



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training



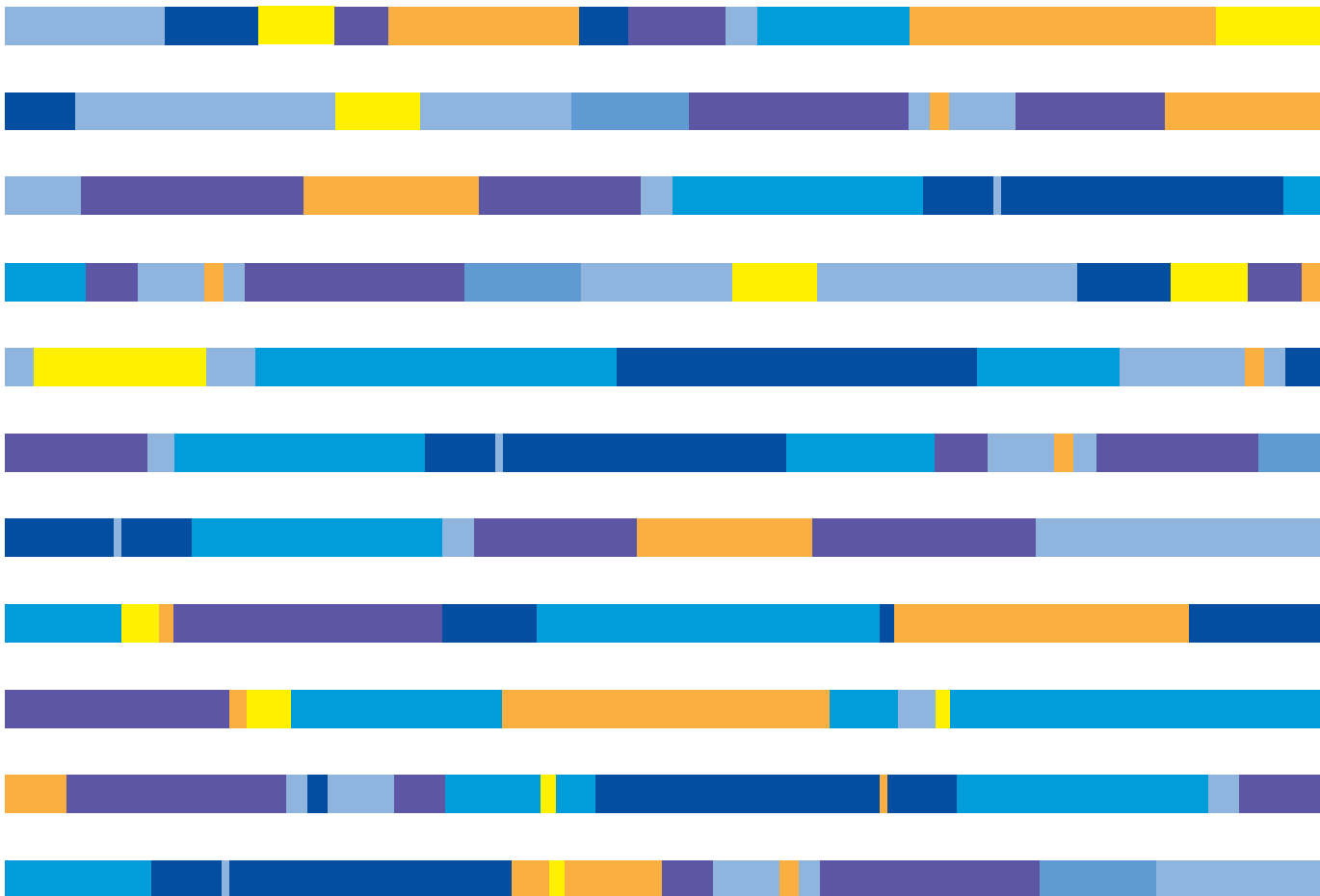
European  
Commission

EN

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

COUNTRY REPORT:  
**ESTONIA**

Author: Moonika Teppo, Kirsti Melesk and Eve Mägi



## Acknowledgements

This country update was produced by Moonika Teppo, Kirsti Melesk and Eve Mägi, as part of the 2023 update to the European Inventory on validation, a project managed by ICF (lead consultants: Manuel Souto-Otero, Michael Richardson, Ilona Murphy, Valentina Musso and Flora Dussine) in association with 3s (lead consultants: Karin Luomi-Messerer, Monika Auzinger, Julia Fellingner, Mariya Dzhenozova and Daniel Unterweger) under the supervision of a Steering Committee formed by the European Commission (Koen Nomden, Aline Juerges and Klara Engels-Perenyi), Cedefop (Ernesto Villalba-Garcia), and the ETF (Maria Rosenstock).

The report has benefitted from feedback from the European qualifications framework Advisory Group (EQF AG) members for Estonia as well as other national-level quality assurance (QA) contacts with expertise in validation.

Work was carried out under DG EMPL Implementing Framework Contract EAC-01-2019 - Request for Services VT/2021/059

### Disclaimer:

The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission, Cedefop, the ETF, ICF, the EQF AG members or the other QA contacts. Neither the European Commission nor any person/organisation acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of any information contained in this publication. The publication has neither been edited nor proof-read by Cedefop's editing service.

Please cite this publication as:

Teppo M., Melesk K., Mägi E. (2024). *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2023 update: Estonia*. European Commission and Cedefop.

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/country-reports/european-inventory-validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning-2023-update-Estonia>

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	2
1 Abstract	4
2 Introduction	4
3 National perspective	5
3.1 Overarching approach to validation	5
3.2 Validation in education and training	8
3.3 Validation and the labour market	9
3.4 Validation and the third sector	9
4 Links to credentials and qualifications	9
5 Standards	11
6 Institutions involved in validation arrangements and its coordination	12
7 Outreach, awareness raising, provision of information, advice and guidance	12
7.1 Outreach and awareness-raising	12
7.2 Information, advice and guidance	13
8 Validation practitioners	14
8.1 Profile of validation practitioners	14
8.2 Provision of training and support to validation practitioners	15
8.3 Qualifications and experience	15
9 Inputs, outputs and outcomes	17
9.1 Funding and costs	17
9.2 Beneficiaries and users of validation processes	18
9.2.1 Validation trends	18
9.2.2 Validation users	19
9.2.3 Validation and disadvantaged groups	19
10 Validation methods	19
10.1 Methodologies and methods	19
10.2 Use of ICT in validation	20
11 Quality assurance	21
11.1 Quality assurance processes	21
11.2 Monitoring and evaluation	21
12 The position of validation in society; visibility and trust	21
13 References	22
13.1 References	22
13.2 Sources	23

# 1 Abstract

This Estonian Inventory 2023 report gives an overview of the main developments and innovations on validation of non-formal and informal learning (NFIL) which have been carried out during the period of 2018-2022 and ongoing beyond the period. There have been several important changes in Estonia, but the principles of the validation of non-formal and informal learning have generally remained the same. In recent years, Estonia has contributed enormously into the integration of non-formal and formal learning as well as the reform of the professional qualifications system with the aim to contribute to linking of the realms of education and work, so that people would study and be able to take into account their previous work or study experience in evaluating and choosing their future career path.

# 2 Introduction

Validation practices and developments in Estonia are based on common principles and frameworks (see for instance Rutiku et al. 2011), but implementation varies across sectors and are more advanced in formal education compared to non-formal education. Higher education (HE) has been leading developments in relation to validation, though other sectors - such as the vocational education and training (VET) and general education sector - have been following these developments. Validation practices in various sectors are similar but links between sectors could be stronger. Thus, the challenge in Estonia is to create a unified system. Although based on the same overall principles, different procedures across educational sectors have led to a fragmented model and for potential applicants it could be difficult to find his/her way around the various systems implemented in different sectors.

Validation practices are well developed in HE and VET due to previous extensive ESF programme funding during the period 2007-2013 and 2014-2020. Validation in HE and VET is seen as a regular part of study processes and each institution is responsible for implementing validation including providing information and guidance, assessing and certifying. The new funding period for the ESF programme (2021-2027) foresees further development of the system, including setting up a digital solution for documenting individual learning pathways and involving social partners and employers in recognition of non-formal and informal learning (see also Ühtekuuluvuspoliitika fondide..., 2021).

Validation practices follow the elements in arrangements for the validation of nonformal and informal learning as described by the Council Recommendation on Validation (2012). A unifying link between the validation practices in various sectors is a common quality code. Many of the principles and practices for validation have been developed in HE but are being also used in other sectors even though the developments have taken place in different times. Guidance and information is part of validation practice and available for all interested applicants. The ESF funding has supported the provision of training for target groups, development of educational materials, setting up networks, organising study tours, presentation of best practices etc. However, ESF funding has been project based leading to somewhat fragmentation of validation. Various user groups (including disadvantaged groups) have not gained special attention in validation except recently adult learners have been targeted to help their return to education and validation has been mentioned as a tool. Validation is more prominent in the public sector (HE, VET, general education) and there are few links with the private sector. (in terms of training providers).

Since 2018 the main focus is to further develop validation programs in adult gymnasiums, vocational education and higher education putting more emphasis on

connections between different sectors – in particular between formal education, informal education and labour market, less with third sector. Main goals for developments regarding validation of non-formal and informal learning are reflected in two strategic documents - Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy (2020) and The Education Strategy (2021–2035). The main goal of the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy (2020) is to ensure that all Estonian people have learning opportunities during their lifetime that meet their needs and abilities and enable them to maximize their opportunities for self-fulfilment in society, in their work and in their family life. The Ministry of Education and Research in Estonia has adopted nine programs for the implementation of the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy, including the “Adult Education Program”. The main goal of the activity “Promoting adult education and broadening learning opportunities” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2015) is to motivate adults to learn and to create flexible and high-quality learning opportunities based on the needs and development of the labour market, including development of RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) to widen opportunities for recognition of learning acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning. The Education Strategy (2021–2035) sets out big changes for developing micro qualifications and learning bites, and a skills based professional qualification system.

For example, under the strategies during the period of 2022-2029 new reform under the project “Reform of Estonian professional qualifications system” (Estonian Qualifications Authority, n.d.-a) has been initiated to connect the education system even more closely with the labour market. With the proposed reform the transition will be made to a skill- and competence-based approach (instead of a whole profession) which will shape several aspects of the skills system. One feature will be developing a digital solution for skills system. This includes development of a future skills forecasting system OSKA, establishment of OsKuS comprehensive skills and professional qualifications system, and digital development of OsKuS. This tool will be available for different target groups (employers, learners, trainers, curriculum developers and career service advisors).

At the general and vocational education level, the project “Supporting young people to succeed - Building capacities to better integrate non-formal and formal learning” (2021-2023) (Ministry of Education and Research, n.d.-a) aims to create a comprehensive solution for better integration of non-formal and formal learning in Estonian general and vocational education. During the project the current practices and problems related to the integration of non-formal and formal learning in Estonia are investigated, an ex-ante impact analysis of a policy change is carried out and piloted ending up with recommendations on legislation and policy, and recommendations on implementation.

For the next ESF funding period (2021-2027) ongoing emphasis is to make education and training systems higher quality, more inclusive, efficient and relevant to the labour market, including through the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

## **3 National perspective**

### **3.1 Overarching approach to validation**

#### **Validation in Estonia**

In Estonia, validation is understood as a process that helps a competent authority assess the competence of an applicant based on specific criteria. This includes the extent to which an applicant’s knowledge, skills and attitudes conform to the enrolment criteria of an educational institution, the learning outcomes of the curriculum, or its part(s), or the competency requirements of an occupational

standard. If the applicant's competences meet the requirements, they will be taken into account with respect to the enrolment criteria, completion of the curriculum, or in terms of awarding an occupational qualification<sup>1</sup>.

**The purpose of validation is:**

- to value the competence of a person and provide equal opportunities for assessing and acknowledging it, regardless of the time, place and the way in which the knowledge and skills were acquired;
- to support lifelong learning and mobility between the education system and the labour market and within each of these; and,
- to improve access to education for people, including people who are socially disadvantaged: to broaden opportunities to acquire an education and compete in the labour market and therefore support a more efficient use of the resources of both the individual and society.

In Estonia, principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning (also known as Recognition of Prior Learning, RPL) have been developed and are regulated by higher education and vocational education legislation (Higher Education Act, 2019; Higher Education Standard, 2019; Vocational Educational Institutions Act, 2013 and Vocational Education Standard, 2013).

The principles for validation are:

- RPL is goal oriented.
- RPL is based on the needs of the applicant and is voluntary for the applicant.
- The organisation and methods of RPL are reliable and based on the standards of education, occupational standards and good practices. Trust plays a central role and results from social recognition, precisely defined standards and clear information on the process and criteria of assessment.
- The assessors and advisers are competent, independent and impartial. Independence and impartiality are key factors in the assessment process and are based on the responsibility of assessors. The roles of assessors and advisers are clear and separate.
- RPL assessment follows precise and unambiguous assessment principles.
- The quality assurance process of RPL is systematic and based on the principle of continuous improvement.

The validation principles are generally also used in the system for awarding occupational qualifications. In the field of general education validation is allowed by law but validation process and practice has not been clearly defined. Validation processes have been unified at adult gymnasiums as a result of a working group (2016) initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research. All adult gymnasiums have validation procedures described and regulated by institutions' study regulations. Institutions providing non-formal education have been partially involved in the implementation of validation principles.

As indicated above, validation has an important role to play in enhancing the links between different levels of education and the labour market. The concept of assessment of prior experiential learning encompasses the idea of lifelong learning and the notion that learning is valuable no matter where or when it has been acquired.

---

<sup>1</sup> Both terms occupational and professional qualification are used. In the current document we stick to 'occupational qualification'.

As reported in the 2016 and 2018 update, validation can be used for:

- Admission to higher education and VET institutions with respect to fulfilling entrance requirements. In HE this is only valid if the applicant has a certain previous level of education (e.g. High school diploma, bachelor or master's degree, depending on the level of study applied for);
- Filling the curriculum by subjects, topics or modules;
- Changing curriculum of study in higher education and vocational education (i.e. transferring learning experience from one field of study to another); and,
- Achieving an occupational qualification (passing of professional examination).

### **Overall policy context in validation**

The legal framework for validation is specific to the education level and more advanced in formal education (HE, VET and adult education gymnasiums). There is no overall legislation to cover validation at all educational levels and each is responsible for its own development and implementation. The lifelong learning strategy known as the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy (2020) has a focus on adult education and validation. One of the objectives is to create equal opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone including using prior learning experiences at secondary education level. The Education Strategy (2021–2035) is the follow-up to the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy (2020) and sets out three key educational goals for the next 15 years. One of the key activities (under the first goal: Learning opportunities are diverse and accessible, and the education system enables smooth transitions between different levels and types of education) is to develop a comprehensive solution for taking non-formal and informal learning into account in formal education in order to give more consideration to the knowledge and skills acquired in various environments (digital environment, workplaces, youth centres and programmes, hobby schools, environmental education centres, etc). Under the third strategic goal (Learning options are responsive to the development needs of society and the labour market) two key activities are: to carry out the reform of the professional qualification system, including shifting from professional standards to profiles, developing a skills matrix and classification system, criteria and tools for assessing skills for different target groups, and recognition of general and professional competences and partial qualifications; and to develop a digital solution for the management of individual educational paths and careers and assessment of skills (digital education history). Thus, during the period 2018-2023 and ongoing more emphasis has been put on how to ensure better quality and transparency in validating non-formal and informal learning throughout lifelong learning.

### **National Skills Strategy and Individual Learning Accounts**

There is no separate National Skills Strategy in Estonia as validation of skills and knowledge is covered by The Education Strategy (2021–2035) and emphasised as one of the priorities to be improved.

There has been reluctance in Estonia to create Individual Learning Accounts for everyone. At first, this requires additional funding for creation and management, which Estonia does not have. Secondly, as a possibility, everyone in Estonia (benefits people with lower or outdated qualifications) can attend in free in-service courses offered by certificated vocational and higher educational institutions financed by ESF activity "Promoting adult education and broadening learning opportunities". Specific target groups such as migrants or refugees can take Estonian language courses for free. Also, training cards are provided by Unemployment Insurance Fund to labour market risk groups (both employed and unemployed people) that provide some freedom in choosing a training course among the training providers approved by the Unemployment Insurance Fund. The field of training and training need is identified in

cooperation with a career counsellor. There are plans to take first steps in introducing Individual Learning Accounts in the new ESF financing period (2021-2027) and piloting the measure (the programme is allocated 3 million Euros and 450 participants).

There is no overall system of skills audit introduced in Estonia, although the Estonian Education Strategy (2021-2035) takes a big step towards recognising skills and knowledge acquired in different learning settings (including micro-qualifications, informal learning settings, digital environments, at workplace etc). This assumes that a system for recognising the results of these different learning activities is introduced.

## 3.2 Validation in education and training

There is no overarching regulation of validation that would cover all sectors and levels of learning, although steps are taken towards developing better validation systems. Overall basic principles are applied in regulating validation in separate legal acts for different education sectors. Validation arrangements have been defined in formal learning to take into account prior knowledge and skills in acquiring a curriculum in higher or vocational education or applying for occupational qualifications (system called VÕTA in Estonian, RPL in English). Thus, RPL is specific procedure (mainly used in vocational and higher education institutions), however validation is a broader term that includes various activities, including issuing an invitation, certifying participation in trainings, etc.

RPL can be implemented for:

- complying with the conditions for admission established by the educational institution;
- continuing prior studies;
- changing from one curriculum to another (and transferring credit points);
- completion of a curriculum;
- acquiring professional qualifications.

RPL takes into account prior studies in a formal education institution, skills and knowledge acquired in additional training or through self-learning or knowledge acquired through work experience.

While RPL can be used for validation of skills and knowledge in formal education system, further reforming validation in formal and non-formal education is a strategic aim for the 2021-2035 period. This includes creating a framework for validating non-formal and informal learning in formal education system to enable smooth transitions between different education systems and consider the skills and knowledge acquired in different educational settings, including in digital environments, workplaces, cultural or youth centres etc. This spans to general education settings which is currently not covered by RPL.

Another major reform in validation in education and training is related to the transfer from professional standards to skills profiles, including development of skills matrix and classification systems, development of skills evaluation criteria and tools for different target groups etc. This gives the necessary tools to describe the skills profile of each individual, including recognising the skills acquired in different settings, including labour market, formal education etc. This enables a better comparability and transferability of validation between the education system and the labour market and across different educational settings. Overall, the reform includes the four stages of validation:

- Identification – a common system for acknowledging skills profiles is being developed;
- documentation – the reform is accompanied by a development of a digital tool to document the results of validation and create a personal skills profile that would be recognised in different education settings as well as in the labour market;
- assessment – the reform includes developing skills evaluation criteria and tools for users;
- certification – certification systems need to adapt to the system of skills profiles; evaluation frameworks provide an important basis for certification in the new system.

There is no specific policy area that is prioritised in validation in education and training. Instead, the described reforms span across different levels of education and include knowledge and skills acquired in different education settings.

### 3.3 Validation and the labour market

Currently, RPL enables to consider the knowledge and skills acquired in the labour market through work experience in higher and vocational education and partly in adult education gymnasium. This enables to consider one's work experience and transferring these as credit points upon acquiring a curriculum or applying for a professional qualification. However, outside of that framework, there is no system of validating knowledge and skills acquired in the labour market.

As part of the reform of vocational system, a self-assessment environment is being created during 2022-2024 based on OSKA skills needs analysis reports (Estonian Qualifications Authority, n.d.-b) to support the assessment of skills and knowledge required in the labour market and introduce a system of validating the results of such assessment. This introduces a new framework for validation of skills and knowledge based on labour market needs. Whether and how this will be considered in formal education or whether this will be foremost for signalling available skills and knowledge to employers, remains to be seen in the course of further developments.

### 3.4 Validation and the third sector

In principle, knowledge and skills acquired in the third sector can be considered in the RPL process similarly to the validation of skills acquired in the labour market (see also prior chapters). Nevertheless, there is little evidence of validation practices in the youth and volunteering sectors. There used to be an online tool to describe knowledge, skills and practical experience acquired through youth work, although this is not active when writing the current update. However, in case the self-assessment tool is developed and introduced, this may give better opportunities to validate the knowledge and skills acquired in the third sector as well (see also previous chapter).

The third sector is also involved in awarding occupational qualification certificates as awarding bodies. This means that third sector organisations are involved in the validation processed for individuals who want to obtain professional qualifications. Currently, 128 companies/organisations from third sector/educational institutions have the authority to award qualifications based on defined qualification standards (Estonian Qualifications Authority, n.d.-c).

## 4 Links to credentials and qualifications

An eight-level qualification framework was established in 2008 (Professions Act, 2018). Estonia has a comprehensive qualifications framework, which consists of four

sub-frameworks: for general education; for vocational education and training; for HE; and, for occupational qualifications with sub-framework specific level descriptors.

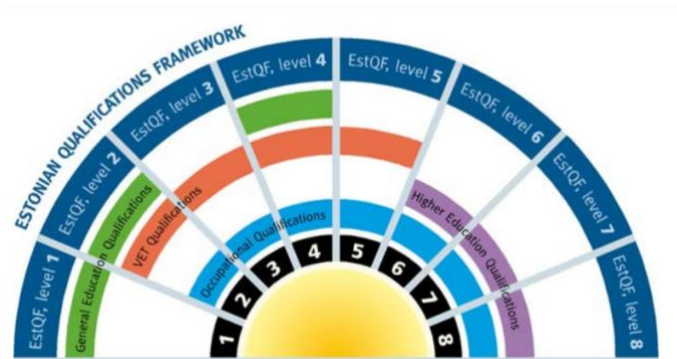
The learning outcomes of each of these have been described in terms of levels:

- the learning outcomes of general education qualifications are described in national curricula for basic schools and upper secondary schools;
- the learning outcomes of vocational education are described in the vocational education standard;
- the learning outcomes of levels of higher education (professional higher education, Bachelor's level study, Master's level study and Doctorate level study) are described in the higher education standard;
- competence requirements for occupational qualifications, i.e. professions, are described in occupational standards.

The detailed descriptions of the levels in respect of the Qualifications framework (<https://www.kutsekoda.ee/en/occupational-qualification-standards/>) determine general requirements for learning outcomes of the education system and for levels of the occupational qualifications system.

As referred to above, referencing of the Estonian qualification framework to the EQF took place from December 2008 to August 2011. The creation and implementation of the Estonian qualification framework is based on the principles for accountability and quality assurance of qualifications laid down by the European Parliament and Council recommendation on the establishment of the EQF. Occupational qualifications can be gained through formal education as well as through non-formal and informal learning.

Figure 4.1 Estonian Qualifications Framework Validation against occupational standards



#### *Validation against occupational standards*

Validation of non-formal and informal learning against occupational standards (Johnson, 2016) is not regulated by law, but the process is largely based on the principles and ideology of validation (discussed earlier in the report). In the process of validation, the applicant's actual skills and knowledge is assessed, regardless of how they are received. Assessment is following a competence-based approach, where competencies acquired are compared in accordance with standards in the field. In the qualification system, the purpose of the validation is to provide a fair and impartial assessment of the applicant's competencies with the competency requirements specified in the occupational standard.

There are several ways of using validation of non-formal and informal learning against occupational standards:

- Validation of preconditions set in occupational standard which creates opportunity for access to the qualification standard.
- Validation of competencies (full or partial) set at the occupational standard.
- Validation of competencies after a certain number of years when applicant needs to re-apply for the occupational standard.

Validation for the preconditions of the occupational standard is applied in cases where the applicant does not have, for example, the required level of education, the amount of in-service training and/or the prescribed length of work experience.

Validation of competencies fully or partially based on RPL takes into account competencies acquired in formal, non-formal or informal settings. When re-applying for an occupational qualification certificate the applicant does not have to take again a test or examination and competencies that have previously assessed will not be re-evaluated.

Occupational qualification providers may regulate the validation process either by providing validation regulations or mentioning general guidelines. As there is no common legislative framework, occupational qualification providers decide on how to use validation principles. Validation processes could be more clearly stated, and information and guidance could be better organized by occupational qualification providers. Competence based qualification standards and assessment standards are a good prerequisite for using validation. In 2016 and 2017 training courses on validation principles and assessment practices were provided for organisations issuing occupational qualifications.

## 5 Standards

Both occupational standards and educational standards are used in validation.

The Occupational Qualification Standard (OQS) describes occupational activities and provides the competency requirements for occupational qualifications and their levels.

OQS consists of three parts (Estonian Qualifications Authority, n.d.-d). Part A of the standard (description of the occupation) provides an overview of the nature of work, major parts of work and tasks, necessary tools, work environment, including the specificities of work and describes the personal characteristics and skills enhancing occupational activities. This information is useful for people who are choosing an occupation or career. This source also helps career advisers, labour market consultants, human resource managers and trainers.

The competence requirements presented in part B of the standard serve as a basis for the training programmes and assessment of the applicant for the occupational qualification. These requirements are presented as descriptions of mandatory and optional competences. Competence is an ability to perform a specific part of work or a task on the basis of having the knowledge, skills and attitudes required.

Part C of the standard contains general information and references to annexes.

Occupational standards are accompanied by assessment standards which specify assessment methods, procedures and assessment criteria. For example, applying for an adult educator's qualification certificate is voluntary and depends on the applicant's wish to formalise his/her professional skills. The application process includes e-portfolio compilation and interview. E-portfolios contain applicants' self-analysis and assessment of competencies and relevant evidence material to support his/her claim. The interview is where the applicant is asked to give proof of his/her competencies.

A reform of occupational standards has been initiated which means the system will be transferred from an occupational standards-based approach towards a skills-

based approach through the “Reform of Estonian professional qualifications system” (Estonian Qualifications Authority, n.d.-a). This should enable better comparison of skills acquired in learning environments and those required in the labour market. The first stage of the reform is implemented in 2023 (creating an environment for describing skills), skills-based services will be developed in 2024 (creation of skills profiles, system of skills validation, creating personalised services), the final stage – skills analysis – will be finalised in 2025 (Ministry of Education and Research, n.d.-b).

## **6 Institutions involved in validation arrangements and its coordination**

Institutions involved in validation have largely remained the same, although some responsibilities have been transferred to the Education and Youth Board since 2021. Validation as a process is still governed by the Ministry of Education and Research, which has the responsibility to set overall policy aims and benchmarks. There is no single institution responsible for validation implementation in all sectors thus the development of validation practices is scattered between government agencies. Validation arrangements are predominantly in the public sector and enterprises are poorly linked to it.

While developments in HE were previously led by the Archimedes Foundation and in vocational education by Foundation INNOVE, since 1 January 2021 Education and Youth Board (HARNO in Estonian) was created and took over all coordination of certification processes across borders and testing and certification procedures in Estonian education system (e.g. language testing, citizenship exams, general skills tests, certification in formal education, national exams and tests in general education etc).

Validation for obtaining occupational qualifications is coordinated by the Estonian Qualifications Authority as it was in 2018. Validation processes are supported by a foresight initiative to identify the skills needed in the labour market. This is also led by the Estonian Qualifications Authority, specifically the OSKA labour force and skills forecast team. Validation across borders is supported by the Europass centre, which provides digital certificates to validate qualifications acquired in different EU countries. On national level, this is also supported by the Estonian Qualifications Authority.

Validation procedures are implemented at the level of educational institutions. Hence, higher education, vocational education and education institutions that provide general education for adults have put in place a set of regulations for the recognition of prior learning and work experience.

Employers are included in the assessment of validation in various cases in HE, VET and occupational qualifications. Employers are part of assessment processes in more technical areas and in the ICT area. The assessment of occupational qualifications is carried out by an awarding body which usually includes employers’ representatives.

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

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

#### *Awareness-raising*

Since 2018 new online materials are developed to introduce and provide guidance for the use of RPL in different settings, including HE, vocational education and general

education for adults. Also, previous materials are revised based on the practical cases of using RPL. Also, new information tools are created to move towards better recognition of skills (see further details below).

The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research has gathered all the general materials related to the RPL (VÕTA) process together on the relevant website (Ministry of Education and Research, n.d.-c). Interactive learning and instructional materials for the applicants, advisors, and assessors are available in the E-koolikott portal (E-Schoolbag, n.d.). More information about the RPL is also available at the Haridusportaal (Education Portal, n.d.).

In the education sector, each institution is responsible for informing current students about validation options. For example, in Tallinn University (n.d.) and University of Tartu (n.d.) websites cover information on the validation process, information on how to apply and also have information for supporting reflection as an applicant. Various videos and guidance materials have been provided for the applicant.

Vocational education has developed information materials that are sector specific. Similar to HE, every vocational education institution has its own regulations regarding validation and application.

Qualification awarding bodies share information with potential applicants. The term validation is often not used. Although the work that is being done is a validation process, it is not named that way.

The portal [mitteformaalne.ee](http://mitteformaalne.ee) is aimed at promoting youth work and provide guidance for recognition of participation in different processes among youth with Youthpass. The portal is supported by Education and Youth Board of Estonia. The portal is widely known among youth workers in Estonia.

To raise awareness of the skills required in different economic sectors, OSKA has published sector-based labour force and skills forecasts since 2016. Compared to 2018, now all economic sectors are covered by sectoral skills forecast studies and new rounds of sector-based assessment has already started. New overarching studies are also added like the need for digital and green skills or study on transversal skills. This supports individuals in choosing the necessary skills for specific sectors or occupations. As a new development, based on the OSKA studies, skills register is created which is a tool for systematic identification of skills that are provided by education or training providers and can also be used for skills audits or skills assessment (Estonian Qualifications Authority, n.d.-e). This is a pilot version that is complemented during 2023 and will be used as an input for skills information system in 2024.

#### *Outreach measures and promotional activities*

Various trainings have been organised for adult gymnasiums, higher and vocational education institutions on the general principles of RPL, counselling and evaluation by the Ministry of Education and Research. Cooperation seminars have been held for RPL contact persons from various educational institutions to share the experiences of RPL implementation. In 2019, the joint network of various educational institutions' seminar "VÕTame ette!" took place, where ideas were collected for updating RPL's instructional materials. As a result, digital and interactive learning materials were completed in 2021 (see information in the first paragraph).

## **7.2 Information, advice and guidance**

As reported previously (2010, 2014, 2016, 2018 update) educational providers are responsible for providing information on their own validation regulations and procedures. Educational institutions must inform students about the conditions of and procedure for the recognition of prior learning and work experience, including the

terms and cost of assessment as well as the conditions of contesting the results, and ensure that all applicants have access to the necessary information, guidance and counselling.

In practice, advice and guidance is based on the sector and provided by individual institutions. In the absence of a single institution for guidance, generally speaking, information and guidance is fragmented and only covers the institution to which the applicant is applying. The same applies for occupational qualifications where each awarding body offers information and guidance usually through their website and direct email or phone communication. Some awarding bodies offer seminars and workshops for potential applicants. Information and guidance is generally free of charge.

The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Eesti Töötukassa) offers various career services free of charge (e.g. counselling and providing career information) for different target groups – students, parents, unemployed, job seekers, etc. as well as mediates job offers. A special interactive portal for career development has been created by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund and is available at [minukarjaar.ee](http://minukarjaar.ee). This page also communicates information about upcoming events related to work and career field (i.e. festivals, fairs). Career counselling covers topics related to study, employment, and career choice. For example, people can test which job suits the best and carry out SWOT analysis. Career counselling may take place both locally in various regional centres all over Estonia or via online. More information about career counselling can find on Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (n.d.) webpage.

## 8 Validation practitioners

### 8.1 Profile of validation practitioners

In HE, there are clear profiles of practitioners. The VET sector has followed the practice currently implemented in the HE sector.

The Estonian Qualification Authority (QA) has developed an occupational standard for assessors of competencies. It is targeted at occupational certificates' awarding bodies who carry out assessments. The standard gives input into training programmes for assessors, helps awarding bodies to select assessors and helps assessors to self-analyse their competencies as assessors. Advisors/counsellors are not clearly defined in the process of awarding occupational certificates. Counselling is regulated by each awarding body and there are no set requirements.

In the context of higher education, the validation adviser, above all, acts as a support person in the validation process. Advisers are traditionally employees of the (educational) institution (e.g. an Academic Affairs Specialist, the Director for Academic Affairs) whose main duties are:

- to explain the rules established by the (educational) institution to applicants, including the requirements set for application and evidence, and to instruct them during the whole RPL process;
- to explain the learning outcomes of the study programme/the competency requirements of the occupational standard to applicants and to guide them in the process of describing their knowledge and skills and assessing their compliance; and,
- to advise on how to prepare the application and collect evidence and to check the compliance of the material with the requirements before submission for assessment.

Depending on the specific character of the (educational) institution, the adviser can also be responsible for monitoring the progress of the process, for exchanging information on organisational issues between the applicant and the assessor and, if necessary and possible, for supporting the applicant's self-esteem and continued motivation to learn.

A validation assessor is usually the person who is also the assessor in non-specialist studies or in the process of awarding occupational qualifications. This is likely to be a lecturer, a teacher, the manager of the study programme, a specialist in the field, or a member of the occupational qualifications committee.

The main tasks of the assessor are:

- to assess the adequacy and relevance of evidence and to provide relevant feedback to the applicant; and,
- to assess whether the applicant's competences comply with the specific learning outcomes/competency requirements and to provide feedback to the applicant.

## 8.2 Provision of training and support to validation practitioners

The Ministry of Education and Research has offered training courses on validation. A number of courses were offered to adult education gymnasiums on validation principles and assessment methods. A set of courses were also offered for occupational standards' providers focusing on their needs regarding validation and higher education institutions. The training was targeted towards validation practitioners such as counsellors, assessors and teaching staff.

There were many training opportunities in the HE sector due to extensive funding (ESF programme). Training courses were offered to assessors, advisers and applicants. Courses for assessors and counsellors were recommended in order to serve as validation practitioners. Courses for applicants were voluntary and in place to help applicants in the process of validation and to support their self-analysis. As the programme period has ended, it has been up to the institutions to carry out training for validation practitioners. The Ministry of Education and Research has started (2018 and ongoing) offering training in HE and VET institutions as many practitioners in the field are new and have no training in the field of validation.

All HE institutions have been offering workshops and guidance for potential validation applicants at the beginning of each semester. Training for assessors or advisors has been triggered by the needs of new people who have started to work at the university and where one of their tasks is validation related. An RPL manual for advisors (Urbla, et al., n.d.) and assessors (Vau, 2013) are available.

## 8.3 Qualifications and experience

In HE, validation practitioners' competencies have been described (see Table 8.1 and Table 8.2) (Rutiku, et al., 2011). There are no official requirements, but these competencies are expected.

Table 8.1 Advisor

<p>Understands the principles and process of RPL and is familiar with the relevant regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can name the main principles of RPL.</li> <li>• Can explain the importance of those principles.</li> <li>• Can describe the main components of the process.</li> </ul>
---	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can describe the process of RPL in his/her organisation.</li> <li>• Can name regulations affecting RPL.</li> <li>• Can explain which regulation(s) have most impact on the adviser role.</li> </ul>
Is familiar with the main components of an outcome-based curriculum and/or occupational standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can describe the structural logic of a curriculum and an occupational standard.</li> <li>• Can name components of the study programme at the educational level assessed or of the relevant occupational standard.</li> </ul>
Is familiar with the principles of assessing experience-based learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can name the principles of assessing experience-based learning.</li> <li>• Can name and explain the main methods of assessing experience-based learning.</li> <li>• Can relate learning outcomes or competencies with evidence.</li> </ul>
Knows and respects the limits of his/her role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can explain the nature of the role of an adviser in the context of RPL.</li> <li>• Can distinguish the roles of an adviser and an assessor.</li> <li>• Stays within the limits of the adviser's role.</li> </ul>
Can advise the applicant in respect of carrying out a self-analysis, selecting evidence and preparing an analysis of what has been learned from experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asks the applicant questions that facilitate self-analysis.</li> <li>• Uses active listening techniques.</li> <li>• Helps find relevant evidence.</li> <li>• Gives feedback to the applicant that supports development.</li> <li>• Gives advice to the applicant on finding and filling in the right application form.</li> </ul>
Co-operates with different parties involved with the RPL process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates with the applicant, the assessor and the supporting personnel involved with the process</li> </ul>
Expresses points clearly and specifically, and produces accurate documentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information in a way that is comprehensible to all parties.</li> <li>• Fills in documentation related to consultation according to the regulations of the competent authority.</li> </ul>

Table 8.2 Assessor

Understands the principles and process of RPL and is familiar with relevant regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can name the main principles of RPL. Can explain the importance of those principles.</li> <li>• Can describe the main components of the process.</li> <li>• Can describe the process of RPL in their organisation.</li> <li>• Can name regulations concerning RPL. Can explain which regulation(s) are critical to their work.</li> </ul>
Is familiar with the main components of an outcome-based curriculum or occupational standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can describe the structural logic of a curriculum or an occupational standard.</li> <li>• Can name components of the study programme at the educational level assessed or of the relevant occupational standard.</li> </ul>

Knows and follows the principles of RPL assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is independent and impartial in assessment. Applies comprehensive assessment, which includes considering general (transferable) competences. Uses relevant methods of assessment.</li> <li>• Compiles assessment criteria that are consistent with learning outcomes or competency requirements. In assessment, relies on suitable evidence and asks for additional evidence, if necessary. Uses threshold criteria in assessment. Gives feedback to the applicant that will support further studies.</li> </ul>
Knows the field assessed at least at the level of the compliance to which it is being assessed in the RPL application.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complies with the qualification requirements of the competent authority where he/she acts as an assessor.</li> </ul>
Co-operates with different parties of the RPL process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates with applicants, advisers and, if necessary, with external parties. Co-operates with other assessors in order to reach a joint assessment decision.</li> </ul>
Expresses him/herself clearly, produces accurate documentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information in a way that is comprehensible to all parties. Fills in documentation related to assessment according to the regulations of the competent authority.</li> </ul>
Can identify and mitigate risks that might affect the quality of assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can specify the risks to the quality of assessment.</li> <li>• Can identify those risks in the assessment process.</li> <li>• Can mitigate the risks whenever feasible.</li> </ul>

## 9 Inputs, outputs and outcomes

### 9.1 Funding and costs

#### *Funding*

Validation costs are covered by the applicant (based on credit-based fee which mostly covers procedural costs), by the educational institution (salaries and other expenses of validation advisors, evaluators and other related personnel are mostly covered by the educational institution) and the development costs have been ESF programme based in HE and VET sectors. The funding covered training courses for assessors, counsellors, applicants, assessment and counselling costs, information campaigns and other related activities, such as the development of specific portfolios and study visits.

Higher education and vocational education programmes also state validation as one of their activities, although in the budget it is not so clearly stated which funds are earmarked for the development of validation.

Applicants in some higher education institutions have to pay a fee which varies by institution. Certain institutions charge a fee based on the amount of credit points for which they are applying, while for others there is a simple application fee with no

additional credit point charge. There is no overall system. Universities are autonomous in this decision.

Funding for validation in vocational education is similar to higher education, where it is also funded by the ESF programme. Funding is primarily for training validation practitioners and for the promotion of validation.

### *Distribution of Costs*

HEI cover the cost of validation in many cases as validation is seen as a regular part of the study system. HE is free for students since autumn 2013 thus universities usually do not charge validation applicants extra (as mentioned above, universities are autonomous in deciding whether to charge a fee). However, there is stipulated a fee for applying for a RPL in the University of Tartu (the fee for reviewing the application is EUR 10 per requested credit) since autumn 2022 with some exceptions. No fee for an assessment of the subjects or in-service courses completed at the University of Tartu (if the result of which was obtained in 2001 or later), an assessment of the compliance of previous studies and work experience with the admission conditions is requested and the application has been submitted to fulfil the doctoral curriculum.

The cost of validation counselling and assessment is seen as part of the everyday work and duties of staff and therefore these costs are typically covered by the university. As indicated above, some universities apply a fee for validation application however, to date, there has not been any analysis on the distribution of cost for validation in HE.

A similar situation can be observed in the VET sector whereby individuals cover most of the cost for applying for a qualification standard. The fees are different depending on the field and level of the standard. A qualifying body determines the fee.

There are no tax incentives for companies to become involved in validation.

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

### **9.2.1 Validation trends**

Validation data collection is one of the planned activities for the future in HE and VET. Table 9.1 presents the number of ECTS credit points and number of applicants who have received RPL during the period 2017-2023. It shows that the number of applicants and number of transferable credits have increased both in HE and VET during the observed period. This shows that process of recognition of prior learning and experience is growing trend in Estonia.

**Table 9.1** Number of ECTS credit points and number of applicants acquired by validation in VET and HE (data source: Estonian education information system by the 09.09.2022)

Year	Number of credits in VET	Number of applicants who have received RPL in VET	Number of credits in HE	Number of applicants who have received RPL in HE
<b>2017-2018</b>	10 872	701	54 604	3 374
<b>2018-2019</b>	21 948	1052	55 684	3 416

<b>2019-2020</b>	29 785	1666	51 030	3 271
<b>2020-2021</b>	22 944	1200	55 501	3 360
<b>2021-2022</b>	33 985	1260	59 124	3 426
<b>2022-2023*</b>	23 591	943	34 767	1 839

\* the results of RPL decisions made during 01.09.2021-30.01.2023, they are not complete

## 9.2.2 Validation users

Number of applicants who have used validation in VET and HE is outlined in chapter 9.2.1 above.

## 9.2.3 Validation and disadvantaged groups

Validation practices are not directly used for supporting disadvantaged groups. However, there is a campaign to encourage adults to return to studying run by Estonian Adult Educators Association ([www.andras.ee](http://www.andras.ee)), which has targeted low qualified adults and/or early school leavers. On the campaign website ([www.jallekooli.ee](http://www.jallekooli.ee)) validation is mentioned as a tool to support learners when accessing education.

# 10 Validation methods

## 10.1 Methodologies and methods

### Validation methods

Methods used in the validation process mainly relate to assessment, as illustrated in the table below (Vau, 2013). There has been no new development since 2018 – the same methods are used since today varying by institutions.

	Identification	Documentation	Assessment
Debate			
Declarative methods	✓	✓	
Interview	✓		✓
Observation			
Portfolio method		✓	✓
Presentation			
Simulation and evidence extracted from work			
Tests and examinations			✓
Other (e.g. e-learning methods) – please specify			

Assessment follows precise and unambiguous assessment principles:

1. It is not the existence of experience, but what has been learned from it that is being assessed.

2. What is most important in the assessment of prior learning is its compliance with the learning outcomes of the study programme or the competency requirements of the occupational standard.
3. The assessment of prior learning is based on the principle of comprehensive assessment.
4. The applicant is not assessed more strictly in RPL than full-time students.
5. Assessment of prior learning mainly uses pass or fail assessment. An exception is the recognition of prior formal education that ended with a grading if a comparable assessment system is used as a basis.

Assessment methods are divided into 'verification'- and 'portfolio'-type methods. The first type is more assessor-centred, often including prepared questions, exercises, and being especially suitable for assessing specific skills and a specific knowledge on a subject. Examples of 'verification'-type assessment methods are demonstration (including, a written quiz with open-ended questions, a multiple-choice test, exercises), simulation (including, solution of a problem, a practical task) and observation (including, conducting a class). In certain cases, the latter may exceed its common limits and become assessment of the applicable competencies as a whole (including, transferable competencies and attitudes). 'Portfolio'-type assessment methods (e.g. a study portfolio and a practical-training log) are more applicant-centred and include the evidence of applicants' achievements, their analysis of their learning from experience, and other material the applicant links to the competencies acquired.

The most common 'portfolio'-type assessment method used in validation is a study portfolio containing various types of evidence compiled by the applicant. This method is well-suited for assessing more complex and interrelated knowledge and skills, which is characteristic of validation.

Irrespective of whether the portfolio is a sample one, or expressing the development of an applicant, from the structural and readability aspects, it is recommended that the applicant should use the method STARR (a competence interview method: Situation, Task, Action, Result, Reflection) for compiling the study portfolio and analysing learning from experience.

From the point of view of authenticity and validity, the second more common method applied in validation is an interview. This is a method that cannot be easily classified as assessor-centred or applicant-centred methods of assessment.

In summary, portfolio and interviews are the most commonly used methods in all sectors. In more practical areas, observation and demonstration methods are used. Case studies are also used as more reflective assignments.

## 10.2 Use of ICT in validation

No separate ICT-based tools for validation have been developed. Different registers gather data separately which is then combined. EHIS (Estonian education information system, [www.ehis.ee](http://www.ehis.ee)) combines data from the VET school database Tahvel, from the higher education institutions information system and the occupational/professional register (Kutseregister – [www.kutseregister.ee](http://www.kutseregister.ee)).

A new tool is developed in 2024 based on skills register to describe individual skills profiles. An online tool for individual skills profiles is planned to be developed for this purpose.

# 11 Quality assurance

## 11.1 Quality assurance processes

There is no specific quality assurance mechanism in place in Estonia for validation procedures. To introduce common principles in the implementation of RPL, guidance materials are developed and made available for assessors (see also chapter 6.1 above). Also, the occupational standard for assessor of competences defines specific skills and knowledge required for this procedure (see also chapter 7.1 above). As validation is part of the learning process, quality assurance is also based on the quality management of HE and VET schools which is supported by the Estonian Quality Agency for Education (HAKA - <https://haka.ee/en/>). For instance, implementation of validation in the learning procedures is part of the institutional validation arrangement for educational institutions.

## 11.2 Monitoring and evaluation

Relevant data is collected through EHIS (Estonian Education Infosystem) regarding ECTS credit points and number of applicants acquired by validation in VET and HE (see Table 9.1). Different types of data (including verbal feedback) are collected in the network of RPL assessors and advisors.

Currently, a questionnaire for schools regarding to RPL (in addition to Cedefop, which is voluntary for countries) is in progress. The data will be available at the end of March 2023.

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

Validation opportunities are clearly visible in the formal education sector (HE, VET, AE) as the institutions offer information about validation to potential learners and students who have already enrolled.

Validation has become a normal part of the study process and in many cases, it is not seen as distinctive. Learners are more aware of the opportunities and thus are acquiring information on their own. The term VÕTA (varasemate õpingute ja töökogemuse arvestamine) is widely used in Estonia and both practitioners and learners are aware of its broad meaning, even though validation is more associated with the education sector than the labour market. Also, validation is present in national policy strategies (e.g. Lifelong Learning Strategy, 2020) and also in legislation. Validation outcomes and benefits could be more clearly presented as information on these matters is missing. Some data is being collected by the education sector but it does not give an overall picture of the use of validation.

## 13 References

### 13.1 References

European Parliament and Council of the European Union (2012). Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 398, 22.12.2012, p. 1–5.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32012H1222%2801%29>

Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy (2020). <https://uil.unesco.org/i/doc/lifelong-learning/policies/estonia-lifelong-learning-strategy-2020.pdf>

Estonian Educational Strategy (2021-2025). <https://www.hm.ee/en/media/2919/download>

Higher Education Act (2019). *Legal Acts of Estonia I*. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/501072022002/consolide/current>

Higher Education Standard (2019). *Legal Acts of Estonia*. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/107102022005?leiaKehtiv>

Johnson, M. (2016). *VÕTA kutse andmisel*. <https://vana.kutsekoda.ee/fwkc/contenthelper/10618872/10633392>

Johnson, M. (2019). *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2018 update: Estonia*.

[http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2019/european\\_inventory\\_validation\\_2018\\_Estonia.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2019/european_inventory_validation_2018_Estonia.pdf)

Professions Act (2018). *Legal Acts of Estonia I*. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/523022015001/consolide/current>

Rutiku, S., Vau, I., Ranne, R. (2011). *VÕTA käsiraamat* (Handbook of Recognition of Prior Learning). [https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/vota\\_kasiraamat.pdf](https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/vota_kasiraamat.pdf)

Urbla, A., Lindpere, M., Kalamees, R., Saluveer, A. Peebo, A.-L. (n.d.). *VÕTA nõustaja juhend* (Advisor's Guide of Recognition of Prior Learning). [https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/v6ta\\_n6ustajajuhend.pdf](https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/v6ta_n6ustajajuhend.pdf)

Vau, I. (2013). *VÕTA hindaja käsiraamat* (Assessor's Guide of Recognition of Prior Learning). [https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/vota\\_hindaja\\_kasiraamat.pdf](https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/vota_hindaja_kasiraamat.pdf)

Vocational Educational Institutions Act (2013). *Legal Acts of Estonia I*. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/505022014002/consolide/current>

Vocational Education Standard (2013). *Legal Acts of Estonia*. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/117042019006?leiaKehtiv>

Ühtekuuluvuspoliitika fondide rakenduskava perioodiks 2021-2027, Eesti. (2021) <https://pilv.rtk.ee/s/6nBxRwrmjfwNgzL>

#### Webpages:

Educational Portal (n.d.). *VÕTA - väärtustame ja kasutame varem õpitut!* <https://haridusportaal.edu.ee/artiklid/v%C3%B5ta> [accessed 07.03.2023]

E-School Bag (n.d.). *VÕTA Guides for applicants, assessors and advisors*. <https://e-koolikott.ee/et/search?q=veronika%20tuul&minAdded=2009&maxAdded=2022&taxon=90> [accessed 07.03.2023]

Estonian Qualifications Authority (n.d.-a). *The project "Reform of Estonian professional qualifications system"*. <https://www.kutsekoda.ee/en/esf-2022-2029-2/> [accessed 06.03.2023]

Estonian Qualifications Authority (n.d.-b). *OSKA labour force and skills needs forecasts*. <https://oska.kutsekoda.ee/en> [accessed 07.03.2023]

Estonian Qualifications Authority (n.d.-c). *Kutse andjad*. [https://www.kutseregister.ee/et/kutset\\_andvad\\_organid/](https://www.kutseregister.ee/et/kutset_andvad_organid/) [accessed 17.03.2023]

Estonian Qualifications Authority (n.d.-d). *Occupational Qualification Standards*. <https://www.kutsekoda.ee/en/occupational-qualification-standards/> [accessed 17.03.2023]

Estonian Qualifications Authority (n.d.-e). *Oskuste register*. <https://www.kutsekoda.ee/oskused-2/> [accessed 17.03.2023]

Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (n.d.). *Career counselling*. <https://www.tootukassa.ee/en/services/career-and-training/career-counselling> [accessed 13.03.2023]

Ministry of Education and Research (2015). „*Toetuse andmise tingimuste kehtestamine tegevuse „Täiskasvanuhariduse edendamise ja õppimisvõimaluste avardamise“ elluviimiseks“ muutmine*“”. [https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/lisa\\_1\\_toetuse\\_andmise\\_tingimused.pdf](https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-06/lisa_1_toetuse_andmise_tingimused.pdf) [accessed 13.03.2023]

Ministry of Education and Research (n.d.-a). *“Supporting young people to succeed - Building capacities to better integrate non-formal and formal learning” (2021-2023)*”. <https://www.hm.ee/noorte-edu-toetuseks-voimekuse-arendamine-mitteformaalpe-loimimiseks-formaalopega-2021-2023> [accessed 07.03.2023]

Ministry of Education and Research (n.d.-b). *Oskuste süsteem seob haridus- ja töömaailma paindlikumalt ühte*. <https://www.hm.ee/uudised/oskuste-susteem-seob-haridus-ja-toomaailma-paindlikumalt-uhte> [accessed 03.03.2023]

Ministry of Education and Research (n.d.-c). *Varasemate õpingute ja töökogemuse arvestamine*. <https://www.hm.ee/kutse-ja-taiskasvanuharidus/taiskasvanuharidus/vota> [accessed 03.03.2023]

Tallinn University (n.d.). *Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)*. <https://www.tlu.ee/en/taxonomy/term/90/recognition-prior-learning-rpl-0> [accessed 17.03.2023]

University of Tartu (n.d.). *Recognition of Prior Learning*. <https://ut.ee/en/content/recognition-prior-learning> [accessed 17.03.2023]

## 13.2 Sources

- Ministry of Education and Research.

# 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.

**CEDEFOP**European Centre for the Development  
of Vocational Training

---

Europe 123, Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE  
Postal address: Cedefop service post, 57001 Thermi, GREECE  
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020, Email: [info@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:info@cedefop.europa.eu)

---

**visit our portal [www.cedefop.europa.eu](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu)**

---