Two decades of European and national policies promoting transparency and transferability of learning outcomes:

Observing the forest - not only single trees

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1990-2000….growing awareness

A growing awareness that learning takes place throughout life and in all venues of life - in education, at work and at home – and that individuals must be able to combine and build on this learning.

The 1996 year of lifelong learning and the 2001 Memorandum on lifelong learning

- Underlines the need for more flexible and open education and training systems able to identify and address the needs of individuals.
Barriers....

- The vast learning taking place outside formal education and training is partly invisible and less valued.

- Education and training systems have increased not only in size but also in complexity, making it difficult for individuals to make use of opportunities and pathways.

- Education and training systems are organised as ‘silos’ operating partly in isolation from each other and raising barriers rather than creating opportunities.

- Education and training systems have not been designed to facilitate international labour market and learning mobility.
1990-2000...identifying responses

- A need to increase the **transparency** of systems, at national and European level

- A need to enable **transferability** of outcomes, individuals should not have to restart/repeat learning every time they cross a border – institutional, sectoral or national.

- A need to focus on **outcomes of learning** rather than input - thus opening up to formal as well as non-formal and informal settings.
Transparency – European level responses

- Europass platform (2004…)
  - Diploma- certificate- and mobility- supplements
- EURES platform
- Directive on Professional qualifications - information support
- Qualifications frameworks (1999…)
  - European Qualifications Framework QF-European Higher Education Area
- Piloting and experimenting (ESF, Erasmus etc)

Observations:
- To a large extent reflecting the need to facilitate European labour market mobility
- Education and training lifelong learning reform an ‘add on’ to the European Mobility priority
Transparency – National responses

- Guidance and counselling
- Adaptation of European instruments (2005+):
  - National and sectoral qualifications frameworks
  - Europass and Eures
- Improvement of national information sources (e.g. databases)
- Learning outcomes based descriptions of qualifications and programmes (1980+)

Observations:
- Focus on national education and training systems and their interaction with labour market
- European labour mobility an ‘add on’ to national priorities
Transferability – European responses

- Directive on professional qualifications (1989+)
- Student and learner exchange schemes (1987+)
- ECTS (1999…)
- ECVET (2009-20)
- Europass and Eures CVs
- Individual learning accounts (2021+)

Observations:
- Initiatives are embedded in the education and training and go beyond the objective of European labour mobility
- Initiatives are predominantly sector-bound
Transferability – National responses

- Restructuring of education and training systems (Permeability)
- Restructuring of education and training (unit based and module based systems)
- National recognition arrangements
- National credit transfer + adoption of European credit transfer

Observations:
- Focus on the modernisation and flexibilization of national education systems
- Mutual learning and policy exchange an important feature of developments
Outcomes orientation – European responses

- From programme (input) to qualification (outcomes) focus (2000+)
- Learning outcomes acting as ‘the glue’ (2005+)
  - for qualifications frameworks
  - for credit transfer
  - for validation
- Key competences (2006+)

Observations:
- The shift to an outcomes perspective critical to EU mobility and lifelong learning strategies.
- While national inputs will always differ, outcomes can be compared and shared across national and institutional borders.
Outcomes orientation – National responses

- Learning outcomes and competence based curricula (1980+)
- Learning outcomes as ‘the glue’ (2005+)
  - National qualifications frameworks
  - Programme curricula and qualification standards
  - Validation
  - Credits

Observations:
- Powerful initiatives potentially shifting the orientation of institutions and systems
- National initiatives influenced by EU initiatives, but deeply rooted in national reforms
- EU initiatives directly influenced by national reforms
From European to national or from national to European?

**European influences**
- Directive on Professional qualifications
- Mutual learning through technical cooperation
- Programmes for exchange and piloting (Erasmus etc.)
- EQF and EHEA (Bologna)
- ECTS

**National influences**
- Learning outcomes and competence
- Focus on permeability of systems
- Focus on units and modules of systems
- Focus on validation
The key research question

Has the multitude of policy initiatives promoting transparency, transferability and outcomes made any difference – in practice and for individual citizens?
Cedefop’s project transparency and transferability of learning outcomes: 2022-2024

Long term approach
European and national policy initiatives (2000-2021)

Comprehensive approach
Wide range of policy initiatives

Insights on **coherence**, combined **impact** and **sustainability**

**Input** into future policies at European and national level
Researching sustainability and impact of policies

European level

- Identify policy initiatives (since 2000)
- Orientation and objectives
- Connections → support or contradictions?

National level

How can they be assessed according to sustainability and impact?
Lifelong learning policies 2000 – 2020: what has changed for individuals

Which obstacles to lifelong and life-wide learning existed in 2000 and 2020?

Which European and national initiatives and reforms have made a difference to individual learners and their need to access, enter, re-enter and combine learning throughout life?
The way ahead?

European policies on lifelong and life-wide learning policies

National developments of lifelong and life-wide learning policies

Alternative policy scenarios toward 2040
The lessons learned?

What can we learn from the interaction between European and national policies; how can we build on these lessons?
The team structure

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Thank you for your attention!

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