

15th-19th DECEMBER • NAPLES

Seminar on the value
OF NON FORMAL
learning and validation/recognition
OF THE COMPETENCES ACQUIRED

welcome!

"Welcome to Naples, Italy, the city of the sun!"

For us, the National Agency, and for me, this seminar is really important for two main reasons. Firstly, because we are in the Italian Semester of European Presidency and the Italian National Agency is organizing a calendar with several opportunities during this semester, with the recognition and validation of the competences being one of the main issues. Indeed, the vice-minister of youth policies Luigi Bobba, while presenting the Italian presidency, put this topic as one of the most important points to be discussed and to be developed during our semester.

For us, this issue is very important and this seminar is not only a formal meeting, but it is a key topic because we want to give to Latvia, the country who will be the next one to lead the semester of presidency after us, the results of this seminar. Second, the seminar is very important to the Italian National Agency, because in Italy the recognition of the competences is a weak point in comparison to other European countries and the possibility to meet youth organizations, teachers, etc. represent a moment for sharing and for discovering the state of play on this issue. These important results will allow the Italian National Agency to have a base for the next year to make an important proposal to the national government. I thank you, personally and on behalf of the Italian National Agency, because this seminar is a possibility to learn for me too, and in particular I want to thank the Italian Agency representatives: Fabiana, Anna, Paola and the entire staff that worked on this seminar.

I wish you to reach important results and to share them with us, along with your ideas, proposals and suggestions."

Giacomo D'arrigo

Enjoy the view from the window of the hotel!

table of contents:

What you will find here:

how to read this book	3
Introduction – the concept behind the seminar	4
Part 1 - Knowledge	17
• <i>What is Non Formal Education?</i>	18
• <i>The Recognition</i>	22
• <i>State of play: Political developments on recognition & validation</i>	25
• <i>Coming-up-next on recognition in the youth field</i>	31
• <i>Impact of youth work on employability</i>	36
Part 2 - Recognition and Validation in Practice	38
• <i>Best Practice at institutional level</i>	39
• <i>The Regional Systems of “Qualifications” and “Formalization and Certification of Competences”</i>	
• <i>NGO Best practice</i>	44
• <i>Pilot project: cooperation between NGO and Human Resources Provider</i>	
• <i>Open Space about theory and practice</i>	46
Part 3 - Get into action	51
• <i>Bridging & synergies at local/regional/national levels</i>	52
Part IV - Feedback & comments	56
• <i>Daily evaluation</i>	57
• <i>Final last words and comments</i>	58
• <i>When I go back, I will bring back home...</i>	59
• <i>A message for you, dear reader..</i>	61
• <i>..and a message for our National Agencies!</i>	63
• <i>List of abbreviations</i>	64
• <i>References</i>	65
• <i>Acknowledgments</i>	68

How to read this book

How to read this book:

Dear reader, this booklet is for you!

I wish that what you find here could be useful and interesting to you as a youth worker, trainer or teacher, policy maker or whatever you feel is your role as citizen of this world...

I wish that this content could be not only the results of a learning experience of 35 participants, but it could represent also a source of inspiration and motivation that could passionate you to walk on the pathways of a better recognition and validation of the non formal and informal learning, and that could support you on doing one more step forward for an easier and happier entering into the job market of our youngsters.

When I work as a trainer on ourselves as actors of changes, among all the methods I use there is one that I love particularly: It's an holistic model that takes in consideration several personal spheres we are part of.

As I believe to the importance of activate and develop all of them with the same intensity, here I would like to give to you "food" for your mind (knowledge part), for your hands (deal with

practice: the skills), for your heart (the attitude, the emotions), and the motivation (inspiration and sources for founding opportunities and project ideas) to join our walk on the pathways toward better recognition and validation of the learning outcomes in non formal and informal settings.

For this reason, in the first chapter of the book you will find inputs, theories, states of play and researches for a better knowledge about this issue; then, in the second part, you will find best practices implemented by institutions and by NGOs to show you some examples and inspiration of what is possible to do in reality, because recognition is a common responsibility and it requires a long-term commitment of all of us as public body or NGO; then, in the third part, you will find some hints, suggestions and ideas to get inspired and motivated to do a step forward and to develop something new.

Where is the space for the emotion? Well, "Love is all around" and you will find emotions, wishes and dreams through all the text thanks to feelings and comments of the participants. I hope it will let you feel the spirit of the people behind this book, but if you want more I invite you to have a look, at the end of the book, to the personal message that the participants left thinking to... you!

Good reading and good walk!

Laura



Introduction

The concepts behind the seminar

This booklet contains the results of the “Seminar on the value of non formal learning and validation/recognition of the competences acquired” organized by the Italian National Agency and held in Naples from 15th until 19th of December 2014.

The idea of the seminar is a follow-up of a national event organized one year earlier, and it wanted to highlight the national and european debate on the topic of the recognition and validation of the learning outcomes acquired in non formal educational setting.

The expected outcomes of the seminar were to provide to the participants inspiration, transfer of know-how, conceptual clarity, readiness to initiative-taking in acting as multipliers; furthermore another expected outcome is to create an informal network of individuals and organizations aiming to push forward the discourse and practice of recognition and validation of non-formal learning.

Finally, to support and to spread the results, we wrote this booklet that incorporates various recognition and validation practices from different contexts, providing an useful resource.

Fabiana (Italian NA):

“it was ambitious to propose this seminar because not only this project perfectly fit into the Italian semester of European Union but also because there are also other reason why we want to carry on this seminar: we believe it’s important to talk about this issue now and to tell to our politicians that we are expecting something from them and that we would like to be involved as NA in the European table when they speak about recognition.

Non formal learning is considered a valuable resource complementary to formal education, and the concept itself of the new programme Erasmus+ is connected to the idea of a benefit coming by the connection between the two different approaches: together they could offer better opportunities to youngsters, offering them a way to face the youth unemployment promoting the youth entrepreneurship and making them European citizens more aware of their own rights, tolerant and open to cultural diversity.

In this new context, leisure time activities become more important than before, because the NFE has a great value on job placement: young people involved in youth organization get the opportunity to develop soft skills highly appreciated in the job market or, in case they do not have working experience yet, the ones done in youth field acquire high values.

Miguel (trainer):

"we are here to know how young people can gain from the activities we do"

But how much employment issue can we put into the bag of the youth worker?

The youth worker should become able to make the youngster reflecting on the activity done, to recognize his own learning and to connect it to the system of certification. The making of this process is a task of the youth worker, and for that reason the youth worker has to develop a proper language and a solid understanding of what is expected for the promotion of recognition and validation of the competences. We know there are different reactions among the youth workers: some of them are frustrated (they complain: "we are not job officers!"), while others like the idea that NFE could be a tool to help the youth employment.

Anette:

"Now I realize that it's/it should be also a part of my job to think about validation".

As a team, we reflect about it and one month before the seminar we spent one day together: Fabiana, Anna, Miguel and Laura met in Rome in the office of the Italian National Agency while Sakis, the greek trainer, was interacting with us online on a big screen.

In order to reach these objectives and to create the right setting for the participants to share and to find new ideas for innovative proposals for further development, we identified the main content to work on and we invited some experts who provided us inputs to create a "pool of knowledge".



The day together helped us to clarify how to work and how to: enable the development of cross-sectoral synergies of entities with an applied interest to recognition and validation of non-formal learning and the competences acquired therein, in view of creating more possibilities for young people to combat unemployment”.

The main aim was composed by the following objecti-

- To consolidate the understanding of recognition and validation-related notions, concepts and processes.
- To deepen the understanding and reflect on the importance of non-formal learning activities in equipping participants with competences required in the professional and other aspects of life in general;
- To provide space for exchange on how organizations/institutions/state- and European-bodies look into competences acquired through non-formal learning activities, also in comparison to those acquired in formal education.
- To explore the application, efficacy and impact of various recognition and validation systems from different countries.
- To look into recent European developments at political level and especially with regards to the Council Recommendation of Dec. 2012 and the current state-of-play of its requirements; specific emphasis on the validation arrangements and their links to NQF and EQF.
- To enable partnership-building and networking in view of future strategic interventions and actions related to the theme of the seminar.

At political point of view, we got an overview on the developments at national and international level made by Paola Trifoni (Italian National Agency) and we focused on a specific case of practices of regional recognition and accreditation of competences made by Training and Employment Center in the Emilia Romagna Region presented by Fabrizia Monti.

Data and information about the impact on employability of the youth involvement in youth organization were provided benefiting from the results of a research study made by the European Youth Forum.

To make it practical at NGO dimension, it was presented an Italian pilot project about creating bridges between NFE and employment issues thanks to the contribution of Amesci, an Italian NGO, which signed an agreement about Recognition of Competences acquired in NFE through Voluntary work with Adecco, an international provider of Human Resources. Looking at the future, the involvement of Kristiina Pernits, SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres Training and Cooperation, gives us inputs about the challenges on this theme at European level, showing us what is going to happen next.

The presentation of Key Action 2 made by Fabiana di Carlo, Italian National Agency, had an operative effect as it provided useful information to stimulate and to facilitate the participants to get into action, developing further ideas to design plan and strategies to bridge different sectors.

Dorian: "I believe it was very well structured and organized. The agenda vhad different kind of activities (from open spaces to dialogue with external peers)."

	15 _{/12}	16 _{/12}	17 _{/12}	18 _{/12}	19 _{/12}
		BREAKFAST			
morning sessions	arrivals	into the seminar & Welcoming of Director of Italian AN	Open Space	Bridging & synergies at local/regional/national level	departures
		getting to know each other		COFFEE BREAK	
common ground defining non formal learning		LUNCH			
afternoon sessions		Know Your recognition context"	European Youth Forum Impact Study	Mapping & coming-up next By Kristina Pernits SALTO TC RC	
State of play: political developments on recognition & validation		AMESCI Organization Naples			
	COFFEE BREAK				
	ice breaking & welcome drink	Emilia Romagna's practice on recognition & validation	Off to Naples city center	Youth pass, final evaluation & closing	
	DINNER		DINNER OUT!	DINNER	

An added values regarding the content came from the group of participants itself, as the seminar involved 35 people with different profiles and backgrounds coming from 16 different Countries, and it could benefit of different levels of expertise influencing positively the approach to the topic of the recognition and validation of the competences, bringing different points of view and practices applied in different contexts.

The diversity in the group regarded the professional role of the participants (youth workers, trainers, project managers, members of main board, EVS mentors, career advisers, teachers, public officers, responsible of NA and deputy) as well the different context they belong to and where they are involved: NGOs working with youth dealing with different topic (culture, sports, environment, media, etc), students and youth involvements (youth city councils, European social forum & students associations), networks of no-profit organization & umbrella of business associations, formal learning places (schools & vocational training centers) and governmental body (NA for schools, adult and VET & Ministry of Youth and Sport).

The diversity among participants had an influence also on the expectations expressed by them. If you want to have a quick look to the expectations of the participants, check this tag cloud! Each tag is an expectation expressed by the participants in their application form, and as many participants expressed it, as bigger you will see the font size.

Here the group expectations!

Share & Experience

Practices & Networking & Project Development

Tools & Concepts

Partnerships

Employment & People

Deliverables

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS



Austria
Daniel Correia
IMACTIV
Verein fuer Sport, Kultur, Bildung und
gesellschaftliches Engagement
Leader/decision-maker
IMACTIV - Association for Sports, Culture,
Education and Community
Our organisation uses these fields to attain youth
(main group) and children as well as their families.



Austria
Arthur Longin
Sozialmanagement Steiermark
EU-Project Manager
NGO, founded on 2003 to organize projects un-
der the governmental Youth Welfare Program for
youngster between 13-18 years old with social or
upgrowing problems.



Bulgaria
Lena Karnalova
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria Association
Executive Director
Non-profit organization, affiliate member of the
Big Brothers Big Sisters International (www.bbbsi.org) and delivers mentoring services to children and
youth at risk, following the international standards.



Croatia
Anita šolman jandžel
Association for Creative "Learning through play"
President
Non-profit association focused on creative projects
and NF educational programs with special concern
to children and youth with few opportunities.



Cyprus
Eleni Matheou
Latsia Municipality Youth Council
Person Representative
The City Council Youth Latsia boasts diverse and
multifaceted work with a wide range of activities
that highlight the dynamism and values of our youth
in cultural, humanistic and artistic level.



Cyprus
Antonis Stylianou
IMACTIV
Cultural Workshop Ayion Omoloyiton
Volunteer/Support Staff
Nonprofit organization established in 2002 to host the Workshop of Traditional Dancing focused on presentation and dissemination of culture and education.



Cyprus
Maria Chatzinicola
European social Forum of Cyprus (ESFC)
active member – teacher
Organization active on European events and volunteerism focus on employability, education and social entrepreneurship in cooperation with many Eu programs. I am also teacher in secondary education.



Denmark
Nana Sofia Hansen
SILBA Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy
Member of Main Board
SILBA supports youth in post-Soviet countries in democratic values, political participation and conflict resolution organizing youth trainings and seminars.



Iceland
Sólveig Ása Tryggvadóttir
AFS Iceland
Hosting coordinator and volunteer developer
Part of the AFS International student exchange organization it gives students an opportunity to experience cultural differences by joining foster families and going to school in foreign countries.



Italy
Silvia Padrini
Associazione di promozione sociale Joint project coordinator
Joint was founded in 2003 and it's an association that promotes social activities for youngsters 13-30 like Youth Exchanges, training courses and EVS within the Youth in Action program and now within Erasmus+.



Italy
Marco Vigliocco
Fyouture
President and projects coordinator
Aim to promote the knowledge about youth policies, Eu values and citizenship; protect rights and interests of disables developing projects founded by EU, by private and public bodies.



Italy

Elisa Maran

Informagiovani

Project manager

InformaGiovani promote human and civil rights, with focus on right to information and participation; defending social and collective rights; promote local and international volunteering.



Italy

Francesco

SEI

Vice-President and Trainer

SEI (society, environment, economy and institutions), a recognized organization born in 2013, works in the field of education, in particular to have sustainable way of living.



Italy

Ginevra Sammartino

SCI Italy

Erasmus+ project manager

It is a branch of an international voluntary movement, Service Civil International, which organize since 1920 voluntary activities and campaigns for the promotion of peace, Human rights, international solidarity and active citizenship.



Italy

Renata Dolega

Centro Servizi per il Volontariato (CSV) - Centre of Service for Volunteer

Youth worker

It's a national network made out of 77 different representatives at local, regional and national level, created to provide free support to volunteers and volunteer associated organisations working in the territory, and to improve the quality of their work and projects.



Lithuania

Robertas Visinskis

Badgecraft

System analyst and product user experience designer

Badgecraft is building learning recognition tools using Open Badges standard. These tools are meant to help youth organisations and trainers working with non-formal education.



Lithuania

Rasa Rotomskiene

Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists

International partnerships coordinator

LPK is an umbrella business association bringing together 42 large industrial branches and 9 regional business associations summing up to over 2700 enterprises in total in Lithuania.



Lithuania

Alma Kuneikaite

Director

Erasmus+ programme NA in Lithuania for School, Adult, Vocation and Higher education sectors
We do implement more than 60 European, Nordic and national programmes for education and vocational training.



Lithuania

Zana Orlova

Education exchanges support foundation
project coordinator

Focus on Erasmus+ programme KA2 Strategic partnership projects within school education sector and coordinator of EU structural funds Project for NFE system development in Lithuanian regions.



Luxembourg

Pelagia Baxevani

The Impactory

Assistant on communication, organisation events, and promotion of informal learning.

Non-profit organization create in March 2012, promotes social entrepreneurship and innovation in Luxembourg organizing workshops and social events to facilitate the exchange and peer-to-peer sharing.



Malta

Mario Apap

Gozo College Boys Secondary School

State Secondary School

Guidance Teacher

Organise orientation visits, inform about available courses and job exposure exercise which 14 / 15 years old students can experience before they decide their future studies.



Norway

Harald Skarsaune

Kirkelig undervisningsforbund KUFO

General secretary

Association for youth workers and teacher in religious education. We hold trainings and organize EVS since 7 years. Our activities are NFL but we also work with universities and other educational institutions in FE.



Poland

Agnieszka Janik

Stowarzyszenie Edukacji Krytycznej/ Critical Education Association

vice-president

Established by the group of students and academics from the University of Wroclaw in Poland we study, read books and carefully observe the contemporary reality and try to act and react to it.



Poland

Zana Orlova

Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Młodzieży Dyslektycznej
(Association to help youth with dyslexia)

Volunteer

Organisation set up in 2002, help with overcoming the consequences of dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysorthographia and dyscalculia through developing the knowledge as copying with school's problems and stress.



Poland

Paulina Bester

Fundacja Edukacji Wizualnej
International Projects Coordinator

Fundacja Edukacji Wizualnej (Foundation of Visual Education) is a non-profit organization and organizes educational and cultural actions.



Portugal

Inês Cerca

Associação de Defesa do Património Cultural e Natural de Soure

Voluntary/project manager

Local environmental NGO defends that the best way to proceed its mission is working with youth people, that's why we have developed project within YiA programme and Erasmus+ programme.



Romania

Dorian Zemba

Youth Academy

National Trainer; Human Resources Coordinator
Organisation, actively developing and implementing projects in the Romanian non-formal education area aimed at ensuring a higher level of learning process for all young people with whom we work.



Romania

Marilena Ciontescu

DOMINOU ASSOCIATION

Trainer for youth and math teacher.

Non-profit Romanian association. It promotes educational and cultural strategy supporting formal education, non-formal and informal learning for children, youth and adults.



Spain

Rafael Quesada Quesada

Santa María de los Ángeles Cooperative Educational Centre for Upper Secondary and Higher Education (29012088)

Head of the Counseling Department and EVS mentor
Our Institution offers post-obligatory studies and it aims to spread values such as social economy and cooperativism through formal and non-formal education.



Spain
Yolanda Rodriguez Guijarro
Mar de Tierras
Facilitator

Association that aims to unite people around a specific idea: "There are another ways." Organize talks debates and conferences on human rights and sustainable development, development cooperation projects, cultural exchange for youngster, lobbying and advocacy.



Turkey
Hakan Dulkadiroglu
General Directorate for Education, Culture and Research for Ministry of Youth and Sport
Deputy General Director

Focus on education and cultural guidance, doing research, publishing and disseminating books, supporting cultural activities on youth related issues.



Turkey
Asli Orhan
Bodrum Youth Club Association
Media Trainer

Aim to create awareness on historical heritages, oral history documentary projects with Greece, dance and intercultural events for young people between 14 - 35 years old.



Turkey
Gülgün Aytug
Menemen Ahmet Erdinc Cengiz Mesleki Egitim Merkezi
Guidance counselor

Vocational Training Center is provided for those who have not been able to continue their education after primary education or who have been left out of formal education for various reasons.



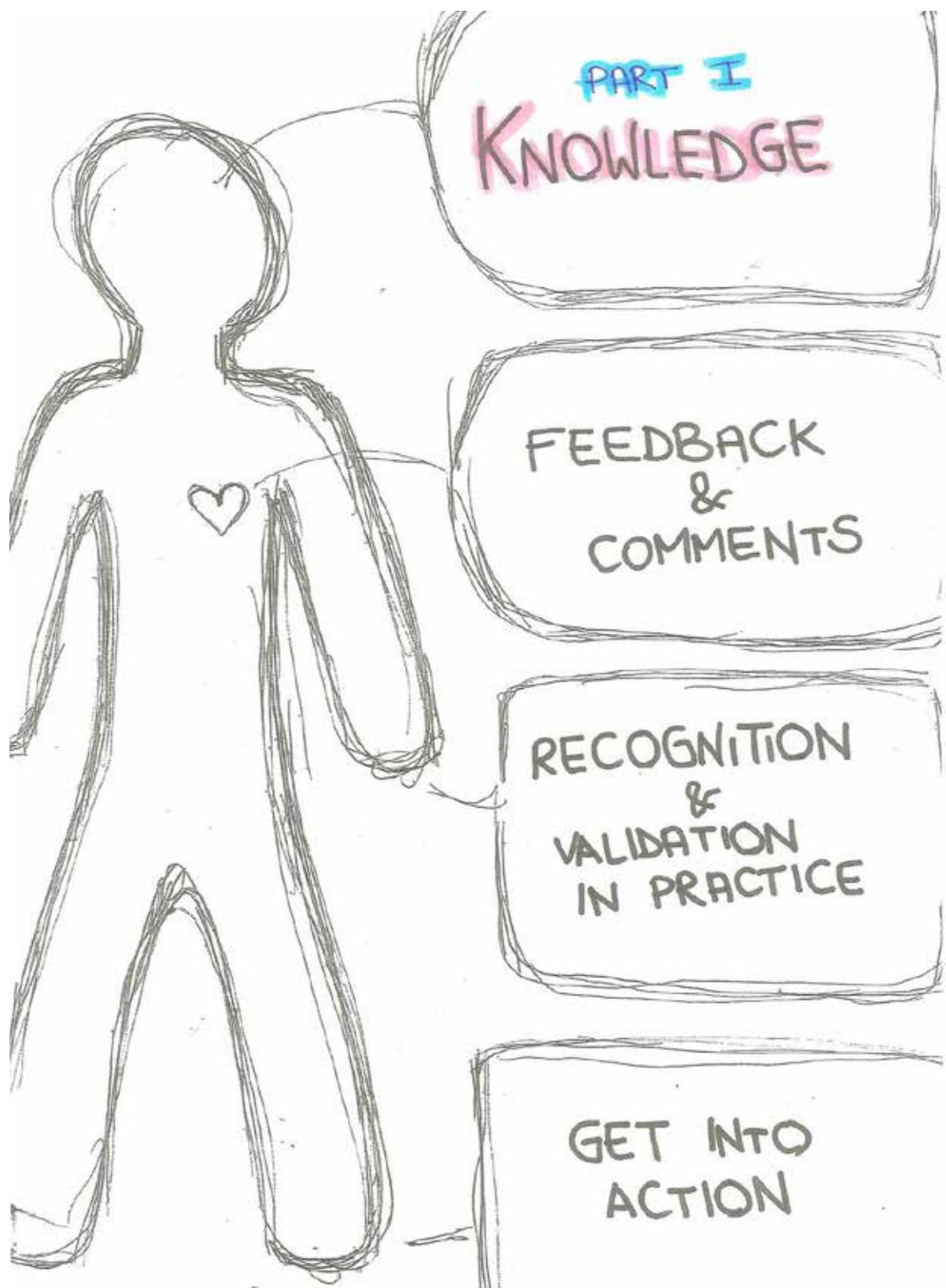
Turkey
Elif Naz Acar
Genç Hayat Vakfı (Youth Lives Foundation)
Training Coordinator

Genç Hayat (Young Lives) Foundation views the youth as the key for a social transformation bringing up personal development of youngster. Non formal education become a characteristic element of our youth organization.



Turkey
Yeliz Semin
KOSGEB Edirne Service Center
Expert

Governmental body responsible for the education of young people about entrepreneurship, research and development and innovation; supplying financial aids to young entrepreneurs and to SMEs.



What is Non Formal Education?

Do we have all the same understanding about Non Formal Education?

Even if people speak about the same things, it often happens that they have different points of view and perceptions about it, putting special emphasis on different aspects. The same situation could happen when we reflect about the concept, values and features of Non Formal Education. To make it evident and to explore the concept of NFE we analyzed how the different institutions defined it along the years, discovering the main issues, emphasis and differences in the definitions according to the different use of the concept related to current needs.

Instead of finding or creating a unique group definition, the participants created small groups according to their personal preferred definition. With their peers, they shared what inspired them, what is more relevant to them and in general what they identify as NFE. As final results of the discussions, they select 2 key elements.

Here the results of the key features in the concept of Non Formal Education:

- 1) Active participation – concept of recognition/validation
- 2) Everybody and everywhere (open to anyone, no barrier to access to and practice it. All resources are everywhere, also online)
- 3) Parallel and complementary to Formal Education – diversity of places when it occurs.
- 4) Planned, outside and inside institutions, it can be a complement of school system. A purpose to provide learning to all people of all ages according to needs and intentions. Openness and accessibility. Design according to need and aspiration.
- 5) Focus on the process not the aim - focus on individual and own experience.
- 6) Outside, person to all ages no restriction, everywhere and everyone.

List of Definition about Non Formal Education

Non-formal education: any organised educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives.

Coombs, P.H. with Prosser, C. and Ahmed, M. 1973

“Non-formal education” is a convenient term for certain educational activities, but it expresses what those activities are not rather than what they are. No definition of the term is without some opening for controversy. [...] education and training of out-of-school youth and adults in groups, classes, courses and activities structured and planned for the promotion of learning (including individual self-tutoring), but not constituting part of the formal system and not specifically leading to formal qualifications such as diplomas or specific trade standards. It concentrates on short education and training programmes of a few days, weeks or even months but not as long as a full academic year. However, all adult literacy programmes of any kind are included.

Review of World Bank Operations in Non-formal Education and Training Ralph I. Romain & Lenor Armstrong. 1987

Non-formal learning takes place along-side the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalised certificates. Non-formal learning may be provided in the workplace and through the activities of civil society organisations and groups (such as in youth organisations, trades unions and political parties). It can also be provided through organisations or services that have been set up to complement formal systems (such as arts, music and sports classes or private tutoring to prepare for examinations).

A memorandum on life-long learning”, European Commission staff working paper, Brussels. October 2000

Non-formal education may be defined as a planned programme of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competencies, outside but supplementary to the formal educational curriculum. Participation is voluntary and the programmes are carried out by trained leaders in the voluntary and/or public sectors, and should be systematically monitored and evaluated. The experience might also be certificated. It is generally related to the employability and lifelong learning requirements of the individual young person, and may require in addition to the youth work sector, the involvement of a range of government or non-governmental agencies responsible for the needs of young people.

“Towards a revitalization of non-formal learning for a changing Europe” Report of the Council of Europe Youth Directorate Symposium on Non-Formal Education. October 2000

Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.

“Common European Principles for Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning”, Brussels, May 2004. European Commission.

Learning outside institutional contexts (out-of-school) is the key activity, but also key competence of the youth field. Non-formal learning in youth activities is structured, based on learning objectives, learning time and specific learning support and it is intentional. For that reason one could also speak of non-formal education. It typically does not lead to certification, but in an increasing number of cases, certificates are delivered.

From "Pathways towards validation and recognition of education, training and learning in the youth field"
Partnership between Council of Europe and European Commission, February 2004

Non-formal education is defined as any organized and sustained educational activities that do not correspond exactly to the above definition of formal education. Non-formal education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational programmes to impart adult literacy, life skills, work skills and general culture. Non-formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the ladder system and may have a differing duration.

Education at a glance 2006, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

Non-formal learning consists of learning embedded in planned, organised and sustained education activities that are outside formal education institution, responding to education needs for persons of all ages. The purpose of NFE is to provide alternative learning opportunities for those who do not have access to formal schooling or need specific life skills and knowledge to overcome different obstacles. Non-formal learning is also intentional from the learner's point of view, as opposed to incidental or random types of learning.

"Synergies between formal and non-formal education", UNESCO, March 2006

Non-formal learning means learning which takes place through planned activities (in terms of learning objectives, learning time) where some form of learning support is present (eg. Student-teacher relationships); it may cover programmes to impart work skills, adult literacy and basic education for early school leavers; very common cases of non-formal learning include in-company training, through which companies update and improve the skills of their workers such as ICT skills, structured on-line learning (eg. by making use of open educational resources), and courses organized by civil society organizations for their members, their target group or the general public.

Council recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning

Youth projects [...] must adhere to the following non-formal and informal learning principles: a) learning in non-formal contexts is intended and voluntary; b) young people and youth workers are actively participating in the planning preparation, implementation and evaluation of the project; c) learning activities take place in a diverse range of environments and situations; d) the activities are carried out with the support of professional facilitators (such as trainers, youth workers, experts in the youth field) or volunteers (such as youth leaders, youth trainers, etc); e) the activities usually document learning in a specific, field-oriented way.

Erasmus + Programme Guide 2015

The recognition

There is a distinction between different forms of recognitions, depending on who recognizes learning and for which purpose. When we speak about the recognition we mostly refer to 4 levels, raising from personal to political dimension.

1 - Individual recognition clearly refers to the personal awareness and self-assessment (“I value the learning acquired”)

2 - Social recognition expresses how society values it and feels it as meaningful.

3 - Formal recognition is the recognition put in practices and it refers to the specific tools, the way to certify it, etc. (“Codified recognition”)

4 - Political recognition refers to the political development through recommendations, state of play, etc.

The participants became ambassadors of their countries and, thanks to their contribution, we mapped the recognition of the learning outcomes acquired within Non Formal Education referring to the 4 dimensions. We gave them some guide questions (that you can find below) to facilitate their analysis, and what comes out is that among the countries there are some common elements or trends but also differences. It was an opportunity to find interesting discoveries and to get inspirations for action.

Let's have a look to the results!

Mapping the recognition context

SOCIAL RECOGNITION

There is a lack of interest concerning NFE from society in Portugal, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Poland, Austria, Iceland and Turkey. There is low social awareness and understanding regarding NFE: the concept is not known yet with this terms (for example in Spain, Italy and Cyprus). On other side if you explain it a bit to the people they understand what is it because the practice of NFE is getting familiar. By the way, this concept reminds and links to European policies and programme but never to actions and programme at local or national level.

Italy, Poland and Spain complains a bit about the non-recognition from media. On contrary, in Iceland there are some talks about it.

Regarding the labour market there is a lack of interest: even if they search for the competences that can be acquired in NFE, they do not realize it and they do not link to it. Lithuania realizes trainings activities address to chamber of commerce to arise the awareness.

The pure volunteering could bring a change of mentality and perception, it could become internship and it seen as a way to facilitate the employment. Sometime it could represent something to be shame about because it can be seen as second choice when you can't find a job ("I do not have anything else more important to do").

Concerning the youth worker there are different way to see its position which is not recognize everywhere and it is not seen as a job: in some country is not payed and there are no financing for youth work.

FORMAL

In general there is a perception to be in a in a situation of development and testing pilot project.

In Lithuania and in Spain there is a good system of qualification of technical skills acquired in NFE to transfer to professional field also because there is a good system between university and labour market.

On 2011 Portugal had a process of recognition of the competences of LLL but only concerning adult education which is now on stand-by while for the young people there is a system of recognition of the competences similar to the one in Emilia-Romagna Region.

There is recognition of credits in higher education in Italy, Lithuania, Cyprus, Spain, Norway.

LAW and POLITICAL RECOGNITION.

There is a lack of recognition at political level and all the countries has only "laws on paper" except for Romania: this country this year got a new law where the activities of the volunteers in any organization are recognized and there is interest put on the background and on the experience the youngster accumulate. Moreover they receive a certificate and there is a strategy to implement it.

In Bulgaria is not possible to work on it because the political situation is complex and the fast changes into the government do not allow to make a stable programme and to set up a strategy.

There is a low involvement of youth workers in local policies (where young people are seen more as a problem than a resource).

PERSONAL RECOGNITION

Self/personal recognition recognition is not enough.

There is not enough importance given to this phase: not enough time, space and support to reflect about own experience of participation in NFE. Youthpass is seen as not important and usually the actions aimed to recognize the learning are low budget and very often there is not time to work on it.

There is a low level of importance about personal recognition: many people are not aware of their competences (they do not know they have it) and often there is a poor quality content about what is written on the Youthpass.

Youthpass is not recognized and everywhere it is not valued by participants or organizations or employers: It's important to arise the awareness of it as well for the young who fill it.

SOCIAL RECOGNITION

How much of non-formal learning is understood and valued by ordinary citizens? By businesses, employers? Other institutions? Are youth workers/leaders treated as partners when discussing local youth policies? How much are non-formal learning activities present in the media? How much are non-formal learning activities supported (financially or else)? Are young people seen mainly as a resource or as a problem to combat and what is the role of youth work and/or the youth worker in this regard, if any?

FORMAL RECOGNITION

Is there a system for people to get qualifications for competences acquired through their participation in non-formal learning activities? Is there a system of accreditation of non-formal learning programmes? Can competences acquired through non-formal learning activities be used as a means to increase one's possibilities to get into or back to formal education? Is there a national/regional/local system available for young people to keep a record of their learning outcomes?

POLITICAL RECOGNITION

Are there any laws and/or regulations promoting recognition of non-formal learning? If yes, are they national/regional/local? If no, are there any coordinated efforts to support policy development in the field of recognition. What is the status of youth work (as a main provider of non-formal learning possibilities) in your country? Ever heard of a politician referring to youth work & non-formal learning in their agenda or rhetoric? Are European policy developments considered by NGOs, authorities, practitioners etc?

SELF-/PERSONAL RECOGNITION

Are there competent youth workers/leaders in your organization and/or community that can support the youth in their learning process? Are they themselves aware of the educational value of youth work/non-formal learning? To what extent young people from your community have tried "self-assessment" or "learning to learn" activities? Do young people have the space, time and support to reflect on their experiences as participants in non-formal learning activities? Is Youthpass known and are there any concrete tools for young people to use to enhance their learning process?

State of play: political developments on recognition & validation



Contribution by Paola Trifoni, Italian National Agency.

The journey through the mapping of the recognitions from each country proceeded with a look to the level of the European political development, thanks to the contribution of Paola Trifoni of the Italian National Agency.

The overview allows us to know better the state of play and “where-do-we-go-from-here”. Knowing this context could facilitate the development of further strategies, giving us a better awareness of the context where our action could take place.

To guide you through the history and the political developments, you can find a keyword for each milestone.

Our story starts from the 90s when the European policies and tools in the field of education and training, the European Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, begins to support initiatives, programs, activities which emphasizes the central role of the concept of lifelong learning.

On the 2000, education, training and employability were recognized by the European Lisbon Council as an essential part of economic and social policies needed to reach the strategic goal of Europe becoming the world’s most dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010.

On 2001, the Commission White Paper entitled "A new impetus for European Youth" stressed the importance of non-formal learning and education.

The Council Resolution on Lifelong Learning invites the Member States to encourage co-operation and effective measures to validate learning outcomes. The Copenhagen Declaration and the Council Resolution on the promotion of enhanced European co-operation in vocational education and training: priority should be given to developing a set of common principles regarding validation of non-formal and informal learning with the aim of ensuring greater comparability among approaches in different countries and at different levels.

With the decision 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences established Europass, a European portfolio which citizens can use to better communicate, record and present their competences and qualifications throughout Europe.

The Council and Commission Joint Interim Report to the Spring European Council, "Education and Training 2010", calls for the development of Common European Principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning: it recognizes that the Member States and the Commission have made progress in developing common European principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field invited the Member States to enable the identification of competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning, with a view to their recognition on the labor market.

The Youthpass was created as a transparency tool for participants in projects funded by the “Youth in Action” programme established by the European Parliament and the Council in Decision No 1719/2006/EC.

The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning invited Member States to relate their national qualifications systems to the European Qualifications Framework and to promote the validation of non-formal and informal learning in accordance with the Common European Principles agreed in May 2004.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) acts as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, promoting workers’ and learners’ mobility between countries and facilitating their lifelong learning.

The EQF aims to relate different countries’ national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Since 2012, all new qualifications issued in Europe carry a reference to an appropriate EQF level

Eight reference levels describe what a learner knows, understands and is able to do – “learning outcomes”. This will enable a much easier comparison between national qualifications and should also mean that people do not have to repeat their learning if they move to another country.

From Level 1: Basic general knowledge, basic skills required to carry out simple tasks, work or study under direct supervision in a structured context.

To Level 8: Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields, the most advanced and specialized skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation, demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research.

The Council conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) noted that lifelong learning should be regarded as a fundamental principle reinforcing the entire framework, which is designed to cover learning in all contexts whether formal, non- formal or informal.

The “EU Strategy for Youth-Investing and Empowering; a renewed open method of co-ordination to address youth challenges and opportunities” called for better recognition of skills acquired through non-formal education for young people and stressed the need for full use to be made of the range of tools established at EU level for the validation of knowledge, skills and competences for the recognition of qualifications.

The “EU Strategy for Youth-Investing and Empowering was endorsed by Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018). A European Inventory on the validation of non-formal and informal learning containing up-to-date information on current validation practices in European countries had been published regularly since 2004, while European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning were published in 2009.

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The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council establish:

- European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET). That Framework should support the implementation of the Common European Principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning, improving the interrelationship of education, training and employment, and building bridges between formal, non-formal and informal learning.
- European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) to be used for the transfer and accumulation of individuals’ learning outcomes achieved in formal and, where appropriate, non-formal and informal contexts.

In 2010, the “Europe 2020” strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth calls for the development of knowledge, skills and competences for achieving economic growth and employment. The accompanying flagship initiatives “Youth on the Move” and the “Agenda for new skills and jobs” emphasizes the need for more flexible learning pathways that can improve entry into and progression in the labor market, facilitate transitions between the phases of work and learning and promote the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

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Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The validation of learning outcomes, namely knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning can play an important role in enhancing employability and mobility, as well as increasing motivation for lifelong learning, particularly in the case of the socio-economically disadvantaged or the low-qualified.

The Member States should have in place, no later than 2018, arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning whilst taking into consideration national, regional and/or local, as well as sectoral needs and characteristics including the following elements:

- identification, documentation, assessment of an individual’s learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
- certification of the results of the assessment of an individual’s learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning in the form of a qualification, or credits leading to a qualification, or in another form, as appropriate.

Moreover they should promote the involvement in the development and implementation of the elements and principles of all relevant stakeholders, such as employers, trade unions, chambers of industry, commerce and skilled crafts, national entities involved in the process of recognition of professional qualifications, employment services, youth organizations, youth workers, education and training providers, and civil society organizations.

- Evaluation and review of European transparency tools (EQF, Europass, ECVET credit system for vocational education and training, ECTS credit system for higher education).
- Launch of a public consultation/debate addressed to stakeholders and the general public.
- Eurobarometer survey.
- Closing conference of the public consultation and debate.
- European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2014.

***creating flexible learning pathways across borders
ensuring adaptation to new phenomena, including internationalization and
developments in digital learning promoting the coherence and
simplification of European transparency tools***

Italian example

Lex 28/6/2012, "Fornero":

- *Define formal, non formal, informal learning*
- *Create the networks for the lifelong learning*
- *Define the path to create the national system of certification in NF and INF context*

Italian situation

Decree 13/2013:

- *Complex system, in which the state and the regions have to create a common ground (not only one repertory of competences but several, with a transferability approach*
- *The certification will be made by 21 different regional systems.*
- *There will be several bodies entitled to validate and issue certificates under the responsibility of the regional authority*

Coming-up-next on recognition in the youth field

By Kristiina Pernits, SALTO TC RC

From history to today and to the future!

Kristiina Pernits from Salto gave us an overview about what is happening next at international level showing us the recent developments in terms of recognition of non-formal learning and youth work in Europe and introducing what is going to happen giving inputs about the future challenges on this theme from Europe.

First of all, there are two main strategy on development:

1) An European Strategy referring to the training development and quality especially in the framework of the programme and the quality of the work done in the programme. It concerns also specific areas like the recognition of youth worker, the recognition of the trainer and the recognition of the competences.

2) A Youthpass strategy in the direction of implementation and development of the already existing recognition tool: the Youthpass Certificate. Additionally, further development will regard as well the recognition of youth work and non-formal/informal learning.

Overview using the 4 dimensions of the recognition:

1. Political recognition:

At European level the list of documents which influenced the political recognition:

At European Level:

- *Youth – Investing & Empowering: EU Youth strategy (2010-2018): It sets priority areas of european youth policies and recognition of volunteering involvement.*
- *The European Youth Report: It contains the development in the priority areas. Last one was edited on 2012-2013 and next year there will be the next one.*
- *Council Resolution on youth work (2010): For first time attempted to define youth work at international at european level. There is an extra-value of this document and even there is a quite vague definition, it represent a starting point.*
- *Council Conclusions on quality youth work (2013: it was important for the inclusion of young people regards bakcground and specific needs.*

In parralel the development in the CoE:

Young Europeans: an urgent educational challenge (2011): This document is the result of a Strasbourg process. It refer to the importance of NFE and It is Important because it aimed to support the recognition on international and national level: young should have the possibility to being involved and it should being recognize properly. The results of the symposium were published, accepted and adopted and they contains statements which highlight the current challenges in terms of recognition. They propose reccomendations and there is a plan of action with more concrete ideas of what could be done in terms of knowledge and instruments both at national than at european istitutional level indicating as well the challenges for recognition.

Other documents:

- *Pathways paper 2.0 (2011): done by EU-CoE youth partnership, SALTO T&C RC, EYF*
- *Legal position of youth work, existing structures for youth: done at National level*

They were created Member States Expert Groups to propose more concrete measures to implement Council Conclusions on European and national levels in order to continue working in more concrete developing of national recommendation at national and european level.

After the Strasbourg Process was initiated by the youth partnership between COM and CoE an European Expert Group on recognition to monitor and push further developments in terms of recognition level.

What is going to happen next at political level of recognition?

- There will be a 2nd Youth Work Convention on April 2015, again in Belgium during Belgium presidency which it will give a clear impact on policies development in terms of recognition of youth work, and it is considered already a milestone, as it is considered one of the topics to be discussed as current challenges in youth work. Moreover it will be presented the description of current state of affairs in youth work in Europe by H. Williamson: it will take stock of the Strasbourg Process and it will feed into the political document of CoE.
- From Council of Europe there is an expected charter on the value of youth work and non-formal and informal learning.

2. Social recognition:

The social recognition is about the wider understanding and the general awareness and acceptance of youth work and the competences related: the ones developed in youth work and the ones needed for youth work to implement and carry out youth activities.

In Erasmus+:Youth we can find several opportunities like the Key Action 2 possibilities to developing recognition in projects and in youthpass, to implement cross-sectorial cooperation and TCA for the network of NA-s.

3. Formal recognition:

The formal recognition regard the perspective of validation of the learning outcomes.

We have the following documents which define the direction where the commission is going in terms of recognition:

- European Qualifications Framework (2008) + National Qualifications Frameworks
- EU - Recommendation on the validation non-formal & informal learning (2012)
- On national levels – e.g. inclusion of learning outcomes from youth work in Accreditation of Prior Education and Learning (APEL, usually by universities)
- European Inventory on validation: it describes the state of affairs of the validation or recognition in general sense both at European level both as national ones. Here there are national reports which provide a bit of overview about what is happening and who are the main actors taking care of different aspects of validations. Additionally, it includes specific projects and specific practices.
- National reports + case studies
- Guidelines on validation

KA2 can be used to support the recognition developing a wider understanding of what is the youth work and which competences can be developed thanks to it: Erasmus+ in comparison to Youth in Action offers more opportunities to work cross-sectorial.

What is going to happen next at Social and formal Recognition?

- There will be main emphasis on EU level about employability.
- There is a National validation systems to be in place by 2018, including validation of competences from the youth field.
- There is a European Training Strategy aimed to provide a generic set of competences for trainers in the youth field and for youth workers working at international level and further measures including recognition and training. The set of competences for youth workers are already developed and published (they are available on salto website) but it's challenging due to the variety of the youth field.
- 2 interesting materials are about to be published by the Partnership: "Mapping of recognition tools and practices in Europe" and a "Compendium of testimonies on the value of youth work".

4. Individual recognition:

The social recognition is about the wider understanding and the general awareness and acceptance of youth work and the competences related: the ones developed in youth work and the ones needed for youth work to implement and carry out youth activities.

In Erasmus+:Youth we can find several opportunities like the Key Action 2 possibilities to developing recognition in projects and in youthpass, to implement cross-sectorial cooperation and TCA for the network of NA-s.

What is going to happen at level of personal recognition: further development of Youthpass

There will be higher effort of the Implementation within Erasmus+ Youth in Action: it will be implemented in transnational activities and address as well to youth workers / youth leaders and for trainers.

There will be a pilot project in Estonia and Latvia on the application of the youthpass as a instrument to recognize the learning outcomes in all nationality as well outside the programme.

There will be development also concerning the general development of concept (because now it is a process but we are also considering to combine it with different certificate) and there will be further development and update of the educational materials and technical developments.



What are the main challenges for recognition we are facing?

1. To make the concepts of “youth work and non-formal learning/education” better understood
2. To keep all dimensions of recognition in balance (because all are equally important)
3. To deal with the paradox of formalization: there is a fear of “reducing” youth work to non-formal learning into formalization as we start recognizing it and using certificate
4. To assuring quality in youth work and in NFL/NFE: there is not a system to evaluate the quality (European Youth Forum is doing a lot of work on quality assurance system and have some training activities as well).
5. To maintain and to cultivate diversity: youth work / field is very diverse in terms of context and themes but it should be kept like that. This diversity is also a challenge in terms of how to recognize it but there is a richness in itself.
6. To build knowledge: the research are done mainly focusing on the results, on the outcomes and not on the process: the part of the knowledge should be developed but also it should be accessible and useful for the everyone.
7. To being dependent on other sectors: due of the interdisciplinarisation we cooperate with different sector. Moreover there is a big variety in the political placement where we are (ex. of different areas and ministry..).
8. To be able to create partnerships: there is a need for cooperation, to create bridges and to find common languages and understanding because there are several projects even for other areas but there is a lack of communication among them.

Don't get depressed!

There are some evidence supporting our cause!

- The COM study on the value of youth work (2014) : study about the value of youth work collecting data from all the members state.
- RAY, a network of 15 NA: they put forces together to do research analysis on youth field and firstly the impact of YIA (how does it works, impact, what changed). They recently publish 2 reports:
-A study on the effects of participation in a Youth in Action project on the level of competences on the self-assessment of the key competences after being participating in YIA projects (2013).
-“Learning in Youth in Action” (2012) focused on the kind of differences the youthpass process can made: It's important to get the certificate but what makes the different is the attention to the learning.
- Youthpass Impact Study (2013)
- The report “Developing the creative and innovative potential of young people through non-formal learning in ways that are relevant to employability” which includes recommendations about further measures, both for the COM and the MS.
- A study focused on the hidden competences: “International skills and competences, developed through international experiences during study or practical training, are an asset on the labour market. Or so we assume. But do we know this?”

Impact of Youth Work on Employability

It was great to know better the context of the recognition and to discover the further development but..

..What is the real impact of Non Formal Education on the employability?

To get some data and information not only concerning the learning outcomes coming from the participation in youth organizations but also how the involvement in youth activities could help the employability of young people we gave a look at the study made by the European Youth Forum. The study contains the results of a survey which involved 245 youth organization, 1.301 young people and 11 in-depth interviews with employers.

The study represent an advocacy tool for recognition of Non Formal Education and Youth Work highlighting the value of the involvement in youth field both for the learner both for society showing the key role of youth organisations as NFE providers and for competences development.

Regarding to the 4 dimension of the recognition:

- 1) At personal level: the self-recognition increase the awareness and the ability to presentate the competences gained by the youngster
- 2) At Social level: it build bridges of trust and understanding
- 3) At Political level: it supports the long-term engagement in NFE and youth organisations
- 4) At Formal level: it shows the value of competences gained in NFE and youth work for LLL

The study demonstrate that the participation in youth organizations enhances employability providing results on the following aspects:

- It assess which competences and skills acquired in non formal education contribute to the employability
- It finds out which soft skills and competences are demanded in the labour market and which one are developed through NFE in youth organizations
- It find out results about the self-recognition by young people and how to make it visible
- It shows the level and conditions of acceptance by employers.

Several factors influence the development of the skills through NFE in Youth Organization. The most important are the frequency, the duration of the involvement and the level of involvement: more involvement bring more development. In particular, the experience abroad has an impact on practicing foreign languages, improving intercultural communication and developing leadership skills.

The young people are aware of the soft skills developed but they need to be more confident in presenting the skills gained. Indeed, the employers tend to find out late: the skills are not mentioned in CV and when they are, there is a lack of information and the relevance is not well explained.

How they are presented is important and youth organization should “brand” themselves better to employers: indeed, young people frequently consider that recruiters will not value their engagement in youth organisations. In reality the research shows that employers are positive toward young people experiences in youth organization. In particular, their values on them depends on certain condition like the level and type of experience and the relevance to job opening. Anyway, in general, they are more relevant as less work experience young people have.

Moreover the involvement in youth organization broaden the occupation consideration because it arise new vocations and it stimulate the job searches. vBeyond the skills development the involvement in youth organization creates network and connection for young people: It leads to social capital that can be used in employment search. Do you believe now on the value of NFE to help the employability of the youngsters?



Best Practice at institutional level

The Regional Systems of “Qualifications” and “Formalization and Certification of Competences”

By *Fabrizia Monti, Responsible of Educational, Vocational Training of Emilia Romagna Region*

In the Italian system the issue of recognition and validation is dealt at regional level by the law since 2012: that means that we have 21 different regional systems as much region we have in our country. Among all of them, one of the most important is the system of the region Emilia-Romagna one.

How is it working concretely?

How young people can have recognized and validated own competences acquired everywhere and however?

Emilia Romagna Region designed and implemented its own system using different structures to improve the quality of Educational, Vocational Training and to consolidate and to develop professional competences. The main ones, presented in our seminar are the following:

SRQ Regional System of Qualifications	The SRQ system of Emilia-Romagna Region provides a formal qualification to a worker. It identifies “Regional Professional Qualifications”: a list of working roles characterized by the same professional competences or working process which are clearly showing the skills belonging to some specific job title.
Training Standards System for acquiring a qualification	It is an “Essential training standards” for training courses addressed to a qualification from the inventory of “Regional System of Qualifications”. Standards refer to the structure of the training courses (and not content): they define the requirements of the candidates, the duration, the structures of theoretical training, of the practical experience and of internships.
SRFC Formalization and Certification of Competences System	The Regional System of formalization of the competences (SRFC) is a process that aims to formalize and to certify the professional competences already acquired by the worker within regional qualifications framework.
Training Standards System for acquiring a qualification	The Accrediting process aims to identify public or private subjects with the necessary capabilities and resources for implementing vocational training activities and able to manage public, ESF, national and regional financing on behalf of the Managing Authority (Emilia Romagna Region).

The Regional System of Qualifications – SRQ

The SRQ system of Emilia-Romagna Region provides a formal qualification to a worker giving validation to the competence related to a reference standard.

To find the reference standard the Region identified “Regional Professional Qualifications” which is a list of working roles characterized by the same professional competences or working process clearly showing the skills belonging to some specific job title.

SRQ is made in consultation with other stakeholders, (like trade union, enterprise’s association) who help on the definition of the assessment criteria.

The competences related to the professional profile are characterized by the fact they could be trained and they enable the professional development plan.

SRQ is composed by:

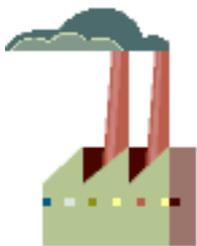
-“Inventory”: a list of qualifications organized into professional areas

-“Professional Standards”: description of qualifications

-“Source Procedure”: the process to update the qualifications and the competences into the list

What is a qualification in our system?

It’s a formal title given by a defined procedure: it is a bridge between the vocational training and the labour system and it reflects professional profiles already “present” in the labour market or to “be trained”. Qualifications characterize the regional economic and productive system and are important for specific regional sector policies and for that reason are expected to be developed.



the labour world:

as they are partners in defining the skills with the institution



the “educational and training” system

because the skills involved are “trainable”



workers

Because they enable professional growth plans

Regional Formalization and Certification System (SRFC)

The Regional System of formalization of the competences (SRFC) is a process that aim to formalize and to certify the professional competences already acquired by the worker within regional qualifications framework.

It allows a large number of people to express and to present the skills acquired through their life experience and/or professional training in a transparent, reliable and recognizable way, facilitating the development of a professional identity, the inclusion or reintegration into the labour market, the job mobility among placement, the transition from the work to the training system and vice versa.

This system take in consideration the competence acquired both in formally way, both non formally or informally ones.

FORMAL LEARNING

People who have taken part (partially or completely) to a training course formalized by a certificate.

INFORMAL AND NON FORMAL LEARNING

people with experience gained through working and/or informal contexts and/or with credentials acquired in formal learning situations, interested in obtaining a formalization and a certification document

The results of formal, informal and non-formal learning are validated respecting the principles of: transparency, practicability, trust, credibility and legitimacy. Thanks to the SRFS is possible to "formalize" the professional skills (by examining evidences, skills and knowledge) and to "certificate" them (after an exam which include a test and an interview) on the basis of the Professional Standards defined by the Regional Inventory of Qualifications.

What are the Evidences?

The «Evidences» are intended as «proofs» that gather information about abilities and knowledge acquired during formal learning courses and/or through professional experience, referring to SRQ standards of qualifications.

The evidences «from experience» are Classified in 3 categories:

Formal documents

(statements, contracts of cooperation, self-declarations, certificates, etc.)

Statements:

Declaration of the employer concerning the role, the duration and the activities performed specifically related to the indicators of SRQ as their concrete implementation:

It requires knowledge and skills related to the SRQ standards and it must be made using a pattern / reference form.

Contracts of cooperation

in which it should be evident the object of cooperation in terms of activities correlated to the standard.

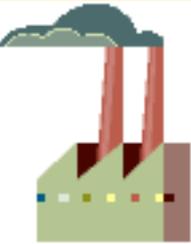
<p><i>Evidence of output</i> (products of people's activities)</p>	<p>The output of the candidate is what he/she has produced. Outputs that can be represented as evidence are semi-finished or finished product, physical or immaterial like product samples of the work, letters, verbal summary of meetings, reports, computer programs, etc.</p>
<p><i>Evidence for action</i> (behavior implemented by people)</p>	<p>Other people could contribute provide evidences through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>testimonials</i> from people who have had the opportunity to observe "in situation" the behavior of the candidate (both at present and in the past) - <i>audio and video recordings</i> maybe produced specifically - a "logbook" of the candidate in which he has noted the action of a competence by specifying the way, etc... - <i>Direct observation</i> of the candidate behavior by the subject engaged in the process of individual consultancy or other authoritative subject (company tutor).

They can be:

Already in existence: It is the case of an artifact, of a paper document that a person has already created in the past, etc..

Specifically created: even though in the framework of the normal activities performed by the candidate in the different contexts mentioned (summative checks).

ACTORS involved in the CERTIFICATION process:

		<p>Number of a subject accredited in Emilia Romagna Region after a specific training course</p>
	<p>RFC Head of Formalization and Certification. <i>Organizational Responsibility Person:</i> He/she is the procedural and organizational reference for the whole service delivery ensuring that the process is carried out in accordance with the agreed procedures.</p>	<p>476</p>
	<p>EPV Expert of the Evaluation Processes. <i>Expert of the methodologies and the process of training:</i> He/She carries out the consultancy and formalization activities and He/she is part of the exam committees and the evaluative interviews.</p>	<p>1196</p>
		<p>1160</p>

SRFC Applications by Emilia-Romagna Region

The certification of the competences acquired it was happening in the following cases:

Formal	At the end of the training courses
non-formal	<p>As extraordinary action for regional Social Health Operator (OSS). An extraordinary action in the field of Social Care was implemented due to the quality criteria requested by the new welfare system to the organization working in the field. Among the criteria one regards the percentage of workers qualified. For that reason, more than 2.000 Social Health Operator were involved and 1.500 of them could get the expected qualification.</p> <p>As regional actions presented on Specific Call (nr. 381/2010 – nr. 704/2011- nr. 438/2012)</p> <p>As service for people from other regions (OSS) As the system is not active in other region, some organization out of Emilia-Romagna benefit of the service of this region sending their workers in Emilia Romanga.</p> <p>As experimental application in the Job Centers. It is used within the programme “Youth Guarantee” to certify the competence acquired in internship activities.</p>
Formal	In the case “textile company in Bologna” and “textile company in Parma”
non-formal	SRFC is requested also for other reason: the industry wants to certify not only the quality but also they want to demonstrate and certify them as a learning setting where people can learn skills and knowledge.

What about the learning in youth mobility activities? Well, there are some indicators which could help to identify if a mobility or volunteer experience could be recognized but it need to fit in one professional role.

The Regional System of Qualifications – SRQ

Pilot project: cooperation between NGO & Human Resources Provider

By Enrico Borrelli, President of Amesci

Actions towards better recognition could be done also by NGO and the following presentation gave an example on how it can be possible for an NGO to develop own recognition strategy in collaboration with other stakeholder.

This presentation shows a pilot project implemented by the Italian NGO Amesci about Recognition of Competences acquired in NFE through Voluntary work in collaboration with Adecco, an international provider of Human Resources.

Context of the project

There are vacancies in the labour market but we don't find the right profiles: there is a distance between the competences of the candidates and the needs of the working placements. For example in Italy we say the universities are not able to transfer more than the knowledge itself. As results, when we study we gain a lot of knowledge but actually we need as well skills and then competences (= we need to know how to use this knowledge).

The values of volunteering experiences in labour market.

Nearly 10 years ago in a national congress of volunteering, a human resource manager (who is someone who knows what means how to select people!) said:

In these last 10 years in Italy we try to follow this way and since 1 year we have a new law concerning job issues where volunteering activities has to be certificated.

The Learning Outcomes in Volunteering activities depends a lot from the duration of the involvement because if I'm not involved regularly I have something I can call as an human experience but if I want to gain something out of it I have to do voluntary project in a more structured way. In Italy we have an extraordinary experience which is civil service which it lasts 12 months including 1.400 hours per year and only few of them structured in formal way (approximately 120 hours of training) where everything you learn is by doing.

Amesci, the Italian NGO, involved Adecco, an international company for provider of HR solutions through offering temporary job on the recognition of the competences acquired by the youngster within Civil Service. Adecco is proposing temporary job but keep in mind that the companies usually ask for temporary contract only as a first step in order to test people before to employ them in a long term.

Project idea

After an experience of Civil Service I can say the youngster "did this activity, they studied this" and I can show all the experiences. It's really useful for a company for provider of HR solutions to know "this youngster has this experience and not only this degree" and we have the right to tell them. That's why we connect Amesci with Adecco and we decided to make a pilot project.

The reason to involve Adecco is due to the fact that they are an international company and they are more open than a single enterprise (which needs to employ within their structure) because

they have to search for other enterprises so they have a bigger overview on the job market. Additionally values is that we can even ask them if they are searching for some competences or profile in particular as they have an overview in the labour market about what is required.

Procedure of validation and recognition

Some phases are still in progress as we start nearly 1 month ago even if we signed the protocol in July. The collaboration is not only starting at the moment of the searching for job at the end of the Civil Service but is taking place as well during the voluntary service itself: indeed, Adecco asks us to make trainings or practical activities during it in order to develop some competences requested by the job market.

Then, when the Civil Service is over and our youngsters are searching for work placement, they can go to Adecco where they receive a deeper interview on their specific non formal experience in order to recognize what they are able to do and they do a test to prove the competences. Additionally, Adecco asks us an internal evaluation by the project manager on how the youngsters work and to get some feedback related to their "balance of the competences".

With all this information and data, for Adecco is easier to find job usually in the companies more connected with practical skills who ask for working experience giving more values in skills and competences and searching for people who know how to work (work in a team, problem solving, etc.) regardless the degree or formal title.

Last challenge of this pilot project concerns the certification methods. Indeed, in Italy we do not have a validation and certification system but only certification about each single competence so we are creating a common process of evaluation with Adecco because they want to use their methods and their system but we are also trying to make it comparable also for other stakeholders so it could be recognized also internationally.

So we are still understanding which is the best methods as we try to create it now, even before the government do the formal process and give us a methods. We will have three processes to take in mind: we have to find a list of competences (and these can be very wide) and to create a methods to prove them, then we have to validate. Finally the institution should certificate with a code which it could allow you to spend them everywhere in Eu.

A final evaluation of the results will show us the efficiency of our strategy and concretely if it really increases the possibilities of employability among youngsters. This research can benefit of the comparison among the historical number in the database of Adecco and the results achieved by our youngsters.

Let's keep update!

Open Space about theory and practice

Are you amazed as we are about the huge amount of content discussed in only couple of days? We really had the feeling we get so much “food” in these days but of course there is always something we like to discuss more so.. now there is the time for our open space!

As the group has already experiences, tools and best practices in the field of recognition and validation of the learning outcomes and on creating bridges between NFE and FE, it was fast and easy to collect several proposal of topic to discuss about.

We run three workshop at time placed in three sessions of half an hour each. Each workshop represent a proposal express by one (or more) participant. Each participant then could choose the preferred group to join. The content were related to the recognition of non formal learning, the relation between formal and non formal system both at theoretical level through discussions both sharing concrete experiences in form or projects ideas, tools or new innovations. vYou can see here below some summary of what came out!

Main Topic Discussed:

Dialogue with Institutions and companies:

- In Lithuania there are good practices about sending students but regarding employers, not many companies are open for dialogue.
- In Portugal companies are not available to pay people doing internship for their companies. There is an activity called: breakfast of work. There are also companies that help students to complete their CV with no-formal competences. They can find also company searching for innovation.
- Malta: we have to make enterprises aware they are losing power.
- Turkey: examples of coca cola industry: once people see the innovation in the big companies the copy it and transfer it in their companies. At institutional level of looking at non-formal education they don't really care about is.

Final conclusion is to involve companies and institution in pilot projects for recognizing their skills learnt with no formal education.

Main Topic Discussed: Young Volunteers web portal

Presentation of the web site and analysis of system design, its strengthen and challenges; sharing other countries examples and discuss about management and certification. Final conclusion is to increase collaboration with other countries to runs same portal and learn how to manage the whole process. To implement the assessment of the performance and to ask for strong regulation to support volunteering.

Main Topic Discussed: Self-awareness of NFE: tools and activities

Brainstorming about methodologies to increase self-awareness:

- Use a grid / table to assess: Which person impacted you? What did you learn? what do you take out from it?
 - Simplify the action / competence to be evaluated
 - Immediate evaluation and define objectives and expectations and fears since the beginnings
 - Make a list of competences to be learnt (so people know what to expect)
 - Implement career-advise and feedback
 - Identify weakness as well and point of improvement
 - Skills recognized by employers: How to prove them?

Keep in mind:

- soft skills provide particular challenge in being evaluated
- Self-awareness comes from self-respect / self-development tool
- NFE = regards self-esteem

Tools:

- Activity: "switching" names when meeting someone
- Theatre of improvisation
- Portfolio of experiences
- Use of questions directed specifically at a particular person, with no answer required. This sparks international thinking process and recognizes actions of individuals.
- Comfort zone: encouraging people to exit to their comfort zone and explore more.

Final conclusion:

Separate self-awareness from validation of competences

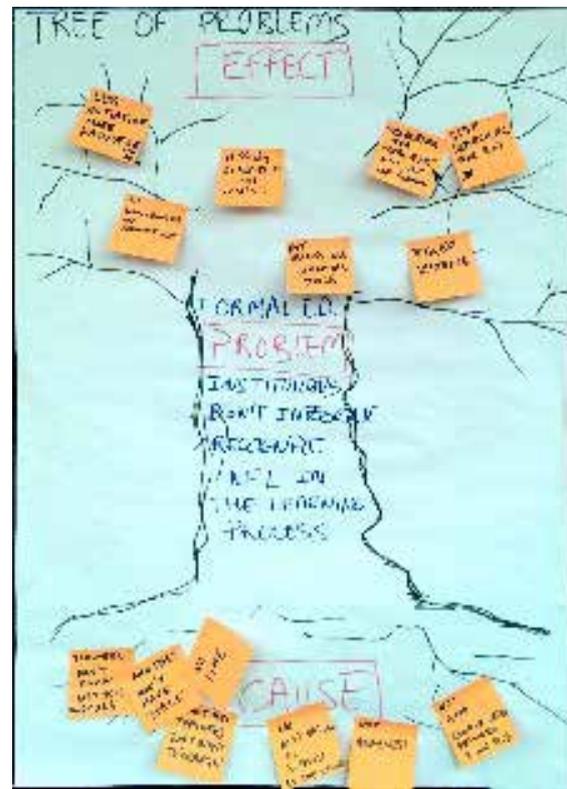
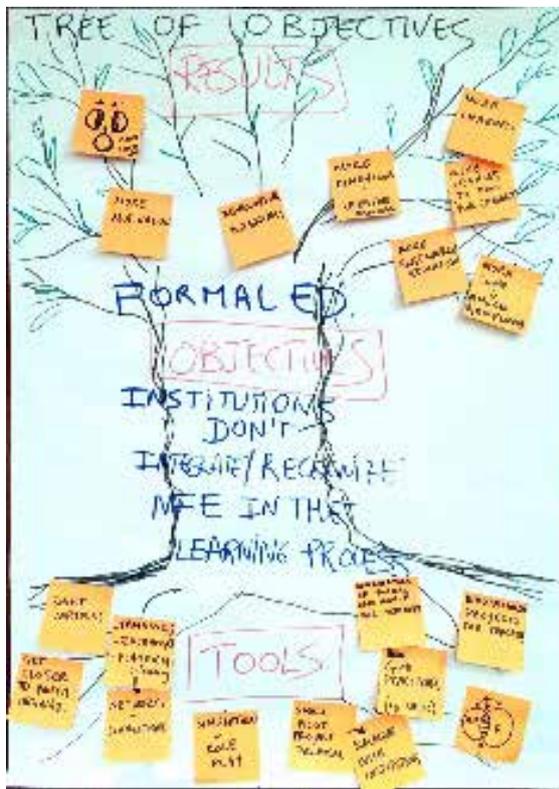


Main Topic Discussed: Problems in the relation among Formal Education and Non Formal Education

Problem: Formal Education Institution do not connect either recognize non formal learning in the learning process

Cause of the problems:

- Teachers don't know the methods, facilitators don't have the space neither time. Sometimes teachers don't want to change; there is no motivation or support from the system and no awareness. There is no good communication between teachers and students.



Effects:

- Less initiatives, more passiveness, no challenges, no renovation, not using all potentials tools, bigger distance, stop searching for experiences, searching for real experiences out of school, missing experiences and competences.

Tools:

- Get closer to youth orientations, simulation role-playing, networks, trainings, exchanges of good practices, learning portfolio, project proposals, dialogue with institutions, education projects for teachers.

Expected results: more motivation, developing potentials in more dimensions, stimulate creative attitude, more channels, more chances to find your paths, more competences, more employability.

Main Topic Discussed: Badges for recognizing learning in a non-formal education context.

What we learned:

- that learning using a gamified process becomes easier and fun
- this technology could be used in various contexts (recognizing achievements of volunteers, learners, educators, motivation at work, ..)
- this is a completely new form of feedback, because anyone participating in a learning process can feedback other participants, not just educator to student, but also student to student, student to educator.
- This tool could be used by employers for recognizing skills of potential employees
- There is a risk involved, because this technology could be used to formalise non-formal education. For this not to happen we must be active participants shaping the technology, and since it's Open technology we are empowered to do so
- Empowerment, is in the core of this technology, because a person is able to collect recognition from all kinds of organizations into a single place and to show to others.
- Finally we came to a realization: the more organizations use badges for recognizing

skills/competences, the better it will be for the whole ecosystem, because eventually we will be able to empower anyone to be themselves and to figure our own personal paths and to show them for recognition and job acquisition..

- So Open Badges simply needs better marketing/communication to non-formal education organisations.

<http://Badgecraft.eu>



Main Topic Discussed: the trainership validation and how to validate the experience of the students and get prove the informal experience.

CV versus validation tool: CV is not enough for employability.

Graduates became more competitive thanks to international labour market.

Youth mobility is clearly relevant for what we are doing.

Main Topic Discussed: The Anholt Project

Report on "Anholt project" and the research study about it.

Creating a Non Formal frame where informal learning can take place.

Rafael meant that there is place in the formal system for informal time and non formal elements and methods to be used.

We agree on doing non formal framework within our means to contribute to the informal learning discussion and take the outcomes of this research as a example for our work with people of all ages.

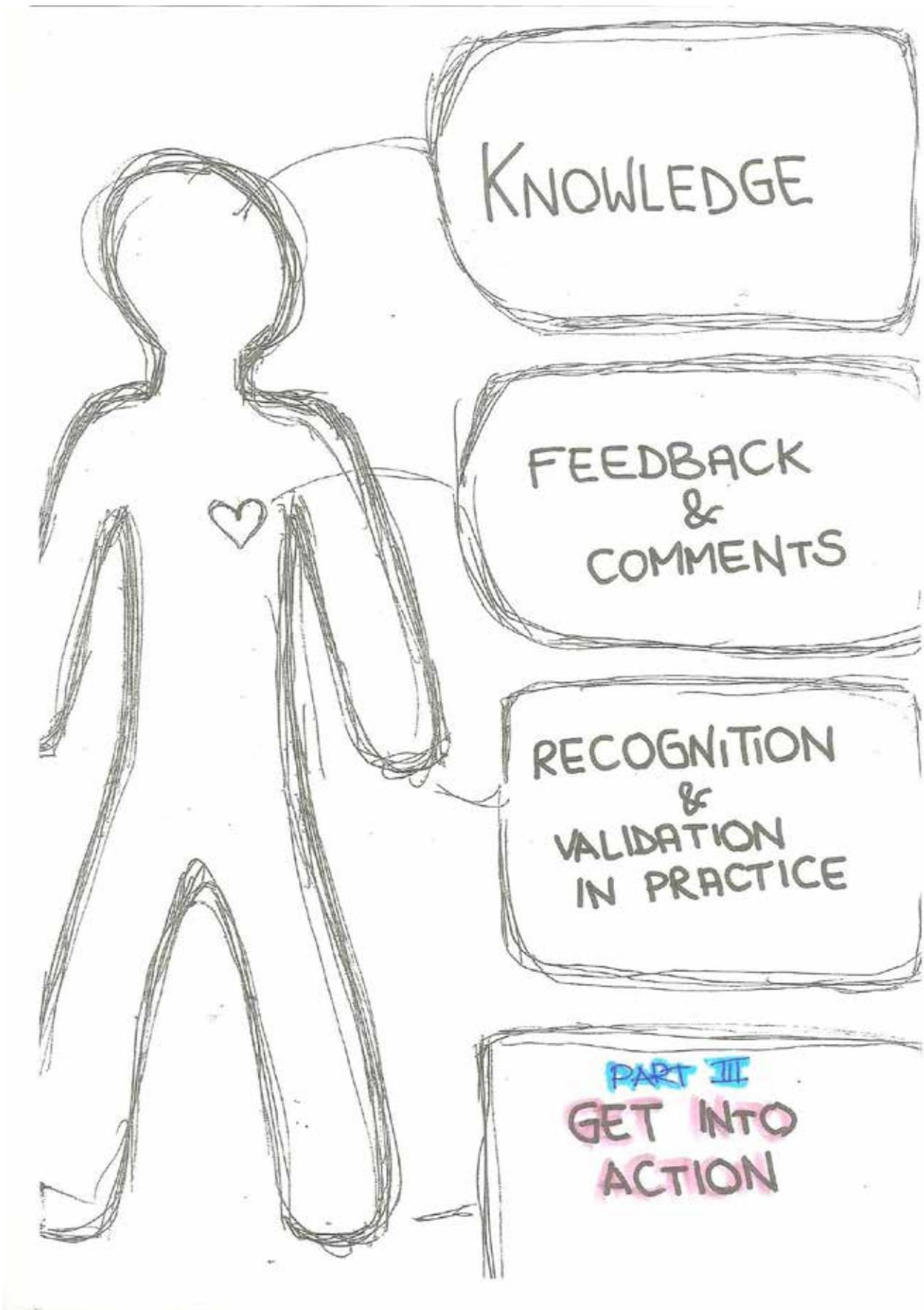


Main Topic Discussed: Good Practices of Recognition

Recognition of Non Formal Learning in Maltese system and Scandinavian System: focused on learning not on results (numbers). Most countries don't have any model of recognition of NFL: the common sense is that the "work" of young people is to study and there are no way to "reveal" young participants of NFE activities. Comes out the importance of the National Governments in getting involved in the recognition strategy in national systems giving more importance of NFE. Conclusions: as a first step, National Governments must need to recognize NFE activities.

Main Topic Discussed: Volunteer Competences Recognition

- Importance of the volunteers competences, definition of recognition from their empowerment / awareness of being in process of those competences
- For their employability: specific training and create recognition and became protagonist (self-employment)
- The model of recognition of competences adopted by the Lombardia region (Italy)
- Strategic partnership for competences recognition (as a forward step of the mentioned project concluded in Italy)



Bridging & synergies at local/regional/national levels

By Fabiana di Carlo, Italian National Agency

Due to high rate of unemployment, the presence of NEET, and rate of drop-out. the commission tried to find a way to decrease these numbers working together with enterprises and formal sector like schools and universities, etc. developing an innovative action which it could put all together the field of NFE and FE sector.

Within "Erasmus+:Youth" there is this new action called K2 (Key Action 2) aimed to create bridges and to create communication between different areas or sector: thanks to that action the different stakeholders can understand better what other people in different sector do and it could be easier to get a wider vision about what is happening at European level in this field.

For ex. A youth worker can understand the European qualification used by the labour market and the people working at the school can know better the youth sector impact on the life skills and learning to learn competence.

All the action within the programme Erasmus+ are the following:

- K1: mobility activities (the activities mostly knew: youth exchanges, trainings, EVS, etc.)
- K2: strategic partnership
- K3: structured dialogue

Details of K2:

- Managed at national level by each National Agency in the programme countries.
- In the moment in the programme there are 33 countries but is open to other countries, especially to neighboring partner country but here there is less involvement of the third country.
- Number of countries involved: minimum 3. (two in 2014).
- Characterized by intellectual output that should be product. Intellectual output.
- It allows long-term partnership and its product: it develop output.
- They ask to create something new, that can be useful and they give money for it!

SUGGESTION!

Take time to check if you have common ground: usually partnership failed because the partners don't know each other or they don't find the chemistry. Thanks to the input the participants took time to develop some ideas and to bring into action all the knowledge acquired. Here below you can find the list of the brainstorming and proposals developed. Working on the recognition of volunteers competences. First step will be a kind of survey about the development and trainings of volunteers. I've a technological background and I'm interested on a technological development. I want to create a tool that but I really need the collaboration of the youth workers. How to integrate NFL in Formal Context and how to create the bridges. Two main areas: conflict management and peace education. Career guidance, we care your future, advice, helps, tips, assistance. Develop national structural possibilities of NFE will help people with few possibility to access to labour market.

Do you want to read more? here below you can find the summary of some of the project ideas!

Project draft

Title of the project: Volunteers' competences recognition for their self-employment.

Possible partnership:

- Centre for Voluntary Service, Brescia
- The Impactory, co-working space, Luxemburg
- The Ministry of Youth, Culture and Research, Turkey
- Youth Academy, Romania

Main objectives:

1. international survey on managerial competences developed by volunteers
2. volunteers competences recognition
3. specific training courses to reinforce/develop their managerial competences

Summary:

The project idea is to respond to the challenging context of the economic crisis and the consequent unemployment rate growth, hitting hardest the young people. At the same time many of young people, often unemployed, offer their service as volunteers, consolidating and/or developing this way new non-formal and informal competences.

The scope of the project is to enhance and share at European level the value of volunteering experience on the whole education and occupation process and to understand how the competences acquired can influence their employability, with a particular interest in those that can be considered as crucial for setting up a social enterprise.

Topics addressed by the project:

- Competences recognition
- NF learning
- Social entrepreneurship

Title: Badges

Possible partnerships must include organisations with different know-how and experience in:

- Tech and IT development
- Youth work
- Psychological and coaching

Main Objective:

Designing and validating best and most effective methodologies to recognize competences acquired in non-formal education process. Then design and build online tools using these methodologies for all youth work oriented people and organisations.

Summary

1. First we want to define methodologies for effective recognition of Core competencies. Select the most promising ones with a help of experts.
2. Then validate the methodologies in real life situations/projects/... learn from these experiences, coming up with insights, choosing the most effective methodologies.
3. Once the consortium is satisfied with the level and effectiveness of chosen methodologies, then aim is to build a set of tools based on these methodologies
4. Finally forming a platform of Trust and Recognition composed of tools, API's, methodologies, documents for organisations and people participating in a Non-Formal learning context.

Project draft

Topics addressed by the project:

Timeline for the project
Competences needed

Title of the project: Connecting, recognizing and validating non formal learning at all levels of education.

Main objectives:

The project's main aim is to connect non-formal learning at all levels of education, with specific tasks, targeting different groups, both educators, enterprises and students alike, will be achieved through bridging the gap between formal and non-formal education in the 2 or 3 years that the Project will be running for.

Summary:

The project will result in the development of new competences through NFE (Non-Formal Education) in the learning process; The recognition of NFE as a learning process by Formal Education Institutions and Enterprises, sharing of tools which can promote non-formal learning in the school curriculum; The spread of a pedagogical model which connects FE (Formal Education) and NFE; The integration of non-formal actions (European Voluntary Service, Youth Associations, Youth Initiatives) in the School system in order to spread non-formal learning as a path to gain more competencies by the students; The exchange of practices of integration and recognition of NFE; The enhancement of knowledge about the processes and outcomes of NF learning; The deepening of understanding and reflection on the importance of NF learning activities; the development emotional competences, and the creation of more possibilities for young people to combat unemployment.

Possible partnership:

- Schools, who are interested in integrating NFE in their programmes and would organize youth trainings and exchanges between students.
- Youth organisations or associations who are part of organizing seminars, trainings, and other educational activities related to Youth issues and unemployment
- Businesses who would become involved in youth training, looking for specific soft skills and competences.
- Enterprises, preferably with experience in the youth field which will provide practices and internships to students.
- European institutions, forums and NGOs who would serve as mediators of information of the project progress.

Title of the project: Conflict management and peace building capacities

Possible partnerships:

Malta, Denmark, Cyprus, Italy, Italy Poland, Austria (4 participants per country)

Main objectives:

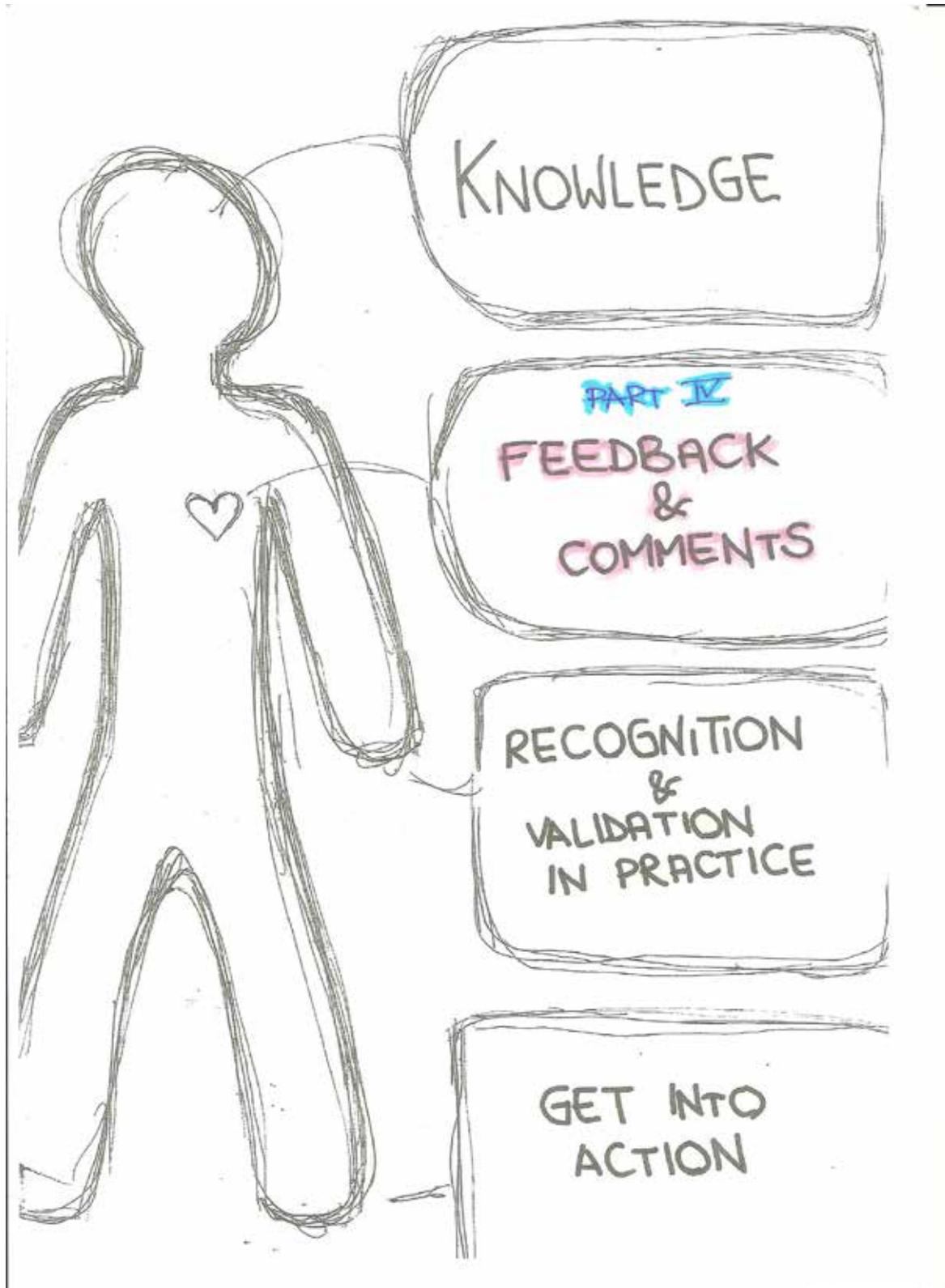
Capacities building on conflict management leading to the creation of non-formal toolkit for teachers.

Learning how to use peace as active tools and change the perception of it.

Summary:

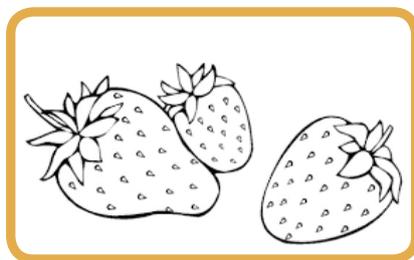
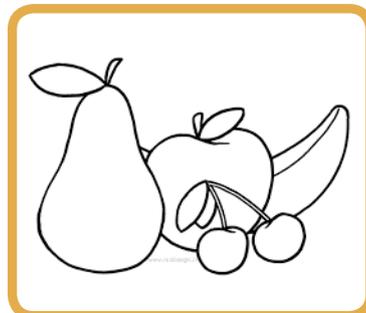
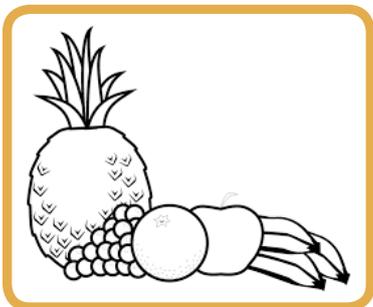
Study visit in several partner countries aimed to collect best practices and practical tools on conflict management.

Topics addressed by the project: Conflict Management



Daily Evaluation

Miguel and Sakis, set up a free space for the daily evaluation of the participants using the imagine of a fruit basket case and results, feedback and learning outcomes could be related to somefruits.



I day

Inspiring
Combine
Common NFE elements between EU countries
Exploring the different understanding of NFE Experience
There is a regional formalization and certification system
Experiences from other countries
Going deeper in the concept of NFL and its role in society and life
Start knowing each other
Creativity
Sharing & developing ideas
Reciclyng knowledge
Interesting discussion exchange
I learn some general information about NFL in other countries which is useful and inspiring
Productive
The interactive way of learning about "bo-ring" documents

II day

Good structure seminar so far
Good connections
Inspiration
Very fruitful & deep discussion in the morning
Badecraft.eu
Cooperation
There are very motivated professional chosen! Thanks
New models new ideas different situations
Motivation
Missing daylight
Knowledge about best practices for future projects
Good examples of people, of trainers, of trainings
Nice babà

Final last words and comments

Here we are at the end of our seminar. How was it?

Definitely It was a journey full of information, tools and knowledge to put in our bag and to get inspired.. but let's give a word to the participants:

We ask to each of them to define the seminar in one word.. look what it came out!

More than single words would you like to get a bit more feedbacks?

And if you are a kind of person who like to read letters, you can find even one here below!

"Dear friends,

I was very lucky to participate in this Seminar in Naples. I felt totally integrated within the group and I can say that I have learnt a lot and even so I might have the chance of building a strategic partnership with some of you.

Thanks to the Italian National Agency, the trainers and all of you for sharing so much knowledge.

As I said in my last intervention, I felt connected, we have collaborated for a better value of the non formal learning and we have created a new bridge for future relations.

Merry X-mas. Best wishes for all of you."

When I go back, I will bring back home..



A message for you, dear reader..



...and message for our National Agencies!

Abbreviations

COE: council of Europe

EQF: European Qualification Framework

EVS: European Voluntary Service

FE: Formal Education

IE: Informal Education

LL: Lifelong Learning

NA: National Agency

NEET: "Not (engaged) in Education, Employment or Training"

NFE: Non Formal Education

NFL: Non Formal Learning

TCA: Transnational Cooperation Activities of the network of NAs of Erasmus+ Youth in Action

VET: vocational Education and training

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Web

Bilan de compétences

www.bilan-competences.fr

Council resolution on youth work

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:327:0001:0005:EN:PDF>

(The Study): "Developing the creative and innovative potential of young people through non-formal learning in ways that are relevant to employability" which includes recommendations about further measures

https://www.jugendpolitikineuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3596/report-creative-potential_en.pdf

Duke of Edinburgh award

www.dofe.org

Emilia Romagna Region

<http://formazioneilavoro.regione.emilia-romagna.it>

Empower yourself

www.scout.org/node/6335

Erasmus+

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/erasmus-for-all/index_en.htm

Europass

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/home>

European Inventory on validation

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning/european-inventory>

European Qualifications Framework

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/eqf_en.htm

European portfolio for youth workers & youth leaders

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Resources/Portfolio/Portfolio_en.asp

(The) Hidden competences http://www.cimo.fi/services/studies_analyses_and_evaluations/hidden_competences

Nachweise International

www.nachweiseinternational.de

Pathways paper 2.0

http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/Youth_work_non-formal_learning/Pathways_paper.html

RAY studies

www.researchyouth.net/ray_specialsurvey_competences.pdf

www.researchyouth.net/ray_specialsurvey_learning.pdf

Unique learning badges

www.learningbadges.eu/

Validation of non-formal and informal learning

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/informal_en.htm

Young Europeans: an urgent educational challenge

http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefATDetails_E.asp?FileID=19707

Youth – Investing & Empowering: EU Youth strategy (2010-2018)

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/youth-investing-and-empowering_en.htm

Youthpass

www.youthpass.eu

Youthpass impact study

<https://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/downloads/youthpass-impact-study/>

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