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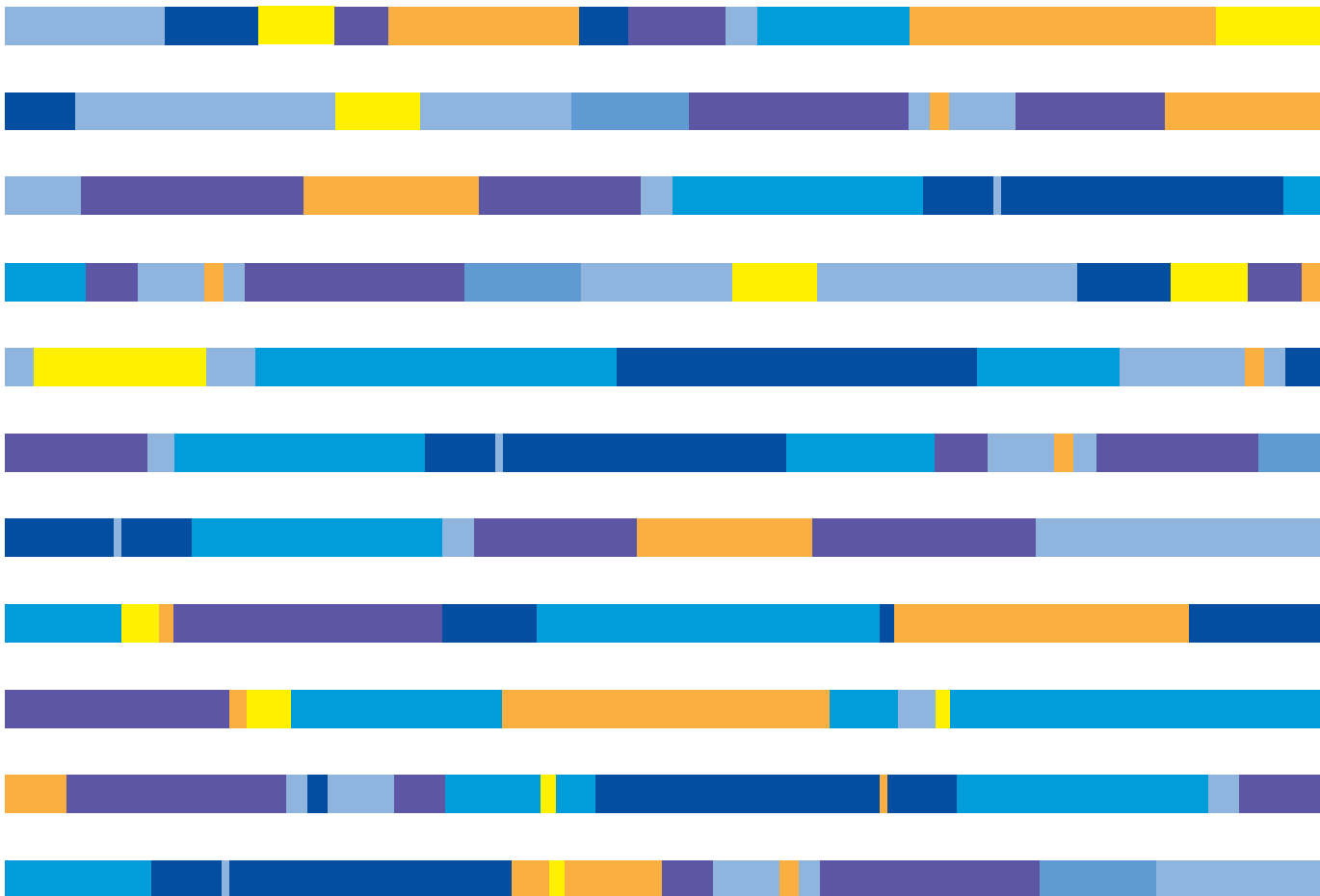
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# European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2023 update

COUNTRY REPORT:  
**DENMARK**

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# 1 Abstract

Generally, reviewing the 2018 Inventory update, there have not been many changes, though a number of changes are envisaged related to implementation of Tripartite agreement, 2018-2021<sup>1</sup>:

- To ensure joint guidelines in validation of prior learning (VPL) for continuing vocational education and training (CVET) and higher education (HE), a digital portal for VPL to Academy Profession programme (part-time) and Diploma programmes (part time) (National Qualification Framework levels 5 and 6) was implemented in 2022 to ensure homogenous assessment results across the University Colleges and Business Academies. Information and guidance about the portal are provided by each institution, in order to increase access to and awareness of the VPL process.
- Denmark has in 2019 introduced procedures and criteria for the inclusion of non-formal and private qualifications in the National Qualification Framework (NQF) for Lifelong Learning. Guidance has been provided and a number of private education providers have had the Learning Outcome level assessed and their qualifications referenced to a level in the Danish NQF. The Danish Accreditation Agency is the operator in charge of the assessment and referencing of non-formal and private qualifications to the NQF. Private education providers are defined as those not regulated under the authority of the Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Science & HE, The Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Culture.
- The Ministry of Children and Education (BUVM) has carried out a practical test on validation of prior learning for vocational education and training. Based on this practical test, the Ministry has developed guidelines for validation of prior learning (in Danish *Realkompetence Vurdering*, RKV) for vocational education and training for applicants aged 25 and above and VPL (Individual Competence Assessment, or IKV regarding Adult Vocational Training (AMU). These guidelines are distributed to Jobcentres/public employment services (PES) and to educational institutions).

# 2 Introduction

In Denmark, validation of prior learning (VPL) (abbreviated IKV or RKVi n Danish, depending on reference to the educational area in question as explained above), is defined as the knowledge, skills and competences an individual has acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning courses in the education system, on the labour market, through work in voluntary organisations or other activities. Within this framework, it is a legal right for individuals to request an assessment of their prior learning in relation to the standards of a given education and training programme no matter where and how competences have been acquired.

A legal framework for VPL, has been in place since 2007<sup>2</sup>. based on common principles for almost all formal adult education and training In Denmark, validation of prior learning has been developed from both a top-down and a bottom-up approach. The Legal framework has been developed nationally, whereas the implementation is decentralised at the provider level. Financial constraints continue to pose obstacles to implementation and among education institutions differences continue to remain regarding the level of VPL activities between the educational institutions with regards to their level of activity. However, the Tripartite agreement on continuing vocational education and training (CVET) (2018-2021) includes financial incentives for education

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<sup>1</sup> The Three-partite agreement for CVET has been prolonged till 2023 as there are remaining initiatives, not yet fully implemented.

<sup>2</sup> Law nr. 556 of 06/06/2007

providers and for enterprises to overcome previous financial constraints regarding participation in Adult Vocational Training. These financial incentives are fully implemented, mainly in terms of higher financial allocations ('taximeter' approach<sup>3</sup>) to the VPL provide together with higher compensation for employers.

The legal framework recommends at the central level that the VPL process comprise the four stages of the 2012 Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Hence this includes the steps of declaration and documentation of competences, though not in terms of standardised methods and tools. This corresponds with the Danish legal framework, which leaves the implementation of VPL arrangements to the VPL providers, and the education institutions in charge of the corresponding education. Development of methods and tools for the declaration and documentation of prior learning has a high priority among trade unions and employer organisations at a sectoral level. Moreover, also the development of approaches and tools in the declaration and documentation steps have been supported by sectoral bodies. However, sectoral stakeholders are critical concerning the lack of coherence across sectors. This is particularly the case concerning formal education providers' lack of openness to accept and, when applicable, to make use of the applicant's documented non-formal and informal learning, acquired in the labour market or in the third sector.

Due to the Tripartite Agreement for CVET and HE (2018-21), the working group on VPL, set by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, recommended, that a joint development and implementation of a digital platform for the RKV application process to Academy Profession and Diploma programmes (EQF level 5 and 6) should be carried out. The development of the platform was financed by funds from the Tripartite Agreement.

During the past 10 years there has been a decline in the number of applicants to Adult Vocational Education & Training (AMU). Hence, the number of applicants to the VPL programme for AMU (IKV) has declined even further. In general, the interest and use of IKV for AMU has been low. According to anticipated changes in the labour market and skills requirements, the Danish Ministry of Children and Education (BUVM) has developed Guidelines for the AMU Institutions to help strengthen the awareness of IKV through improved information and guidance about the process. Initiatives and recommendations in the Guidelines to AMU institutions are built upon a comprehensive evaluation of VPL in Denmark, carried out by the Danish Evaluation Institute, EVA, in 2018. The evaluation stressed the importance of providing more targeted information about IKV together with implementation of new tools. The Guidelines from the Danish Ministry of Education recommends the use of a broader approach in the IKV process, i.e. to make the assessment towards occupational standards / rather than single education objectives. The descriptive framework for AMU courses is organised as descriptions of Common Occupational Standards, which include the specific education objectives for the contained qualifications.

Also, for VPL (RKV) in VET (for the special VET programme for adults, aged 25 and above), a practical test concerning VET institutions concrete RKV practice has been carried out. This practical test especially concerned how and to which extent skills audit is used as a part of the VPL. The practical test was carried out in cooperation with PES (Public Employment Services). Findings and initiatives based on the practical test suggest that more could be done to strengthen coherence in the VPL process across PES and the educational institution, when the local PES requires an assessment of the individual's practice skills. The ministry has developed a set of

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<sup>3</sup> Taximeter management entails that with the state's total financial framework for educational purposes, activity-level dependent appropriations are distributed to the individual educational institution based on: 1. Objective goals for activity levels; 2. Politically determined taximeter rates per activity-level units. (Source: Eurydice <https://euridice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/denmark/funding-education>)

guidelines and recommendations to PES and the educational institutions to raise efficiency and quality in VPL across labour market and education providers.<sup>4</sup>

In the AMU and VET programmes, there is a strong focus on the importance of including Green Transition as a cross-cutting perspective in the education programmes. Also, the social partners (the education committees) are encouraged to initiate the development of new education programmes linked to Green Transition.

In Denmark, skills anticipation studies are undertaken in almost all sectors and industries, but methods vary substantially. Think tanks and ad hoc commissions, set up by the Government, are analysing needs for labour market education and labour market reforms to better cope with future changes and to ensure adequate labour supply.

Examples are:

- The Danish Accreditation Institute published in 2021 the report, *New Flexible Education Pathways throughout life – Danish perspectives on micro-credentials*. In the report – with a special focus on micro-credentials at higher education (HE) level - The Danish Employer Organisation for Industries (DI) expresses the expectation, that micro-credentials for HE level, hold great potentials in relation to Danish business development. However, a realization of these potentials depends, according to DI, on a common language and a better bridging between companies and educational institutions. From 2017-2018, the Disruption Council, was set by the Government to discuss, analyse and develop suggestions on how to prepare companies and the Danish people for the future and the future labour market. The Disruption Council, in conjunction with the Danish Labour Market agency, STAR, proposed a new skills taxonomy informed by ESCO, but it has not become a common tool deployed across education and labour market actors, and as mentioned moreover, skills anticipation remains fragmented due to mutual methods deployed and lack of common terminology.
- The Reform Commission published its first report in April 2022 with recommendations for a new VPL practice, which includes to work simpler and more effectively with a stronger focus on practical testing of skills. Moreover, to provide a more homogeneous and professional VPL (the RKV programme) the Commission suggests that a smaller number of education institutions are certified to carry out VPL and not, as is the situation now, that each educational institution provides VPL for its own education programmes. The remaining recommendations are expected to be published in May 2023.

Though the recommended Danish model for VPL includes the steps of declaration and documentation in the VPL process, this is not defined as a part of the legal framework in terms of standardised methods and tools. Due to this, VPL users occasionally experience a lack of transparency in the process.

Hence, development of methods and tools for the declaration and documentation of prior learning has been a high priority at regional and sectoral level throughout the existence of VPL as a legal right in Denmark. For instance, this criticism is expressed by the third Sector. The umbrella organisation, the Danish Adult Education Association (DAEA), makes this point regarding cooperation with formal education institutions, as some institutions are perceived as unwilling to accept the issued certificate from Day High School participants when applying for access to formal education. Some formal education institutions explain that the issued Day High School certificate lacks transparency in terms of level and measurable learning outcomes. Based on this, an initiative has been taken by the Day High Schools

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.uvm.dk/-/media/filer/uvm/udd/erhverv/pdf23/feb/230209-realkompetencevurdering-for-ledige.pdf>

Association (member of DAEA) in 2021 to develop a more transparent certificate thus improving the formal education provider's application of the certificate as part of the applicants' documentation of competences for the RKV. With this new course certificate, Day High Schools experience better cooperation with some institutions. However, this still depends on individual institutions and is not consistent across the sector of formal education providers.

## 3 National perspective

### 3.1 Overarching approach to validation

The legal framework for validation of prior learning (VPL) (RKV and IKV) serves as a key instrument for upskilling pathways within the Adult Education (AVU) and the Adult Vocational Education and Training (AMU) programmes, together with the VET Programme for Adults, aged 25 and above (EUV), though it does not directly address upskilling pathways.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning has been on the policy agenda since 2007, and it is still regarded a key element to promote lifelong learning in Denmark. In practice, validation of non-formal and informal learning in Denmark provides individuals with the opportunities of:

- a) being granted access to formal education and training programmes if they do not meet the formal entry requirements;
- b) getting exemptions for parts of a formal education and training programme and/or to have an individual tailored education and training programme;
- c) acquiring 'certificate of competence' leading to access/ exemptions in adult education and training programmes;
- d) obtaining 'education certificates' for parts of/or a whole education programme on the basis of validation of prior learning.

Competence assessment and possible outcomes in terms of access, exemption and acquirement of certificates varies between the different education and training sectors e.g. VET, HE and General adult education (AVU) and vocational training (AMU) or almost all formal adult education and training. A legal framework for VPL based on common principles has been in place since 2007. VET programmes for adults (EUV, 2015) are targeted at adults 25 years and above but in the other sectors there is no age regulation.

Within this framework, it is a legal right for individuals to request an assessment of their Learning outcomes in relation to the standards of a given education and training programme no matter where and how competences have been acquired.

In Denmark, VPL is regulated by laws and agreements as follows:

- a) the legislation for upper general education including executive order BEK nr 497 of 18/05/2017 kap. 12 , which entitles students to get credit transfers for prior learning on the basis of an individual assessment;
- b) the legislation for VET<sup>5</sup> (2023) for adults aged 25 and above (EUV), which includes a general principle of a mandatory individual competence assessment as a basis for preparation of a personal education plan. The personal education plan is based on an assessment of the students' competences and outlines an individual pathway through the VET system. Changes were made in 2017 (see below);

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<sup>5</sup> [www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=164802](http://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=164802)

c) Act no. 556 of 6 June 2007<sup>6</sup>, which entitled 'Development of the VPL in adult education and continuing training', effective from August 2007. It gives an individual the right to have his/her prior learning experiences validated in relation to specific goals of adult education and continuing training programmes<sup>7</sup>. Citizens from other EU countries are granted the same rights to undergo validation processes. Act no. 556 includes the following six educational fields as part of adult education:

- single course subjects in general adult education (AVU);
- single course subjects in general upper secondary education (HF);
- vocational training programme (AMU);
- VET programme for adults, 25 +<sup>8</sup>
- short-cycle post-secondary adult higher education ('Academy' programme); and
- medium-cycle post-secondary adult higher education ('Diploma' programme).

According to Danish law, the assessment must be conducted by the educational institution offering the corresponding study programmes.

Since 2007, legislation<sup>9</sup> allows individuals to gain access to part time short-cycle and medium-cycle higher education (Bachelor-level degrees) based on an individual competence assessment. The educational institutions are responsible for information, guidance and assessment of the individual. The Ministry of Children and Education<sup>10</sup> and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science<sup>11</sup> are responsible for the legislative framework for the assessment of prior learning and for taking national initiatives to implementing the legislation. The Ministries have developed policy guidelines and funded projects with the aim of developing tools, methods and procedures.

Validation of prior learning plays a key role in the National Skills Strategy. Denmark conducts skills anticipation activities based on collaboration and dialogue amongst ministries, public authorities and stakeholders. The main skills anticipation activities include:

- a) skills forecasting (e.g. statistical forecasting of education status and the demand and supply of labour in the public sector);
- b) skills assessments (e.g. quantitative sectoral assessments on imbalances in the labour market);
- c) skills anticipation (e.g. sectoral anticipation on future needs in the labour market);
- d) employer surveys.<sup>12</sup>

Validation of non-formal and informal learning has also been an important focal point for many years in the non-formal sector especially among organisations and institutions engaged in liberal education. Tools have been developed for documenting knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/r0710.aspx?id=25349>

<sup>7</sup> In 2001 the further education system for adults was established as a parallel system to the ordinary education system. It consists of Basic Adult Education (GVU) up to Master's level programmes and aims to award certificates of competences to adults, and to offer further learning and education. In 2015, the Basic Adult Education (GVU) has been replaced by the VET programme for adults (EUV), aged 25.

<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2016/367>

<sup>8</sup> There is a standardised and an individual part of the validation which takes place before the student starts at the EUV. The criteria for the standardised part of the validation, with the aim of shortening the VET duration, is settled by the Vocational Training Committees for each branch.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=145524>

<sup>10</sup> <http://eng.uvm.dk/>

<sup>11</sup> [http://fivu.dk/en?set\\_language=en&cl=en](http://fivu.dk/en?set_language=en&cl=en)

<sup>12</sup> [Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment](#)

VPL within the adult education and training programmes enjoys great support from relevant stakeholders (including social partners) and is recognised as a very important instrument to promote participation in adult and continuing education and training. However, there is still considerable potential for development and improvement concerning information/awareness raising, standardization, quality assurance and cooperation between stakeholders (educational institutions, job centres, unemployment funds, trade unions, third sector, etc.). The previously mentioned evaluation, carried out by The Danish Evaluation Institute, EVA, (2018 – 2019) documented progress in several key areas concerning Information, awareness raising activities and quality assurance. Generally, for all 6 education areas, more efforts were seen in terms of raising awareness about RKV in Denmark, though with major differences among the education areas. The respondents, representing the education areas, unanimously underlined that the population at large continues to have a lack of awareness about RKV, despite an increase in information and outreach activities among education providers. The Evaluation Institute recommended that institutions should improve the actual content of practices and procedures for RKV, and the same goes for the standards and criteria for the RKV and the use of tools and not least how to document prior learning. Furthermore, a recommendation was specifically directed to the social partners to support the institutions' information work through targeted outreach to their own members about the potentials of RKV.

As for specific quality assurance initiatives, it was recommended by the evaluation institute that more tools should be used in the VPL process. While the use of various tools had been improved since the previous evaluation in 2010, it was still the recommendation to increase the use of an individual conversation / interview with the VPL candidate and to use practical tools in the assessment. Concerning the internal QA activities, it was recommended to further prioritise documentation of the assessment process in order to increase transparency for the candidate and in order to be able to verify the recognition result of the process.

The 2013 PIAAC in Denmark indicated an inadequate level of basic skills in reading and writing for about 600 000 adults; and similarly, inadequate ICT skills in simple problem-solving for one million adults. This initiative mentioned above addresses the issue of upskilling pathways. The PIACC, 2022-2023 is under development and results are expected in 2024/-25.<sup>13</sup>

The Integration Basic Education programme for refugees and migrants (IGU) was launched in 2015 as a preliminary education offer till the end of 2023. The two-year programme combines employment in a paid internship with school education. The uptake of the programme has been limited. However, the IGU programme is applied now for the Ukrainian refugees in Denmark. Skills audits are an integral part of the IGU and are administered by PES. This is an option with reference to the Danish Special law for Ukrainian refugees in Denmark <sup>14</sup>

Individual learning accounts do not exist in Denmark as recommended in terms of European Councils Recommendation for Individual learning accounts (June 2022). An individual fixed budget for training does not exist in Denmark. However, Competence Funds for public and private institutions have been in place for almost 20 years within the collective agreements. Based on an application process, the Competence Funds finance employees' participation in CVET according to ordinary conditions for attending CVET. Validation of prior learning is applied, based on the general legislation for VPL and not specifically due to the Competence Fund model. Guidance and counselling in the context of VET, CVET and labour market education (AMU) is a right and is available in terms of the e-Guidance system<sup>15</sup> and by the

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.vive.dk/da/projektforloeb/kompetencer-i-danmark-piaac-2022-2023/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ta/2022/324>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ug.dk/evejledning/eguidance-denmark>

educational institutions. Also, the trade unions have comprehensive guidance of their members, e.g. HK, Finance Trade Union. There are 75 Competence Funds in Denmark, available for employees and for employers to have education partly financed.<sup>16</sup> However, it varies considerably between the collective funds how broadly they can be used.

In legal terms, VPL in formal education only takes place in the educational institutions providing the corresponding education programme. Other sectors might support the coming VPL process for the applicant with the former steps of identification / clarification and documentation of prior learning, acquired in work or in terms of third sector activities. However, there is no legal basis connected to the learning outcomes, documented from other sectors – apart from the legal definition of VPL, that all learning, acquired is valuable. This means that prior learning, documented in terms of work experience or third sector activities do not automatically lead to assessment or recognition in the VPL process carried out by the formal education institution. This dilemma often causes frustration and critics by users and stakeholders, as it is perceived as a situation of non-coherency across sectors.

The Qualification Guide database (*UddannelsesGuiden* / [www.ug.dk](http://www.ug.dk)) provides a comprehensive overview of all formal qualifications in Denmark, with an indication of area of education, job profiles and employment areas together with further education opportunities.<sup>17</sup> The database similarly provides Information and Guidance about VPL for the formal education programmes contained in the database.

Skills audits mainly target certain groups, such as long-term unemployed adults. When specific skills are deemed crucial for an individual, PES may request a skills audit from a local educational institution. Presently, this need arises due to the special law for Ukrainian refugees. For instance, considering the scarcity of labour in Denmark's elderly care sector, obtaining employment in this field is a possibility. Consequently, a skills audit becomes essential and is arranged collaboratively between PES, the local Vocational Education and Training (VET) school, and the Municipality (the primary public employer of elderly care staff).

Moreover, PES extensively provides skills audits, incorporating them into in-company traineeships to assess skills pertinent to employment and/or CVET. Following such skills audits, the company furnishes the outcomes in the form of an employer declaration.

According to the Danish legal framework for VPL, only the formal education institutions have the authority to carry out VPL and to issue, when relevant, the certificate of the VPL result. Other organisations can contribute with parts of the VPL process, e.g. workplaces who are requested to do so by the local PES to carry out a skills audit. Skills audit results are subsequently included in the overall assessment by the education institution. Alternatively, the result of the skills audit is used by the Job Centre in cooperation with the individual to decide further actions for job or education. Skills audits are typically carried out for practical skills and language skills. In the current situation and special law concerning Ukrainian refugees in Denmark, skills audits could be commissioned by the local PES for the assessment of job or education possibilities in employment areas with good job prospects. Skills audits are ordered from relevant companies with an indication of purpose and criteria. There are no rules or legislation related to skills audits and they are not included in collective agreements. There are no private providers who act as major players specialised in skills audits. Data collected systematically on participation in skills audits are not available.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://voksenuddannelse.dk/uddannelse/kompetencefonde>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ug.dk/>

## 3.2 Validation in education and training

The legal framework for VPL is set nationally under Act no 556 (2007). The implementation of the legislation is decentralised. The legislation provides a framework that outlines how the educational institutions must act to promote quality assurance and to ensure evaluation with a view to developing quality systems and methods. The VPL process is publicly funded on the 'taximeter' basis.

Educational institutions are responsible for providing information, counselling and guidance, and for assessing and approving validation within their educational and training programmes. Educational institutions also have the responsibility for quality assurance, review and evaluation.

Other stakeholders can act as guidance institutions, e.g. Job centres (PES), trade unions, unemployment security funds and the third sector.

A working group, established by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, set by the Tripartite agreement for CVET and HE (2018-21) focused on support elements for an increased use of VPL. The final result has been a digital platform for RKV to the levels of Academy Profession and Diploma degree/programme (part-time continuing professional education at bachelor level) programmes. Common guidelines and the use of common sector instruments have been developed to support effectiveness and homogenous validation results.

Funding has been forthcoming for adult vocational education and training (AMU) and CVET to encourage more use of adult vocational education and CVET, which has been declining for some years and continues to do so.<sup>18</sup> The funding has been improved in terms of a raised VPL 'taximeter' to the educational institutions / the VPL providers, and a higher wage compensation to the employer. For almost all education areas an increase in VPL / RKV for the corresponding education area is registered apart from IKV for AMU

Actual data show that VPL/IKV for AMU has not increased despite these incentives. The figures show the percentage of AMU participants who have had an IKV prior to the AMU training course. The percentage of IKV for AMU participation has declined (since 2018) from 0.58% to (2022) 0.42 %. Compared with the entrance data of IKV for AMU (2008) of 3.12%, the decline of IKV to AMU participation has been almost constant.

## 3.3 Validation and the labour market

Various bodies, at regional and organisational level, are allowed to contribute to the elements of information, identification, guidance and counselling in the phase leading up to the assessment process (a pre-phase). These include, among others, trade unions, employers' associations, job centres (PES), unemployment insurance funds, civic education institutions, study committees and 'eVejledning' ('e-Guidance' online guidance service). They can all take responsibility for this part of the process, often in collaboration with the educational institution. But this is not set by the legal framework. In the area of adult vocational training (AMU), there is a tradition of collaboration between enterprises and formal educational institutions concerning competence development of employees including validation. However, this has been decreasing in most areas.

The social partners play an important role in strengthening this collaboration. As part of the Tripartite agreement (2018-2021), the Government has launched an initiative for the social partners that promotes responsibility for providing IAG about basic and vocational upskilling of low skilled and skilled employees in both private and public

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ae.dk/analyse/2023-01-det-gaar-den-forkerte-vej-med-efteruddannelsen-i-danmark>

enterprises. As a response to the previously mentioned Danish PIAAC results, 2013 - demonstrating inadequate basic skills in reading and writing for about 600 000 adults and similar lack of competences in IT for problem solving for about 1 million adults - adult education for raising basic skills is highly prioritised in the tri-partite agreement. The PIAAC 2022 is under development with the report, foreseen in 2024-25.

There is no national or regional arrangement for VPL in the labour market, but local elements of validation are in place to varying degrees and forms, depending on the labour market situation, and typically carried out by the local Job-centre (PES) in collaboration with educational institutions. PES can also make agreements with private cooperation partners, typically concerning skills audit or internship, and PES also provides information about VPL, requirements and options. When it comes to the assessment and certification parts of VPL, only the formal education institutions have the authority to do this.

Documented learning outcomes, achieved in the private sector can be included in the individual's overall documentation for VPL towards a formal education while assessment and recognition can only be carried out by the formal education institution. All documented prior learning is included in the candidates' background material for the assessment and when adequate, the recognition. This also includes the documentation carried out with the support of other stakeholder organisations. Competence assessment in enterprises does not have an independent currency in the assessment of the employee's VPL. However, this might form an important part of the individual's entire documentation of competences. And specifically, when the documentation is based on a skills audit, required by the job centre (PES) in order to assess a person's possibility for having a job or to access education. This could be the situation for the initiatives helping unemployed people, or to ensure skills supply in occupations in need for qualified staff.

### **3.4 Validation and the third sector**

All kinds of learning should be considered in a VPL. However, as the authority to assessment and recognition only belongs to the formal education system, there is no guarantee that documented learning from activity in the third sector is taken further in the process to assessment and recognition. However, the third sector plays an important role in supporting learners in the steps of identification / clarification and documentation to be applied in an application process to formal education.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning has been an important focal point for many years in the non-formal sector especially among organisations and institutions engaged in liberal education. Tools have been developed for documenting knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education.

While there is an ongoing development work in third sector, setting the overall aims, the individual institutions are free to make their own material and processes, because they are independent schools.

One example of this is a development initiative under the umbrella organisation, Danish Adult Education Association (DAEA). In 2021 the Day High Schools developed a prototype for a new certificate for participants' learning outcomes achieved through Day High School courses (non-formal) with the aim of increasing transparency of the documentation and – hence – to make a better utilization of the documentation by the formal education institution. The individual Day High School is free to apply the new elements into the school certificate.

There are no formal validation processes in the sector, but identification / clarification and documentation of learning outcomes are supported as for instance in the example described above. An interview with the association of Day High Schools suggests a need for better cross-sector cooperation. An example of how to ensure participants' better acknowledgement of the Day High School certificate is mentioned: there is

good experience related to the importance of the teacher's name on the certificate as a guarantor for professionalism when students seek a job or access to education within the corresponding area. It is the experience that a well-recognised teacher's 'street-credit' (i.e. enjoying respect in the professional environment) provides a valuable reference, especially for job or education within the more creative professional areas, such as film, music, drama and design. These programmes typically are governed by the Ministry of Culture.

## 4 Links to credentials and qualifications

There is a comprehensive national qualification framework (NQF) in place in Denmark, covering all types and levels of formal qualifications awarded and quality assured by public authorities. The proposal for the eight-level framework was adopted in 2009 and the NQF was referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in May 2011. Most qualifications in the Danish NQF are accessible /can be acquired on the basis of validation. The results of a VPL is guaranteed in terms of the linkage to national qualification frameworks – also in line with the EQF.

When the documented non-formal and informal learning is regarded relevant for the education, this learning is included in the overall assessment, together with formal learning outcomes. Informal and non-formal learning is not included in the NQF, which means that this learning outcome is assessed within the combination of all elements of the overall documentation. When assessed and recognised, the VPL results can provide access to education, exemption and – potentially, though not often seen - a full qualification. The criteria for obtaining a full qualification is that all educational objectives must be fully met by the candidates documented prior learning. However, this is a more frequent result for Adult Vocational Training (AMU) than for the CVET Higher Education. The framework also includes partial qualification, which counts for AMU.

As a result of the Tripartite Agreement on CVET (2017-21), since 2022, private education providers can have their education programmes level assessed and, if relevant included in the NQF. Level assessment is carried out by the Danish Accreditation Institution.<sup>19</sup> The purpose is to support Lifelong Learning by the increase of transparency in the provision of legitimate educations, which are not administered under the ministries of Children and Education (BVUM), Higher Education and Science (UFM) and Culture (Kulturministeriet). Till now, 2023, 43 private education providers have had educations assessed and included in the NQF.<sup>20</sup>

Validation is integrated within the NQF, encompassing 8 levels. VPL is an option regarding level 1-6 of the NQF. In the VPL process, candidates' prior learning is assessed in relation to learning outcomes for the specific qualification. See chapter 3.1. for possible outcomes of a VPL

Certificates awarded by VPL do not differ from the certificates generally issued for the modules or the entire education of the study programme in question. With the provision of these options, VPL related to the NQF allows individuals to progress between levels and types of education as well as to obtain a qualification by combining credentials, obtained by validation.

Micro-credentials are not yet developed in Denmark to the level of credit arrangements. What might be the future situation is to assess the acquired micro credentials against standards and objectives of a relevant formal education (the principles of stackability and portability). However, development work on micro-

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<sup>19</sup> <https://akkr.dk/wp-content/filer/akkr/Guide-to-level-assessment-4.-Edition.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://ufm.dk/uddannelse/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/dokumentation/kvalifikationsrammer/indplacering/private-mfl>

credentials is initiated but fragmented, and primarily occurs among institutions, though a pilot is currently implemented for the EBSI infrastructure involving all the DK university colleges, and it could be of relevance to digital credentialing. As a formal learning unit, the short Adult Vocational training courses (AMU) are at times referred to as examples of micro-credentials in Denmark. Furthermore, the established process and criteria for the inclusion of non-formal and private qualifications in the NQF includes no lower limit for the credit burden of these types of qualifications, thus allowing micro-credentials to be referenced to the NQF, although they are not labelled as micro-credentials.

A partial qualification, issued in CVET or HE is similar to a module. In VET, an exemption can be issued in terms of one or more subjects of the VET programme, with an exemption due to duration of the education, reflected in student's study plan. Certificate for partial or full qualifications is an option for Adult Vocational training (AMU). Certificates can be issued for General Adult Education (AVU), and for single course subjects of General Upper-secondary Education (HF).

The past evaluation of VPL in relation to the six Danish education areas, carried out by the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA), 2019, shows variations in the use of VPL. For CVET-HE, there is an increasing use of VPL, while for Adult Vocational Training (AMU), the decrease, registered since 2010 is still the situation.

The same evaluation also examines the prevalence of VPL for the 6 education areas, compared with the level of 2010. The evaluation states, that for all six education areas, the prevalence of VPL has increased in the period 2010-2018.

However, the respondents, representing the education areas, express that awareness in population about VPL is still relatively low.

In Denmark, VPL for formal education includes all documented learning, also learning undertaken with a non-formal education provider. However, this does not automatically provide the individual with a guarantee that the learning will be recognised in a VPL by the formal education institution.

## 5 Standards

There is a credit transfer system in general upper secondary education, which is based on the assessment of an individual's prior learning. Students can get transfer (not credit based as ECTS) for previously completed studies, periods of study abroad, etc., and can be granted admission to subjects at a higher level, to extra optional subjects, or a reduced advanced level course load (where the credit transfer is particularly substantial). Assessment is made after entry.

In HE, ECTS is in use and the modularised structure supports the validation process. Individuals can be awarded competence certificates on the basis of VPL.

In Denmark, qualification standards and general procedures and executive orders are used as the basis for validation in public funded programmes.

The standards used for VPL to Adult Vocational Training (AMU) are based on the specific educational objectives under the Common Occupational Standards (Fælles Kompetence Beskrivelser, FKB).

In HE, standards used are the NQF and the educational standards in use by Higher Education.

The certificates issued as a result of the VPL are the same as obtained for the formal educational programme.

The recognised and certified competences are based on transparent quality assurance measures. The VPL providers are responsible for the QA and the assessment based on common standards and criteria. The Branch Committees are

responsible for setting the standards and criteria for recognition towards the educations.

## 6 Institutions involved in validation arrangements and their coordination

Validation activities in terms of the VPL towards formal education are carried out in accordance with the act 556 06/2007. According to this, the formal education institutions are responsible for the process. The candidates' documented prior learning is assessed towards criteria and standards for the education objectives of the formal education. Criteria and standards are set by the branch committees for each education programme.

However, other stakeholders and organisations can support the individual's Identification / clarification and documentation. But generally, they are not carried out in a coordinated way, and users and stakeholders often perceive VPL as incoherent and uncoordinated across sectors. As such, there are no legal changes in stakeholders' roles and involvement in the design, implementation and execution of VPL. However, in 2022, the Ministry of Education developed a set of Guidelines for PES and the VET institutions in order to coordinate and to increase the application of VPL and especially the tool of skills audit for unemployed people.

Organisations in the labour market and third sector are able to support individuals in relation to career guidance and lifelong guidance services – which especially counts for PES. Identification / clarification and documentation is often a part of non-formal learning activities in the third sector, Liberal Education and Day High school courses. As such, these activities could be regarded as pre-Validation activities of great importance for the individual. However, assessment and recognition, based on the documentation is carried out by the formal educational institution towards the education and in accordance with the legal framework.

PES, labour market- and third sector organisations make an important effort Though not directly addressed as 'upskilling pathways', to increase information and awareness raising about VPL. PES and unemployment funds provide information about VPL in connection with career guidance and job-seeking activities.

Generally, institutions, sectors and stakeholders do not interact with regards to the design and implementation of validation. However, there are examples that especially third sector institutions and labour market organisations take initiatives to interact with formal education institutions with the aim of securing transparency of course certificates in terms of course aim, learning outcomes, level and course duration (lessons).

Only formal public educational institutions providing the education in question are allowed to provide VPL linked to certification.

According to the legal framework and act (nr. 556 /June/2007), formal educational institutions must be accredited to provide VPL. The authorization to provide VPL is not issued in terms of the VPL but in terms of providing the education programme. The authorization to provide a certain education programme automatically implies the requirement to provide VPL to the corresponding education programme.

The provision of VPL is a requirement for the formal educational institutions as it is stated a legal right for the individual to have his or her prior learning assessed. Non-formal and informal learning is not included in the NQF. Though the definition of VPL (RKV and IKV) in Denmark clearly encompasses all kinds of learning outcomes, irrespective of where and how this has been achieved, a criticism is expressed, that non-formal and informal learning is often not recognised to the extent that might be

expected. This impression counts for both VPL applicants and stakeholders, for instance in the labour market and third sector.

## **7 Outreach, awareness raising, provision of information, advice and guidance**

### **7.1 Outreach and awareness-raising**

Awareness-raising campaigns on validation are evident in relation to the national skills policies and strategies. According to the strategy, six weeks of education for unemployed persons – administered by the PES, is used as an activation instrument, which implicitly also includes the RKV or IKV to the chosen education (which must be included in the so-called Positive list defined as education programmes with positive job perspectives). Other policy initiatives are at hand for increasing the skills supply and thus indirectly also motivating individuals for having the benefit of a VPL.

The Ministry of Children and Education has published two set of guidelines, 2022, about VPL to PES and VET institutions, providing the VET and the Adult Vocational training programme (AMU). The aim of the two set of Guidelines is to promote an increase in the use of VPL (RKV and IKV) to the two education programmes and to coordinate a higher application of VPL across PES and the educational institutions.

Disadvantaged groups and long termed unemployed people have the same legal right to have their prior learning assessed; however, as the VPL is only carried out by educational providers, it might form a barrier for individuals from these groups, as they need to decide about the choice of education before being able to have the VPL. Here the jobcentres play an important role in guiding the unemployed in the choice of education. Moreover, it could be argued that disadvantaged groups in a labour market context would benefit from having their competences and skills assessed as a whole – in particular transferable skills.

The evaluation of development of VPL in Denmark from 2010-2018, (EVA, 2019), has analysed the barriers for a higher outreach of VPL according to the six Danish VET educational areas.

Though it is still the general impression across the respondents, representing VPL provider institutions, that awareness in population about the possibilities of VPL, continues to be is still relatively low, the 2018 evaluation on the other hand illustrates that VPL provision among education areas has become more widespread within most of the six the education areas. While VPL for Adult Vocational Training (AMU) and Single subject courses (HF) is at the same level as in 2010, there is an increase in the provision of VPL among the remaining four education sub-sectors.

Hence, for CVET for Higher Education, NQF level 5, the Academy Profession programme the percentage of institutions having carried out at least one RKV has increased from 28 % in 2010 to 88 % in 2018. Regarding RKV for the Diploma Programme (NQF level 6), the percentage has increased from 50% in 2010 to 85%.

in 2018, for General Adult Education (AVU), the percentage of institutions having carried out RKV was still relatively low, increasing from 42% in 2010 to 53% in 2018.

The figures show that measures regarding educational institutions' information about RKV for the education sub-sectors has had a positive effect for at least four of the six education areas. Nevertheless, as stated above, the respondents still express needs for improvement in terms of information about RKV in order to make clear what prior learning means and how to document one's prior learning. Outreach measures for this purpose are also regarded as an implication of low 'taximeter' for the VPL process

which does not allocate funding for the guidance counselling and the documentation parts of the VPL.

## 7.2 Information, advice and guidance

The Ministry of Children and Education provides extensive information about VPL on its website<sup>21</sup>. However, unless individuals are already looking for VPL opportunities, unlikely they will consult these portals – which emphasises the important role of social partners. The educational institutions that offer VPL also have the obligation to provide information on their websites. Guidance bodies, such as Job Centres, Study Guidance Centres and social partner organisations, also provide information on VPL.

While educational institutions are required to inform the public about VPL, based on experiences from practitioners in the field, there is still an insufficient level of information about the existing validation procedures in Denmark and too many potential users are not aware of the validation opportunities available for them.

In the sector of CVET for Higher Education, the new digital RKV platform was implemented in 2022 in order to secure homogenous VPL results based on joint guidelines for the VPL process. In accordance with these guidelines, each education provider of the educational programmes, included in the RKV platform are obliged to provide information about the platform including information on guidance on the institution's website.

In the VPL process, IAG is provided to validation users by various means and methods; online platforms, telephone and not least integrated during the validation process. After finalisation of the validation process, information about the result is provided in a written form, forwarded by digital post, and – if requested – supplemented by direct contact to the institution.

The educational institution is not obliged to provide career guidance. However, guidance and counselling in the previous phase concerning the education choice is provided by the institution. Career guidance is available from the job centres in the Open guidance service, which also includes information about job perspectives, education and VPL.

Trade unions and Unemployment Funds also provide IAG for career, job and education, including the possibilities of validation. Educational institutions are obliged to offer IAG about VPL prior to the process. This is free of charge. When attending a VPL, the validation fee differs according to the educational level of the candidate; a VPL for formal education up till and including EQF level 5 is free of charge.

For VPL candidates with an education level above level 5, a fee is charged for the process. The fee amount differs according to the VPL result, increasing with the opportunities of either getting access, obtaining a competence certificate for one or more modules or a full qualification certificate. This information must be available on the institution's website.

## 8 Validation practitioners

### 8.1 Profile of validation practitioners

As for the competence requirements of VPL professionals, there seems to be a need for a more specific competence development. The typical VPL staff are teachers and trainers and guidance counsellors. But there is not a specific teaching or competence

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.uvm.dk/erhvervsuddannelser/adgang-og-optagelse/realkompetencevurdering>

development programme for VPL practitioners in DK. And there are no specific formal competence requirements concerning the VPL practice.

As the responsibility of VPL is in the hands of the educational institutions, the cross sectoral cooperation among stakeholders could be improved in Denmark. Especially the third sector is deeply engaged in the development of VPL methods, approach, tools and competence development for the sector. In enterprises, there is not a specific focus on VPL in the workplace. The legal framework clearly states that informal and non-formal learning – acquired no matter where and how – must be included in the overall validation and so it is. However, there is no doubt, that a more coordinated cooperation among sectors and stakeholders could further improve the common understanding of learning acquired in all settings and how to more systematically work out the documentation.

The barriers for some individuals concerning the documentation of their learning clearly demonstrates that resources from all sectors could help the individual better understand how to prepare for the VPL.

Interviews carried out with individuals show that important documentation of experience is sometimes missing from the documentation because the candidate lacks sufficient support for this.

This issue is furthermore critical as the ‘taximeter’ allocated to the VPL provider does not cover the documentation phase. Hence, the responsibility for developing the documentation is fully in the hands of the individual. The evaluation report about VPL development in Denmark 2010-2018, underlines this problematic effect. Among a number of recommendations, based on the evaluation, it is recommended (recommendation nr. 6), that relevant ministries reconsider the economic incentive structure for providing VPL.

## **8.2 Provision of training and support to validation practitioners**

‘Validation practitioners’ in Denmark include counsellors/advisors, assessors, teachers, administrative staff and staff from guidance organisations (i.e. job centres /PES). The main practitioners involved in the VPL are counsellors/advisors and assessors. Validation assessors are usually teachers and counsellors from the concerned educational institutions.

Apart from these requirements, there are no additional requirements for practising VPL.

The evaluation report about VPL development in Denmark (2019) identifies one of the barriers being that a provision of training and support about VPL to practitioners is missing, though this requirement has been expressed throughout the years of VPL practice in Denmark. Working groups, set by ministries during these years, have unanimously recommended provision of training and education for VPL practitioners. In spite of the absence of this option, there are well functioning networks for some of the education areas. This counts e.g. for VET institutions in the social- and healthcare education area, the mercantile education programmes and for CVET, Higher Education, the Academy Profession - and the Diploma programmes. Concerning the latter, there is no doubt that the implementation of the digital platform for VPL for the two education programmes has led to a well-functioning cooperation and knowledge sharing in the VPL practitioners’ network.

## **8.3 Qualifications and experience**

The mandatory requirements for VPL practitioners are determined and fulfilled in relation to the specific tasks in the validation process. Guidance counsellors’

competence requirements are specified in terms of relevant educational level, Diploma programme and / or Master level for Guidance & Counselling.

Assessors are typically teachers, qualified in teaching and related tasks for the VPL in the relevant education programme.

In cases of observation of practice skills, some education programmes cooperate with workplaces in the assessment of practice skills. This is the case for example for social and healthcare education programmes, social and healthcare assistant (VET), where assessment of practice skills is carried out at workplaces within elderly care. Results of the observations are included in the overall assessment, carried out by the educational institution.

## **9 Inputs, outputs and outcomes**

### **9.1 Funding and costs**

VPL constitutes an individual right. For the majority of users, VPL is free, though this depends on the level of candidates' educational background. VPL is free for candidates with a former educational background up to EQF level 5. Above EQF level 5, candidates must pay a fee which differs according to the requested VPL certificate, i.e. Access, competence module – equal to exemption – or a full qualification. For some users, it might be a consideration if a fee is sometimes too high compared to e.g., the price of a module, while attending this as a student.

Regarding unemployed people, VPL fees are covered by the PES or the unemployment fund. Information and guidance (IAG) covers VPL fees and are available on relevant educational institutions' websites.

VPL activities are publicly funded through a 'taximeter' approach and per activity type. Funding of VPL activities within the entire educational system is allocated by the ministries responsible for specific programmes in education.

### **9.2 Beneficiaries and users of validation processes**

#### **9.2.1 Validation trends**

The evaluation report about development of VPL in Denmark (2010-2018), published by EVA (2019), shows that a growing number of educational institutions carrying out VPL in their respective educational sector. The data similarly show that there is a high commitment across educational institutions to the idea of recognition of prior learning. The number of individuals having undergone VPL differs depending on the educational sector: the use of VPL has been increasing in CVET and HE but decreasing in adult learning (IKV for AMU).

#### **9.2.2 Validation users**

There is no information available on validation users.

#### **9.2.3 Validation and disadvantaged groups**

People who are unemployed or at risk of unemployment are financially supported to undergo a VPL when this is determined as relevant to their career prospects.

There is a specific legal framework for youth, under the authority of municipalities. If deemed relevant based on the young person's background, VPL is utilised within the legal framework for VPL in formal education.

Since 2021, the Special Law concerning Ukrainian Refugees in Denmark allows them to undergo VPL under standard conditions.

There is no information available on the number of participants with the aforementioned profiles.

## 10 Validation methods

### 10.1 Methodologies

Methods and approaches used most commonly in VPL in formal education are based on dialogue, self-evaluation, digital tests / multiple choice, practice tests, portfolio and presentation.

Practice tests can be both observation of the person's practice skills, demonstrated in a realistic setting (like for VET- a skills audit), or it is used as a written reflection of their own experience and prior learning in terms of a case, relevant for a certain objective of the formal education. This is especially used in VPL towards Academy Profession programme and Diploma programmes. The EVA evaluation (2019) on RKV reported that the VPL result is vulnerable, if the personal interaction between VPL staff and the individual is limited due to the usage of tools and written documentation. The Evaluation report on development of VPL (2019) clearly states that the use of conversation as a tool between the candidate and the VPL practitioner is too limited according to the prospects of ensuring a well-functioning VPL process, not least in the documentation phase. The same report underlines this as being one of the barriers for an increase to the widespread of VPL. It is complex for users to understand what prior learning is about and how to document this, prior to the assessment. A conversation would help the candidate's understanding of this.

### 10.2 Use of ICT in validation

ICT based tools for the individual's identification and documentation of prior learning are available. This is the case for instance for the digital tool, My prior learning (Mine realkompetencer)<sup>22</sup>, for the target group of adults who plan for a VET for adults, age 25 + ). It is available on the platform, UddannelsesGuiden. <https://www.ug.dk>. By filling in the tool, the user gets an idea of the relevance of his or her prior learning according to various VET educations.

#### **My prior learning (*Mine realkompetencer*)**

My prior learning is a digital tool for adults who plan to start a vocational education.

With this tool, the applicant can carry out an indicative competence assessment before applying for a vocational education i to get an idea of the options for shortening the education.

For further support for development of documentation for RKV, the digital tool, My Competence Folder is available <sup>23</sup>The Competence Folder contains all digital education certificates and credentials, obtained by the individual. Furthermore, the user of My Competence Folder is guided on how to describe systematically all relevant learning to be documented in the application process for either education or VPL to the education. My Competence Folder is developed and maintained by the Authority of ICT and Learning (STIL), The Danish Ministry of Education's

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.euv25.dk/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.minkompetencemappe.dk/>

([www.uvm.dk](http://www.uvm.dk)) My Competence Folder is available via a personal login, and secured in terms of legal regulations for digital secure identity.

For VPL users in CVET, HE, and Academy Profession Programmes, a digital platform for RKV is available for the entire VPL process<sup>24</sup>. The digital platform contains all stages of the VPL process and purposes related to VPL from first access to transfer of achievements / validations outcomes and issuance of certificates. The tool is accessed via the [www.e-boks.dk](http://www.e-boks.dk) website, a commonly used digital mailbox in Denmark. This also guarantees safety regarding exchange of information.

## 11 Quality assurance

### 11.1 Quality assurance processes

VPL providers for VPL to formal educations are obliged to assure quality. The QA procedures and instruments are defined and used at organisational level. Among means and methods for internal quality assurance (QA), self-evaluation is a common tool, used by the VPL staff. The VPL participants are – typically not involved in an evaluation process. Tools, methods and approach are decided by the institution itself. For RKV to IVET (EUD), the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) has developed a material with suggestions on how to improve the RKV processes.

The evaluation report on VPL development in Denmark (EVA 2019) highlights a notably extensive internal awareness of VPL (Recognition of Prior Learning - RKV and Individual Competence Assessment - IKV). This level of awareness spans across almost all six education areas, commonly disseminated through meetings, the institution's intranet, and direct communication with relevant individuals. Similarly, external information about VPL across educational sub-sectors also exhibits a high percentage of awareness. However, despite the substantial efforts in providing externally targeted information, the report suggests a general perception that public knowledge about RKV remains relatively low.

When examining specific aspects within internal QA, there appears to be limited utilisation of the documentation tool in the Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) process. Proper documentation throughout all phases of the VPL process plays a crucial role in ensuring the reliability of its outcomes. This documentation is essential for testing and replicating the process to yield consistent results across educational institutions. However, the current legal framework for VPL lacks adequate standardization of VPL practices. An exception to this is evident in the VPL process for the Academy Profession and Diploma programs, where all Recognition of Prior Learning (RKV) activities are conducted through a digital RKV platform. This approach ensures uniform processes and assessment standards, contributing to consistent and standardised recognition practices.

Networks for VPL practitioners across institutions across different educational sectors contribute significantly to knowledge sharing and mutual inspiration for practice and for QA. For the national network of VPL practitioners for RKV to Academy Profession and Diploma programmes, a new model is implemented in order to systematise further this work. The network meets twice a year, of which one of the meetings is organised by the Ministry of HE and Science.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.ug.dk/efteruddannelse/realkompetencer/realkomptencevurdering-rkv-til-akademi-og-diplomuddannelser>

For VPL to all educational areas, there is an appeal right. Information to the user about this must be included in the written message about the VPL result. Complaints about VPL results are at a low level.<sup>25</sup>

## 11.2 Monitoring and evaluation

Data about VPL activity and results are reported and collected from the VPL providers. Data reports deliver information to the central level, and specifically to the relevant ministries for each of the education areas. Data reports are analysed and inform the design of initiatives concerning development and / or needs for changes in VPL. However, there is no aggregated data about users, which could potentially improve outreach to certain target groups.

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) carries out evaluations in close relation to the VPL programme, overall and in relation to specific subjects, like for instance the quality assurance activities. EVA carries out evaluations for public institutions and organisations, like municipalities, associations, organisations, educational institutions and ministries. Besides, EVA develops tools and materials focusing on good practice for VPL providers and practitioners.

A report on quality in RKV was published in 2019, based on a comprehensive evaluation, carried out in 2010 – and repeated in 2018 – to identify progress in the development of RKV activity and of monitoring.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Science monitors the activity annually, both the number of RKV to Academy Professions and Diploma Programmes, and through dialogue with the national network of VPL practitioners.

## 12 The position of validation in society; visibility and trust

Outcomes of validation generally enjoy high trust among stakeholders and in society. Though, as mentioned in this report, critics is expressed towards educational institutions' regarding acceptance of learning outcome achieved during third sector learning activities. This is for example the case when day high school participants experience that their course certificate is not perceived as an essential document for the VPL process.

Anyway, there is no doubt that the reason for the generally high trust is based upon the involvement of labour market organisations in setting the standards and criteria for assessment of prior learning towards formal education. The social partners are equally represented in the Education Committees for the educational area in question.

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<https://www.uvm.dk/arbejdsmarkedssuddannelser/hvad-og-hvor/individuel-kompetencevurdering--ikv->

# European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2023 update

This report is part of the 2023 update of the [European Inventory on the validation of non-formal and informal learning](#). The inventory provides a comprehensive overview of validation practices across Europe, covering 32 systems in EU-27 Member States and EFTA countries.

The European inventory is the product of a long-standing cooperation of the European Commission, Cedefop and ETF on the field. The inventory was endorsed by the [Council recommendation of 2012](#) on validation and works together with the [European guidelines](#) as a tool to support countries in developing and implementing validation arrangements.

A rich source of information, the inventory informs dialogue and learning between countries and stakeholders developing and implementing validation in Europe. Our key objective is to support Member States so that more learners and workers can acquire and make visible new skills, which will support their career and further learning and improve their quality of life.

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