

Developing mechanisms for recognition of prior learning

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 ROMANIA

Timeline



ID number 28514

Background

The 2015-20 Strategy for lifelong learning adopted in 2015 provided a foundation for developing validation mechanisms, providing financial incentives and counselling. In 2016, the national strategy for education and vocational training in Romania foresaw the development of mechanisms for recognition of prior learning and quality assurance mechanisms for certification of learning outcomes. A dedicated validation facility within the National Qualifications Authority (ANC), the National Centre for Accreditation, has been established.

Objectives

To improve the quality of validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL).

To improve the evidence-based approach to the validation of non-formal and informal learning by developing tools for collecting and analysing relevant data from the target groups.

Description

In 2018, the regulatory framework for validation and recognition was revised with a view to introducing QA measures for validation and recognition. Specific criteria for certification of evaluator and external evaluator competences and additional requirements for assessment and certification, organised by the assessment centres, were introduced in legislation. By 2019, there were 37 fully functioning local assessment centres that could validate prior learning of candidates, mainly in services, construction and agriculture fields of learning.

The VNFIL mechanism has been further developed, especially in relation to quality assurance, to make the validation more effective, reliable and credible to stakeholders. For example, the administrative capacity of the existing assessment centres continues to be improved and their coordination with stakeholders in adult education is being consistently strengthened to increase the rate of low-qualified adults certified through VNFIL. Measures have been taken to ensure the dissemination of the awareness-raising activities to inform

potential beneficiaries about the benefits of the validation process, especially for those with a lesser qualification level, for whom the certification of professional competences could become a real opportunity to improve entry into the labour market.

A large database and a facility to analyse and report different statistics of the target groups has been developed to make the VNFIL development and implementation more evidence-based.

2018 Legislative process

2019 Implementation

In March 2019, the methodology for creating, updating and management of the National register for professional qualifications was approved (Order No 3177/660/2019), bringing into one place the descriptions of all qualifications obtained by all training forms: formal initial education, tertiary education and continuing training. The national register is the basis for validation, using the qualification descriptions as its starting point.

A credit system was not yet in place for VET. In 2019, the generalisation of the ECTS system in higher education was approved (Order No 4698/2019). There were plans to define and set up a credit system for VET, applying also to VNFIL, but developments were at an early stage.

In 2019, ANC decided to modify the instructions for the authorisation of the centres for the evaluation and certification of the professional competences obtained other than by formal means; to launch the project to establish procedures for audio-video surveillance of the evaluation processes carried out by the centres of evaluation and certification of the professional competences obtained other than by formal means; to assess and certify prior learning, obtained other than by formal means.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, the ESF project on legislative systematisation in the field of qualifications development progressed towards creating a standardised mechanism for assessment of professional competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.

A dedicated platform for online assessment of the competences was being developed for the use by the candidates of all authorised assessment centres in Romania. Standardised assessment instruments (a database of assessment items for theoretical evaluation), standardised assessment tools for practical evaluation (in real working life contexts), and a methodological guide for assessment, integrating the learning outcomes approach into the assessment process were also being developed.

The above tools aim to be fully operational from January 2023.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, the ESF project on legislative systematisation in the field of qualifications development progressed towards better correlation of qualifications of level 1-5 NQF and higher education qualifications with the Classification of Occupations in Romania. Better matching of these qualifications and occupations should support an increase in participation in lifelong learning. Several project results were achieved in 2021:

- (a) An analysis of labour market evolution of skills and qualifications within economic sectors, for the 2025-30 horizon. The analysis provided a forecast of labour demand developments by branches and economic sectors, labour supply developments by education and specialisations levels (higher and secondary education), forecast horizon 2021-30 (medium-term forecast), and the demand for replacement of higher education graduates by specialisations (2021-30) and their labour market insertion rate by branches and economic sectors. The analysis aimed at supporting a systematic legislative approach to qualifications and update of the National register of qualifications;

- (b) Methodology to match 1-5 NQF level qualifications to corresponding occupations within the Classification of occupations in Romania (approved by common order of the ministers for education and labour, no. 3001/2022);
- (c) Correlation of occupations in the Classification of occupations in Romania (COR) with the domains of CANE (Classification of activities in the national economy);
- (d) Mapping occupations in the Classification of occupations Romania (COR) with ESCO (Multilingual classification of European skills, competences, qualifications and occupations). As a result, 4 340 COR occupations were correlated with 1 156 ESCO occupations;
- (e) Analysis of what legislative measures were needed in order to ensure an efficient correlation of CVET programmes, certification of qualifications and access to occupations;
- (f) A proposal of the Qualification Standard was developed to describe activities and necessary professional competences of occupations in a group of qualifications within the Classification of occupations in Romania, in line with labour market demands and built-in terms of learning outcomes.

The above actions support recognition of prior learning.

2022 Legislative process

In 2022, according to ANC, there were 25 active VNFIL assessment centres mainly in sectors of services, construction and social protection.

In 2022, ANC continued the development of a dedicated platform for online assessment of competences acquired outside of formal learning to collect and analyse relevant data from the assessment processes, standardised assessment tools (for 18 of 30 occupations so far) and the development of a methodological guide for assessment, integrating the learning outcomes approach.

In 2022, a public consultation was launched on three methodologies: the process of evaluation and certification, the identification, evaluation and recognition of learning outcomes, and authorisation and accreditation of centres for the evaluation.

2023 Implementation

In 2023, ANC drafted two legal acts to replace the 2004 VNFIL system legislation: on the VNFIL process and on the authorisation/accreditation of the assessment centres. The updates also aim to embed the use of learning outcomes and micro-certification in VNFIL.

2024 Implementation

Due to the new education laws (pre-university education law no. 198/2023, respectively higher education law no. 199/2023), the ministerial order no. 3888/2021 for the approval of the Methodology regarding the criteria and procedures for the assessment and certification of professional competence assessors, assessor assessors and external assessors was updated.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of National Education (until 2021)
- National Qualifications Authority (ANC)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity
- Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (until 2021)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

Learners with migrant background, including refugees

Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers

Adult learners

Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)

Unemployed and jobseekers

Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment

Low-skilled/qualified persons

Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Trainers

Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

Companies

VET providers (all kinds)

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Using EU transparency tools (EQF, Europass, ESCO, ECTS, ECVET principles)

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Order for the approval of the Methodology of the process of evaluation and certification of professional competences obtained by other means than formal ones](#)

[Government Decision regarding the approval of the Methodology for the identification, evaluation and recognition of learning outcomes in non-formal and informal contexts](#)

[Order for the approval of the Methodology for the authorization and accreditation of centres for the evaluation and certification of professional competences obtained by other means than formal ones](#)

[Order Minister of Education, no. 3888/2021 for the approval of the Methodology on the criteria and procedures for the assessment and certification of professional competence](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

National strategy for adult training 2024-27

The strategy was developed with the support of EU funding (Erasmus+ 101051428-SNFA-ERASMUS-EDU-2021-AL-AGENDA-IBA).

During the design phase, the labour ministry consulted employers, professional training providers, social partners, regional employment agencies, and NGOs.

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Implementation

National strategy for employment 2021-27

The strategy was developed in a challenging economic time. It needs to support the recovery of the labour market after the COVID-19 crisis and continue the previously implemented policies, including Youth Guarantee actions.

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Transferable credit system

The development of the transferable credit system includes methodology for granting transferable credits for the professional training of adults including categories of skills to be considered for certification of competences: key, technical and occupation-related.

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

2021 Completed

Support for adults acquiring key competences

The 2015-20 lifelong learning strategy addressed the acquisition and validation of key competences that help early leavers from education to find jobs. The measures included revision of the validation methodology, quality assurance and training of staff in assessment centres of prior learning.

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Implementation

Referencing the national qualifications framework to EQF

The Romanian national qualifications framework was referenced to the EQF in April 2018 and the next revision of the referencing report is foreseen to take place in 2023.

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

The 2016-20 VET strategy

The strategy for education and vocational training in Romania for 2016-20 was adopted in 2016 (government Decision No 317 on 27 April 2016).

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

Lifelong learning strategy 2015-20

Lifelong learning strategy 2015-20 was adopted in 2015. It addressed the need for strengthening partnerships between VET providers and enterprises, to increase the quality and labour market relevance of VET.

 ROMANIA

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

CVET

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Developing mechanisms for recognition of prior learning: Romania. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28514>