

## Parallel session A

### Validation in national skills strategies (integrated approach)

The 2012 Recommendation contributed to a shared understanding of validation as relevant for many purposes (for identification, documentations as well as assessment and recognition of learning) and in a wide range of settings (education and training, for labour market as well as social services). For validation to be relevant and become widely used by individual learners and employees there is a need to focus systematically on how to best mobilize, involve and connect (existing and potential) stakeholders and institutions in a coordinated and coherent way. Validation, to be successful, needs to become integrated in overarching skills strategies at national and European level.

#### Diverse functions and outcomes

Functions and outcomes of the validation processes differ between contexts. In education and training, validation might be used to provide access, exemptions to or to award parts or full qualifications. Within labour market initiatives, validation processes might form a basis for selection and recruitment, as well as for promotion and appraisal processes. Employers can use validation for strategic skills planning, analyzing skills gaps and using validation results to create tailor-made competence development schemes for their staff. In the context of civil society organisations, validation tends to have a more formative purpose, in which validation is used for empowering individuals and making them aware of their skills. Binding these approaches together is in individuals' interest to attribute value and visibility to learning. For learners it is essential that systems interact with each other and make it possible to combine, transfer and accumulate learning experiences over time and in different contexts (national and cross border).

#### Validation as a facilitator for lifelong and life-wide learning

The full potential of validation, as a facilitator of lifelong and life-wide learning, can only be released when the outcomes of validation in different settings and for different purposes can be connected. At its core, validation arrangements must make it possible for individuals to transfer and accumulate learning across institutional and contexts. Only by doing this will validation support the transfer and accumulation of learning experiences and de facto support lifelong and life-wide learning. We therefore need a **common vision on the role and functions of validation across education and training, labour market institutions and civil society organizations**.

#### Objectives of the parallel session

This parallel session, building on inputs from key stakeholders, will focus on the way different functions and outcomes of validation can be brought together and in what way stakeholders in different contexts and policy areas can work together. By highlighting the role of different institutions and stakeholders, the sessions will look at opportunities as well as challenges related to the integration of validation in national and European skills strategies. The workshops will bring examples in which the different functions and stakeholders come together to provide coherent validation approaches, which can feed into an update of the Guidelines.

The workshop will be divided into three parts focusing on specific aspects:

1. A.1: Education and training institutions on validation
2. A.2: Civil Society organisations on validation
3. A.3: Employer and trade union organisations on validation

## **Orienting questions**

- Which requirements should be met for an integrated validation approach to form part of a national skills strategy?
- How can links between different validation contexts be reinforced to allow individuals to transfer and build learning throughout life and in different settings?
- Which are the key messages that need to be integrated into the European Guidelines?
  - For education and training stakeholders
  - For civil society stakeholders
  - For employers, trade unions and employees
  - For other groups
- What role should European stakeholders and strategies play?

## **Reading**

Note EQF AG – 53-6: Note on Validation in national skills strategies (integrated approach)