

Updating the system of validation of prior learning

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NETHERLANDS

Timeline

2015 Implementation 2016 Implementation 2017 Implementation
2018 Implementation 2019 Completed

ID number 28450

Background

A national policy on validation of non-formal and informal learning was presented in early 2014. The outcome of this reorientation is closely linked to making validation of prior learning (VPL) a successful tool in both learning and employment.

Description

The VPL system has been evaluated and, since 2016, the results have led to developing a new system in which there are two different paths for validating prior learning:

- (a) the labour market route;
- (b) the education route.

VPL tools are, for example, intake-assessment, e-portfolios, competence tests and ECVET elements. If a formal VPL procedure is followed, it can result in the award of an experience certificate (*ervaringscertificaat*). Since January 2016, an examination support body (*servicepunt examineren*) has supported VET schools in validating competences. In January 2018, this body was merged with the support body for the implementation of the qualifications framework into the Expertise centre for examination and education (*Kennispunt onderwijs and examineren*).

It is up to schools and employers' organisations whether or not to use the tools (such as VPL, assessments, ECVET) provided within the legal framework. The Dutch NCP ECVET promotes the awareness and availability of the ECVET principles by providing information and supporting implementation.

2015 Implementation

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Completed

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Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
- Examination support body (Servicepunt Examinering) (until 2018)
- Expertise centre for examination and education (Kennispunt Onderwijs en Examinering)

Target group

Learners

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)

Thematic categories

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

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

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[Expertise centre for examination and education - Kennispunt Onderwijs & Examinering](#)

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Updating the system of validation of prior learning: Netherlands. 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/28450>