Cedefop TTnet

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TTNET WORKSHOP

Validation of competences and professionalisation of trainers

Lisbon, 25-26 May 2000

Working document

The capacity of traditional systems of professional validation and certification to recognise competences acquired through professional experience as an integral part of training and qualification is currently being examined.

According to the European Commission White Paper 'Teaching and learning, towards the learning society', determining new ways of evaluating competences is one of the key objectives of lifelong learning.

> 'Harnessing the knowledge acquired by individuals throughout their life must be based on opening up *new methods of recognising skills*, over and above paper qualifications and initial training […].'

At national level in the Member States, reform and an improved legislative framework are needed for several reasons:

(a) qualifications must keep pace with the rapid development of occupations and technologies;
(b) there is a social interest in recognising competences acquired through experience so as to optimise employability;
(c) experience must be given more weight in training access and validation.

The validation of acquired competences in training occupations has only recently entered national and Community debate. Our workshop will consider the issue within the following framework:

(a) the validation of trainers' acquired competences must be approached from the perspective of the system of professional validation and certification of the country concerned;
(b) the workshop is thus limited to the process of validation of acquired competences as defined in the Cedefop Glossary[*]: 'the process of attributing/providing a formal evidence of value to competences, irrespective of the way these competences have been gained';
(c) the question of the validation of acquired competences is not the same for teachers of initial vocational training, whose access to the profession is regulated as it is for trainers of continuing vocational training, for whom access to qualifications is largely unregulated. The work of the

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[*] Draft version, April 2000.

TTnet network has shown that Member States want procedures which allow competences acquired through experience to be validated as an element in the qualification of trainers. That is why the theme is topical and why it has been chosen as the theme of a Community workshop.

The objective of this Workshop, organised in the framework of the Portuguese presidency of the European Union, is to find some answers to the following question:

Under what circumstances can the validation of acquired competences be said to contribute to the professionalisation of teachers and trainers, i.e. to create closer links between experience and training, and between training and qualification?

(a) Will the validation of acquired competences allow the development of new, recognised qualifications geared to market needs (French experience with CQP - Certificate of professional qualification)?
(b) Will the validation of acquired competences introduce transparency of trainers' qualifications related to specific job descriptions and profiles?
(c) Will the validation of acquired competences mean that training provision will be matched more closely to training needs (training requirements linked to employment requirements, modular training, tailor-made training paths, building on acquired skills)?

The Workshop will consist of three complementary sessions.

(a) Session 1 will define the general framework of activities for the Workshop;

(b) Session 2 will present innovative experiences in the field of the validation of competences of trainers at national level (Greece, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom);

(c) Session 3 will be a synthesis session during which, based on analysis of national situations, themes of common interest and the basic elements of a Community approach to the validation of training occupations will be identified.

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