

Validation of non-formal and informal learning (until 2022)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE** **ESTONIA**

Timeline

2015 Implementation **2016 Implementation** **2017 Implementation****2018 Implementation** **2019 Implementation** **2020 Implementation****2021 Implementation** **2022 Completed****ID number 28169**

Background

Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 (2014-20) included the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and the validation of work experience as a major principle.

Recognition of prior/non-formal learning is used in IVET, CVET and higher education.

In general education, RPL is not yet widely used, although the inclusion of compulsory validation of non-formal and informal learning to the regulations is envisaged and drafted into the amended Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act.

Objectives

Recognition of prior learning and validation of work experience aims to increase the permeability of the education system and to smooth transitions between levels and types of education, and to the labour market.

Description

The development of RPL is a part of the Adult education programme. Since 2015, the Ministry of Education and Research has been widening access to education through:

- (a) validation of previous experience;
- (b) insertion of recognition-related data into the education database;
- (c) more precise regulation for validating non-formal and informal learning in general education.

RPL principles have been developed and are regulated in higher education and vocational education acts.

2015 Implementation

<p>2016 Implementation</p>
<p>2017 Implementation</p>
<p>2018 Implementation</p>
<p>2019 Implementation</p> <p>In 2019, the development of recognition of prior/non-formal learning involved increasing cooperation between education institutions and training RPL counsellors in education institutions, including VET institutions.</p>
<p>2020 Implementation</p> <p>In 2020, RPL network seminars continued, including in VET, and the preparation of a concept and prototype of digital RPL instructions was started. The application of RPL in VET has increased, including recognition of informal learning and, especially, learning from previous work experience. In 2019/20, 7% of VET students used RPL, and almost half of these were about recognising informal learning.</p>
<p>2021 Implementation</p> <p>In 2021, activities focused was on modernising the management of the RPL system. This helped develop cooperation between upper secondary schools for adults, VET schools, and HE institutions to ensure greater flexibility between types and levels of education and to increase the capacity of education institutions to implement RPL. Projects have been launched to support the validation of non-formal learning in formal education and to build capacity through the EU's Structural reform support programme.</p>
<p>2022 Completed</p> <p>In 2022, the RPL system was further developed and expanded: new actions were taken to update the RPL guidelines and improve monitoring.</p> <p>In 2022, the project financed by the European Commission on the validation of non-formal learning experiences in formal education (2021-23) reached a pilot phase. In the project, policy options were explored to achieve better integration of non-formal and formal learning, including legislation, funding schemes and models of governance; guidelines for stakeholders were developed and validated, and implementation of the reform was planned.</p> <p>For progress on developments related to validation of non-formal and informal learning as of 2023, see related policy developments.</p>

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research

Target group

Learners

Adult learners

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Other

Upper secondary schools for adults, higher education

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

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Cedefop country report on validation of non-formal and informal learning in Estonia - 2016](#)

[Recognition of prior learning and work experience \(RPL\) \(in Estonian\)](#)

[In support of successful youth: The capability to integrate the competences acquired in hobby education \(project page, in Estonian\)](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Seamless transitions between levels and types of education and training, and the labour market

In order to ensure flexible learning opportunities, accessibility of high-quality education and training, and supported learning with the aim of reducing drop-out and early leaving rates and exploiting every individual's potential to the fullest, the following measures are foreseen:

 ESTONIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28169>

