed that several challenges exist, but there isn't any perfect system. We need to start with steady steps instead of doing nothing because of the barriers. In fact, he said that things are currently progressing, mentioning an internal (MoECSY) report and consultations on establishing a validation system. Explaining this report, he made reference to a single authority with the authorization to assess programmes (and subsequently institutions) and individuals. He also emphasized the positive developments on the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) with opportunities to expand involving the private sector. According to Mr Markatzis, employers are key actors and professional qualifications need to be equally recognised with academic qualifications. However, the sector's complexity and involvement of numerous shareholders are challenges to consider, explaining why things cannot speed up. Also, financing is crucial to maintain sustainability. Last, he confirmed that there is a positive disposition for political and legal arrangements at the moment.

In an effort to exchange knowledge, participants asked how the Malta's and Estonia's systems work. Professor Calleja explained, in brief, the main arrangements done during the last decade, emphasizing the occurrence of several inevitable setbacks. After establishing the legal framework and governing body (with a form of a Council which later became an Agency, consisting of labour market, academia, and Ministries' representatives), Malta started to set the mechanisms. Educational providers now have the responsibility and autonomy to design programmes, assess individuals and recognise learning outcomes. However, this is highly controlled with transparent processes to ensure reliability and trust within the system. International reviewers are often called to conduct controls at any time. This way, institutions have developed a notable level of trust and agreed on a

common 'currency'. Last, he ensured that many blunders were identified and improved during the last years. For example, serious penalties are still imposed on education institutions with poor performance and low-quality standards. However, today, government parties reached a consensus on these policies and accept a more technocratic approach to education arrangements.

Mrs Kulli All informed that Estonia similarly had to diminish almost half of the VET schools after vigilant controls. Regarding the operational level, the Estonian Qualifications Authority develops and administers the professional standards and qualifications. Although, educational institutions are allowed and obliged to assess and validate prior learning. Today, more than 100 bodies can certify individuals with a diploma or certificate equal to formal standards, allowing learners to proceed to the next qualification level of EstQF. She concluded that recognition of prior learning (RPL; or validation of non-formal and informal learning – VNIL) is inevitable and we have to react. The educational sector is usually very conservative and slow in accepting change, however, life goes on. Employers and society need the recognition system now.

Mrs Gina Ebner aptly and critically pointed out that we probably tend to see the pyramid upside down. She explained that the amount of informal learning we get is greater than what we learn in institutions (formal and non-formal learning). Therefore, learning validation should normally start and focus on the basis of the pyramid. She also highlighted that learning, especially in the field of adult education, does not necessarily lead to professional qualifications.



On a critical view, participants worried about the involvement of the employers in Cyprus. As they pointed out, employers might prefer individuals with no qualifications -at least officially evidenced- to avoid higher salaries. Mrs Kulli shared her experience referring to some smart incentives and arguments. She explained that Estonia had a similar challenge to face due to the country's non-regulated labour market. However, the validation system helps employers to hire the appropriate staff with the right skills, especially for informalized professional areas such as construction. This implies serious benefits on the productivity of the business. Talking from experience, she ensured that employers are interested in making skills transparent because it solves several

issues during hiring. Concluding, she mentioned two categories of employers. The first group is consisted of the 'dreamers' who invest in their workforce, keep their employees on the training loop, and recognize the value of skills and learning validation. They understand that the company's future depends largely on their people, and staff is in turn loyal to the company. The second group of employers usually looks to hire skills from the labour market. They usually look for the new set of competences namely 21st-century skills, digital attitudes etc. For both cases, learners' competences should be always visible, transferable and exposed.

Professor Calleja, when asked about the role and level of involvement of public authorities on educational institutions regarding the validation process, explained that the state is there to regulate, not impose. He emphasized that the regulatory and monitoring role of the state is critical. It mainly operates with systematic or ad-hoc reviews on education institutions. He added that many organisations certify individuals without being accredited by the responsible authority. However, these certifications do not have high value and are not recognised in society.

As a last point, Mr Markatzis expressed the need to create an umbrella as a comprehensive system to cover all existing and new mechanisms. For example, SVQs of HRDA are useful but not sufficient. Micro-credentials are encouraged, but they are only complementary. Partial qualifications from VET schools could be provided, but they are only a piece of the puzzle. This system has a mission to make different mechanisms work harmoniously. There is also a need to bring together employers, education providers, the state, and individuals. He concluded by mentioning that legislation, which is the first step to action, is on the way.

Conclusion

The Conference was particularly useful for exchanging experiences and best practices with experts from other countries, regarding the establishment of a national validation system for non-formal and informal learning. The experts enriched the discussion with several examples, lessons learned, and solutions to common challenges. Their input was profitable for “building” the Cypriot key actors’ capacity. At the same time, officials and representatives from public authorities and private organisations had the opportunity to discuss and develop links for future cooperation, which is an essential requirement for establishing the national validation system.

The examples of Malta, Estonia, and Ireland illuminated some key areas to focus on while establishing the national validation system. Firstly, a robust infrastructure with legal and institutional arrangements was demonstrated necessary and critical for building upon operation mechanisms. During this phase, adequate funding must also be ensured to sustain the management, monitoring, and operation of the system. Secondly, the experts from the abovementioned countries eminently pointed out the repeated setbacks that inevitably occur during the establishment and operation of the system. For this reason, responsible authorities need to show courage and develop resilience in order to overcome these challenges with determination. Next, as one of the most critical challenges, the state needs to actively engage employers and educational institutions, converting them from stakeholders into shareholders. Conflicts of interest are to be solved with extensive dialogue and strategic resolutions. Another important point is the large amount of attention to be given to trust, transparency, and transferability; the so called 3 Ts. These values should horizontally govern all phases of validation to sustain a credible system.

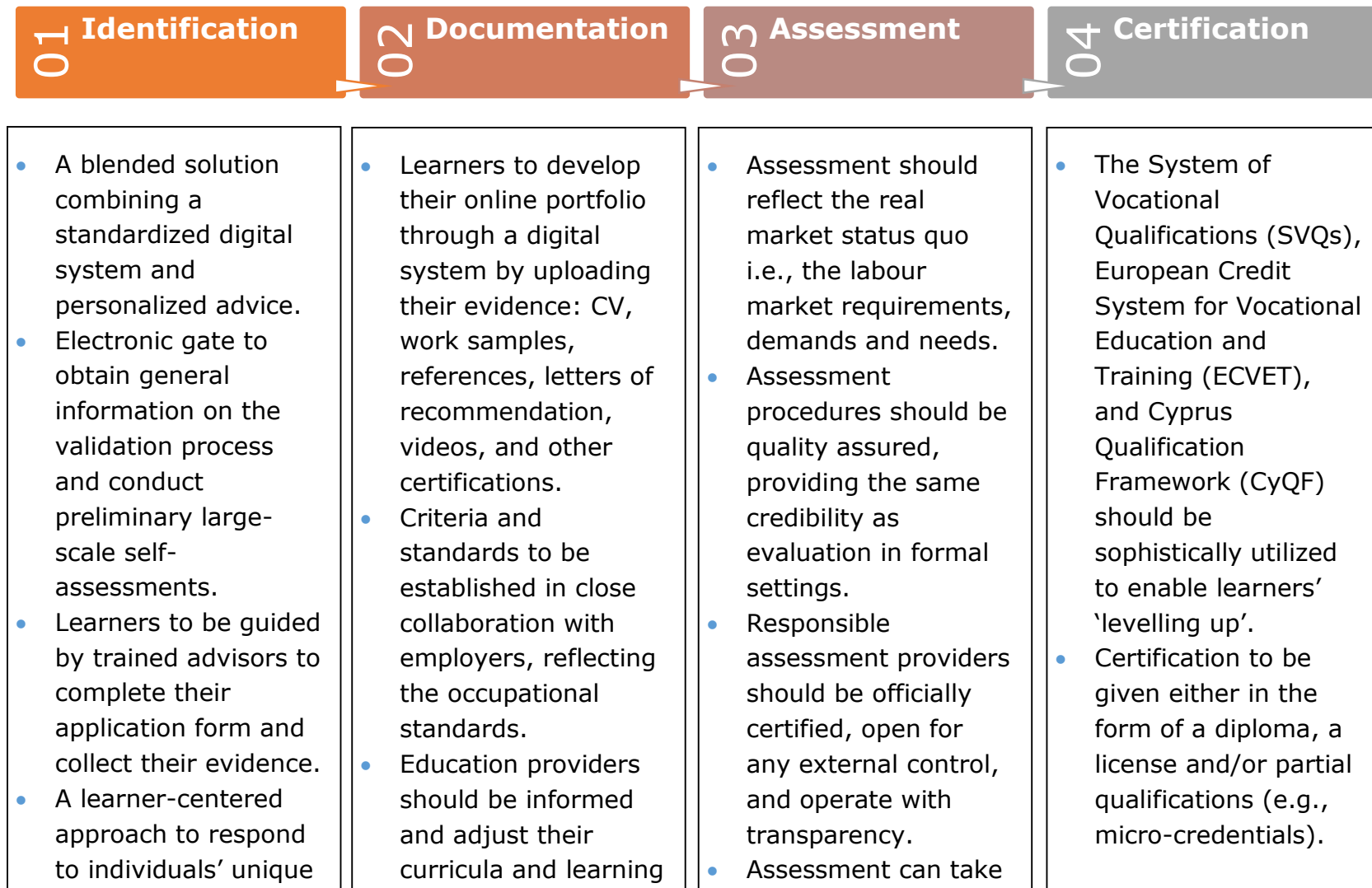
From another point of view, experts mentioned the need for a communal perception shift for education. Key actors need to rethink and redefine education provision, pointing out basic questions, such as why we teach and for whom we teach. Education has to follow a learner-centred approach and ensure that all learners - not only some - will achieve the desired learning outcomes. Last, it was made clear that validation of knowledge and skills is a social demand. The modern business world requires proof and transparency of learning outcomes and competences.

Participants mentioned several challenges that hinder the progress of establishing the national validation system in Cyprus. Communication and collaboration among different bodies and organisations, conflicts of interest, the lack of legal and institutional arrangements, and funding are only some of the challenges faced. However, during the workshops, participants proposed ideas and solutions on how to overcome these challenges, focusing on specific actions and practices for each validation phase.

Primarily, a blended solution combining a standardized digital system and personalised advice was recommended for the phases of identification and documentation. Through the electronic gate, learners could acquire general information, conduct preliminary self-assessments, and develop their online portfolio by uploading their evidence: CV, work samples, references, letters of recommendation, videos, and other certifications. Later on, they could be guided by trained advisors to complete their application form, considering the different and diverse competences and fields of expertise.

Criteria and standards should be carefully set in close collaboration with employers, reflecting the occupational standards. Education providers should be informed and adjust their curricula and learning objectives to reflect these standards. The System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and Cyprus Qualification Framework (CyQF) should be sophisticatedly utilized to enable learners' 'levelling up'. Assessment procedures should be quality assured, providing the same credibility as evaluation in formal settings. Responsible assessment providers should be officially certified, open for any external control, and operate with transparency in order to enhance trust and reliability.

Finally, certification, either in the form of a diploma or a license, can be the stepping stone for personal and professional growth. By exploiting existing systems such as the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) and the SVQs, and CyQF, individuals could be provided with opportunities to upskill. However, certifications should be officially and equally recognised by society, including employers and education providers. Key shareholders during all phases are the National Qualifications Authority («Εθνική Αρχή Προσόντων»), HRDA, MoECSY, MLWSI, Universities and certainly employers.





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| <p>competences and needs to promotes a lifelong learning culture.</p> | <p>objectives and outcomes to reflect these standards, and thus evidence.</p> | <p>the form of written and oral examinations, or practical demonstrations if needed, designed on each learner.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The value of certifications should be officially recognised by the state to ensure their transferability and portability. |
| <p>Actors to be involved National Qualifications Authority («Εθνική Αρχή Προσόντων»), Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA), guidance and advising services of Ministries (MoECSY and MWLSI), Universities' careers and liaison offices, the Youth Board Council (YBC), NGOs, community centers, education and training centers.</p> | <p>Actors to be involved National Qualifications Authority («Εθνική Αρχή Προσόντων») as responsible of the National Qualifications Framework (CyQF), employers, institutions of secondary, post-secondary and tertiary education, adult education providers, guidance and advising services of Ministries (MoECSY and MWLSI).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A legislative framework to encompass this process and set protective measures. <p>Actors to be involved An independent authority to set assessment mechanisms centrally or by delegating them to educational institutions or external experts.</p> | <p>Actors to be involved Independent authority, National Qualifications Authority («Εθνική Αρχή Προσόντων») as responsible of the CyQF, HRDA.</p> |

Annex 1

CONFERENCE AGENDA

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| Registrations | 8:30 – 9:00 | |
| Welcome speech from the President of IDEP Board | 9:00 – 9:05 | Dr Onisiforos Iordanou <i>President of IDEP Board</i> |
| Minister' s of Education Address | 9:05 – 9:15 | Mr. Prodromos Prodromou <i>HE the Minister of Education</i> |
| Director of IDEP setting the theme of the Conference | 9:15 – 9:30 | Dr Stylianos Mauromoustakos <i>Director of IDEP</i> |
| Cyprus Lifelong Learning Strategy | 9:30 – 9:50 | Dr Nicoletta Ioannou <i>Officer of European and International Affairs, Lifelong Learning and Adult Education Office</i> |
| "The Learning Curve of <i>Learning Outcomes</i> : Malta, a Case Study" | 9:50 – 10:20 | Prof. James Calleja <i>Principal and CEO, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology & President EfVET.</i> |
| "Learning outcomes and recognition of non-formal learning - the Estonian example" | 10:20 - 10:50 | Mrs Kulli All <i>Deputy head of lifelong learning and skills department, Estonian Ministry of Education and Research</i> |
| Coffee break | 10:50 – 11:10 | 20' |
| "We make the road by walking... the organic development of RPL in Ireland" | 11:10 – 11:40 | Mrs Andrina Wafer <i>Head of Access and Lifelong Learning, Qualifications and Quality Assurance Ireland (QQI)</i> |

| Workshops | 11:40 – 13:00 | Facilitators |
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| A. Transfer and Recognition of LO to professional qualifications | | Mr. Panayiotis Anastasopoulos <i>General Director p-consulting.gr</i> <i>Board of Directors EfVET</i> |
| B. Procedures for the recognition and the mechanism for the transfer of LO from non-formal education | | Mr Raimo Sivonen <i>Principal of Kainuu Vocational College</i> |
| Γ. Certification Mechanism of LO in informal education | | Mrs. Gina Ebner <i>Secretary General of European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)</i> |
| Lunch Break | 13:00 – 14:30 | 90' |
| Workshops' Main points | 14:30 – 15:00 | |
| PANEL Discussion | 15:00 – 16:30 | Dr. Elias Markatzis Mrs. Kulli All Prof. James Calleja Dr Stylianos Mauromoustakos |

Annex 2

Workshops and Thematic Areas

Workshops

- A. Transfer and Recognition of LO to professional qualifications
- B. Procedures for the recognition and the mechanism for the transfer of LO from non-formal education
- C. Certification Mechanism of LO in informal education

Topics and questions

1. Identification

Will we build a standardised digital tool for self-assessment or provide a dialogue-based identification through guidance and counselling support? Or blended? Who will provide support (formative assessment)? Which stakeholders will be involved?

2. Documentation

How evidence will be collected (portfolio)? What are the criteria and standards? What formats of evidence? Who will collect the evidence? Which stakeholders will be involved?

3. Assessment

What are the reference points and standards? What are the assessment methods/tools (written, demonstrations, simulations etc.)? How transparency and trust is ensured? What are the quality assurance arrangements? Who will conduct the assessment? Which stakeholders will be involved? Will there be a summative assessment?

4. Certification

Will this process lead to a formal qualification, part-qualification, license, or else? Who will provide the certification – awarding body (credible authority or organisation)? Will the summative assessment be linked with the NQF? Will there be specific certifications for non-formal and informal learning? How this certification can be exchanged into formal and/or professional qualifications?