

**Recognition and validation of informal and non-formal
learning for VET teachers and trainers in the EU
Member States**

Revised Final Report

Edwin Webb

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Final Report draws upon Interim Project Reports prepared by Anne-Marie Charraud and presented at various meetings of the project team. Those reports and presentations, made throughout the progress of the project, identified and analysed a range of issues both related to and arising from the focus of the project. Not all of those commentaries are represented in this version of the overall report, though their value contributed greatly to the enhancement of the project and the benefit of those involved in it. The contributing members of the project provided briefing papers and case studies. Some members of the team, at various meetings, made additional presentations on key issues identified in their written submissions or on analytic reflections across the information gathered. The members of the project team were: Eddy Donders (Belgium), Pia Cort and Rasmus Frimodt (Denmark), Françoise Gerard and Évelyne Deret (France), Kristiina Volmari (Finland), Claudia Montedoro and Mario Catani (Italy), Nora Byrne (Ireland), Kestutis Pukelis (Lithuania), Juraj Vantuch and Andrea Hagovska (Slovakia), Stuart Bradley (United Kingdom).

Emerging results of the project, and issues identified within the project were the subject of presentation and discussion also at several events outside of project group meetings. They included: TTnet Annual Conferences (Thessaloniki, Greece, December 2004 and 2005), TTnet Portugal Conference (Lisbon, September 2005), and TTnet Germany *Agora* Conference (Berlin, November 2005). Useful feedback was received at each of these events. The Europe-wide representation of participants at the Thessaloniki Conference of 2005 provided especially valuable consideration of a draft version of this report. Those responses, made both during and following the Conference, have resulted in substantial changes to this Final Report, even though it has not been possible to accommodate all of those suggestions and requests.

Thanks are due also to Mara Brugia of CEDEFOP for her overall direction of the project and her management of project group meetings. Thanks are due too to Vicki Orioapoulou, also of CEDEFOP, for locating various documents and for her unfailing goodwill in the administrative support of the project and its members.

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 From the Lisbon EU Council strategic declaration of 2000 onwards, vocational education and training (VET) has been perceived as the prime means of making the EU the “most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”.

Subsequent EU Council declarations (Stockholm 2001; Barcelona 2002; Copenhagen 2002; Brussels 2003), together with the Brussels Education Council resolutions (2003; 2004) and the Maastricht Communiqué of 2004 have all served to enhance the importance of VET within the Lisbon process.

1.0 Issues and Priorities identified within these policies which have particular reference to the present study include:

- the development of lifelong learning (EU Council 2000, 2001, 2002; Education Council 2003)
- the bringing together of learners and learning opportunities (EC 2001)
- improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems (EU Council 2001, 2002)
- quality assurance of qualifications for teachers and trainers and recognition of competences (EU Council 2003)

All of these themes connect with the present study and provide reference points for the findings and conclusions presented. To this wider context must then be added the specific dimension provided by the European Council Draft Conclusions on informal and non-formal learning (May 2004).

1.3 Among the Conclusions reached by Council and Representatives of the Governments of the Member States was a statement of Common European principles “to encourage and guide the development of high-quality, trustworthy approaches and systems for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning”.

1.4. Those principles were gathered under the following four headings:

Individual entitlements

The identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning should, in principle, be a voluntary matter for the individual. There should be equal access and equal and fair treatment of all individuals. The privacy and rights of the individual are to be respected.

Obligations of stakeholders

Stakeholders should establish, in accordance with their rights, responsibilities and competences, systems and approaches for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning. These should include appropriate quality assurance mechanisms. Stakeholders should provide guidance, counselling and information about these systems and approaches to individuals.

Confidence and trust

The process, procedures and criteria for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning must be fair, transparent and underpinned by quality assurance mechanisms.

Credibility and legitimacy

Systems and approaches for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning should respect the legitimate interests and ensure the balanced participation of the relevant stakeholders.

The process of assessment should be impartial and mechanisms should be put in place to avoid any conflict of interest. The professional competence of those who carry out assessment should also be assured.

1. CONCEPTS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE: A BRIEF DISCUSSION

- 1.1** There has been, and continues to be, extensive debate concerning the definition and description of concepts and terms of reference employed in the title brief given for this report. Case-studies submitted to the TTnet project themselves confirm differences in the use of key terms. Before engaging with the results of the project, therefore, it is essential to rehearse the range of meanings attached to these terms; and from that discussion to establish their usage for the purposes of this report.

1.2 Informal and non-formal learning.

Informal and non-formal learning are usually defined in contradistinction to formal learning. The definitions adopted by the European Commission (2001) read as follows:

- (g) formal learning is typically provided by education or training institutions, structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and leading to certification. Formal learning is intentional from the learner's perspective.

- (h) non-formal learning is not provided by an education or training institution and typically it does not lead to certification. However, it is structured, in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

- (i) informal learning results from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time and/or learning support). Typically, it does not lead to certification. Informal learning may be intentional but in most cases, it is non-intentional (or incidental/random).

1.2.1 The key distinction in these definitions is between formal and non-formal learning, both of which offer *structured* learning opportunities, and informal learning which is *not* structured. The subsidiary distinction is between formal and non-formal learning as an intentional learning activity, and informal as (in most cases) non-intentional.

1.2.2 There can be no absolute distinction between non-formal and informal learning. Even within the non-formal learning opportunity, as structured by learning objectives, there may be other incidental but valuable learning which takes place. In the context of the TTnet project reported here, what matters is not whether learning was derived from either non-formal or informal opportunities, or whether learning was intentionally or incidentally derived. What matters is the ability of the individual *to make that learning explicit*, and then the capacity to *apply that learning* to the professional roles and responsibilities of the vocational teacher or trainer. The application of that learning may be applied both to current and prospective teaching and training roles and responsibilities.

1.2.3 The collective *range* of such learning (whether as a consequence of informal or non-formal acquisition) as cited in case-studies submitted to this project may derive from work, social, or personal experience. Examples drawn from this full range (with variations shown in brackets) include:

- knowledge (practical knowledge, theoretical knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of the enterprise)
- skills (practical skills, written skills, communication skills, social skills)
- *savoir-faire*/"know-how"
- attitudes (professional attitudes, attitudes to self-development or "personal growth")
- competences (job competences, personal and social competences, technical and teaching competences, planning and administration competence).

1.2.4 It must be noted that the distinction between non-formal and informal learning is, in any case, not in general use throughout all national systems. The term "experiential learning", for example, has greater currency in some national systems (as, for example within APEL systems: see 2.3.4, below), and is the convention of translation for *acquis de l'expérience* adopted throughout a collection of contributions on the French system and its applications (Gérard and Bax-Boyer: 2005). It is also a term of reference directly employed in the European Commission report on the Testing Conference on the Common European Principles (EC, October 2005: 6). "Experiential learning" implies both learning *from* experience and learning *through* experience; that is, the extrapolation of learning and the application of learning. In a wider sense, the term "prior learning" may also be found to acknowledge learning acquired both informally/non-formally *and* formally.

1.2.5 For the purposes of the findings of this report, therefore, both "informal and non-formal learning" and "experiential learning" have been adopted as equivalent alternatives to denote the descriptions offered in 2.2(a) and (b).

1.3 Recognition and Validation

The title assigned to the TTnet project reported here includes the terms "recognition" and "validation". The distinction between these terms, again, is not definitive.

It should be noted that the terms employed in the European Council Draft Conclusions (May 2004) are ‘identification’ and ‘validation’ – defined as follows:

Identification records and makes visible the individual’s learning outcomes. This does not result in a formal certificate or diploma, but it may provide the basis for such recognition. Validation is based on the assessment of the individual’s learning outcomes and may result in a certificate or diploma.

1.3.1 The Draft Conclusions footnote the variations in use for referring to validation:

The term validation is used in a very specific sense ... but is used differently in the Member States. For some, the term is broadly used to encompass the identification as well as the assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

Variation in the use of the term validation has been evident in contributions to this TTnet project and has been the focus of much discussion among and between project members.

1.3.2 One use of the term validation may be found in the French system of *validation des acquis de l’expérience (VAE)* and is there subject to legal definition and regulation. In this system, experiential learning of knowledge, skills, and competences may lead to the award of a full certificate and can be applied to “all diplomas, titles and certificates included in the national register of vocational certifications” (Colardyn and Bjornavold, 2005: 38). For a more extensive and critical account of *VAE* see Évelyne Deret (in Gérard and Bax-Boyer, 2005: 97-108).

2.3.3 An example of a restricted use of the term validation, however, may be found in UK practice. Validation here refers to the process by which a proposed university award (certificate, diploma, degree) is subjected to scrutiny, both internally and via external academic experts, to ensure that it meets all the standards and requirements of such an award.

1.0.0 Validation of experiential learning in the sense proposed in the Commission’s Draft Conclusions includes assessment of learning. That assessment, in most of the cases examined in this report, is made against a schedule of requirements

(which can be expressed variously as criteria, learning outcomes, competences, standards). Referenced assessment of this order may be known in some systems as accreditation (as is the case for Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Slovakia, UK) and has two common applications: APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) and APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning).

2.0.0 Despite individual system differences, the convention of this report adopts validation as the generic term to embody the following dimensions and processes:

identification of learning

↓

assessment and/or testing of learning

↓

recognition (of various kinds)

“Valorisation” has been proposed, within this project, as an alternative to validation in the context of informal and non-formal learning. The adoption of this additional term of reference, however, would add even more uncertainty, given that it is not a term in widespread use, in this context, among member states. There is the complication also that valorisation has been adopted as a term to refer to the dissemination and exploitation of project outcomes and their application. The use adopted for validation, in this report, is one with greater general recognition of its more inclusive sense. It is also an application which can accommodate all of the examples of good practice collected in this project. Furthermore, validation in the sense adopted here is also that proposed, and more extensively argued for, by Colardyn and Bjornvold (2005: 23-25), as “a common term” which

is sufficiently general to cover the various activities in question (ranging from the first identification of learning outcomes, via assessment and/or testing processes, to recognition, certification or accreditation coming at the end of the process).

Such an application of the term is also compliant with the CEDEFOP glossary of social terms which defines validation as:

The process of assessing and recognising a wide range of knowledge, know-how, skills and competences, which people develop throughout their lives within different environments, for example through education, work and leisure activities. (Tissot: 2004)

3.0.0 Another advantage of this representation of validation is that it can be applied in two distinct, but related ways. Self-identification, subjected to personal assessment through analysis and reflection, can promote recognition of actions to be taken by the individual in order to pursue personal professional development. It therefore includes the principles involved in developing “the reflective practitioner.” Where recognition takes the form of certification or confirmation of some different kind by others (including institutions) then there is external validation. In this sense recognition refers to the *outcome resulting from* the assessment of experiential learning measured against external standards, requirements, or criteria. Many of the case-studies, as presented in later sections of this report, start with the individual’s self-identification as the basis for a process that will promote self-assessment which, in turn, will be subjected to external assessment. Indeed, such an interconnected process is shown to be one of the distinguishing characteristics of the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

2.0 VET Teachers and Trainers

In their report prepared for the European Commission’s Maastricht deliberations Leney et al (November 2004) identified five broad clusters of vocational teachers and trainers:

- (1) teachers or lecturers working in formal school or college settings and giving instruction in vocational courses;
- (2) instructors and laboratory assistants, working in school or college settings in vocational labs, who teach with a high degree of autonomy or sometimes act as assistants to other vocational teachers;
- (1) trainer, tutor, and others in enterprises who integrate training and education functions in to their jobs with varying degrees (from incidental to full-time teaching of trainees and apprentices). In dual systems, this function is often separated from HRD functions within companies, while in others this distinction is not strongly maintained;
- (2) instructors and trainers working in labour market training

institutions supported by governments and public authorities, often with a strong focus on social inclusion and basic occupational competences;

(3) instructors and trainers working in employers' organisations, such as chambers of commerce, sectoral training institutions or privately-run training companies and providers that focus on upgrading of technical competences, training in communication skills, etc.

A more recent EC discussion document (October 2005) proposed that:

For simplification, the persons falling under categories 1 and 2 will be considered as teachers; those falling under categories 3, 4 and 5 will be considered as trainers.

2.4.1 Whilst these nominal categories describe the range of settings within which VET teachers and trainers work, the listing does not address a fundamental distinction between teacher and trainer as recognised in many countries. That distinction is addressed in the European Commission's Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications (revised October 2004):

... a teacher is a person who is acknowledged as having the status of a teacher (or equivalent) according to the legislation and practice of a given country. The word "equivalent" is needed because in some countries there could be groups of teachers with different titles but holding the same status. In some countries a *teacher* could also be a *trainer* who works with school-aged pupils and young adults following vocational programmes in schools, colleges, companies or training organisations.

An even more recent version of this definition (following the Testing Conference of Common European Principles, June 2005) removes from *teacher* the connection "could also be a *trainer*". Since the rest of that sentence remains, however, the ambiguity remains; and the formal distinction between teacher and trainer can not be definitively sustained across all VET systems in differing European contexts.

2.4.2 In many systems legislative recognition of the status of general subjects teachers requires a formal teaching qualification, in most cases to be achieved prior to entry to the profession. Exceptions will be found in the appointment of vocational teachers who may not be required to hold pedagogical qualifications for appointment as vocational teachers. The qualifications held by these teachers will relate to those crafts and trades they will be

required to teach, together with work experience in appropriate vocational areas. The validation of informal and non-formal learning achieved by persons in this category could provide a means by which they could achieve parity of recognition.

1.0.0 The title trainer is even less secure than the qualified, and revised, definition of teacher quoted above. In many cases ‘trainer’ carries with it no formal acknowledgement in terms of national/regional legislation and no requirement to hold a teaching qualification. Definition is made problematic for three principal inter-related reasons:

- as noted by Levey et al (above) there is the complication in the case of trainers within organisations and enterprises that their job function may include training only as a part of their total job description. Many trainers fulfil a variety of employment roles as well as training roles.
- trainers operate in a wide diversity of locations across a wide range of public and private organisations and enterprises.
- it is especially the case of vocational trainers that their roles “are extending ...from instruction to learning facilitators and innovators and are increasingly involved in additional tasks, such as human resource development, guidance and coaching, and assessment of competences”. (Tessaring and Wannam, 2005:51).

2.0.0 VET teachers too must “cope with new roles and functions”:

They have to act as counsellors, perform administrative and managerial tasks, plan, conduct research and cooperate with colleagues and external partners (other institutions, enterprises, public authorities, parents, etc.)... [and often] work in cross-disciplinary teams. (Cort *et al*, 2004: 39).

3.0.0 The results, when available, of a new TTnet project launched in September 2005 (“Defining VET professions”) may go some way towards identifying the roles and responsibilities of some key groups of vocational trainers. Those results, in turn, may provide closer guidance as to the content required for both the initial and continuing training of VET teachers and trainers.

2.4.6 Whilst any absolute and formal distinction between teacher and trainer can not be sustained in the varying European contexts of VET, what is clear is what VET teachers and trainers share in common in many systems. What VET teachers and trainers share in common is a relatively low status despite the fact that they “are essential to supporting skill development in the workforce” (Tessaring and Wannam, 2005:51). The acknowledgement of the importance of VET teachers and trainers in achieving the Lisbon goals was underlined in the Maastricht Communiqué (December 2004) calling for urgent action to improve the quality and status of this target group. To date such actions appear limited; in general terms “there have been few attempts at European level to tackle the specific challenges of [their] education and training” (Tessaring and Wannam, *ibid*). The EC discussion document cited above (2.4) acknowledges that:

In many countries the professions of VET teacher/trainer are not attractive, they are not sufficiently recognised, their initial education does not equip the individuals with the required skills and competences, and continuous professional development is lacking.

2.4.7 The results of this project show that there are alternative ways, to that of formal pre-entry training, by which the professionalisation of vocational teachers and trainers can be addressed and their status raised. Such ways, identified in later sections of this report, create opportunities which themselves recognise that VET teachers and trainers are likely to be more mature entrants to the profession who have significant work and social experience on which they can draw to develop teaching/training competence. Similarly, there are results of this project which can be applied to the continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers.

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE TTnet PROJECT ON THE RECOGNITION AND VALIDATION OF INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING FOR VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS.

3.1 This TTnet project was set up as part of the 2004-05 work programme to which national members were invited to contribute. The project was formed of 9 country members whose function was to locate and share concrete examples of the recognition of informal and non-formal learning within their own countries/regions and to identify particular issues relating to these practices.

3.2 Terms of Reference

Within the broad terms of reference for this TTnet project, three specific objectives were set:

1. to provide an overview of the approaches and methodologies implemented at national level on the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning for VET teachers and trainers
2. to describe and analyse examples of good practice for developing the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning
3. to identify common transnational issues and make recommendations for policy-makers

3.2.1 Whilst these terms of reference, and therefore this report, focus upon the design, functioning, development, and application of methods for the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning, their implementation resides always in a sociological context. That context will vary from one national/regional system to another and will involve decision-makers at various levels. Nonetheless, members of the project and of the wider TTnet community (as represented in views expressed during and following the annual TTnet conference, Thessaloniki 2005) recognise that further implementation and extension of the practices described here will be dependent upon the widest possible stakeholder involvement, negotiation, agreement, and active promotion. Stakeholders, according to the various systems, include national and regional governments and ministries and their agencies, employers, chambers of commerce and industry, and training providers, among others. Social partners, such as professional organisations and associations, teacher trade unions, and certificate-awarding bodies also need to be fully engaged with the processes of decision-making and representation. The diversity of stakeholder and social partner

identities and their roles and responsibilities, within national and regional systems, is too extensive to be recorded here. Summaries for seven of the countries participating in this project (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, UK) are given in Colardyn and Bjornvold (2005: 30-64), together with entries for another six member states. Finally, if there is to be real progress based on the practices presented in this report and their potential for greater application, there must be real and improved access to opportunity made available to the individual VET teacher and trainer. For the role of the VET teacher and trainer “is a dual one, combining that of stakeholder and professional” (Grootings and Nielsen 2005:11). Teachers and trainers, therefore, must themselves be included in the social dialogue that leads to innovation and change.

3.3 Methodology

- (i) For the first phase of this project each volunteer member of the project submitted a background paper summarising the national/regional context for the provision of VET; the requirements for recognition as a teacher or trainer within its nation/region; and indicators of existing provision for the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning within the initial or continuing education of vocational teachers and trainers. Revised and edited versions of these briefing papers, prepared originally by Anne-Marie Charraud on the basis of country returns, are reprinted as Appendix A of this report.
- (ii) Following this first phase of the project a grid designed to collect information on specific examples of the validation of experiential learning relating to VET teachers and trainers was designed, revised and circulated to participating members for completion.
- (iii) The grid was intended to elicit information in the following three categories:
 - the context and aims for each case described
 - the processes and procedures adopted in each case for the validation of informal/non-formal learning
 - the quality control requirements for each case

- (iv) These activities were mediated by meetings and conferences among participants (between November 2004 and June 2005) and, in a wider setting, at the TTnet annual conference (Thessaloniki, December 2004).
- (v) Each phase of work was separately reported on, via interim reports prepared by Anne-Marie Charraud, and presented to the project members together with oral presentations.

1.0.0 TTnet meetings included presentations by participants relating to their own case-studies, together with interim syntheses and analyses based on evaluations of documentation.

2.0.0 In support of the specific objectives for this project (3.2 above), additional analyses of the case-studies have been undertaken to:

- establish the range of outcomes for the validation of informal/non-formal learning
- define the processes and procedures by which informal and non-formal learning is recognised
- establish Quality Assurance criteria for the validation of informal/non-formal learning
- identify common features across case-studies
- identify features of good practice as illustrated both across case-studies and within individual case-studies

3.0.0 Sections of this report were sent to participants in order to check the representation of their case-studies. Following that, a draft of this report was made available at the TTnet annual conference (Thessaloniki, December 2005) for appraisal. Amendments and additions were made to the draft report on the basis of responses from the conference working parties and from individuals both during and after the conference. A revised draft report (February 2006) was circulated to all representatives and delegates present at the December TTnet conference for checking and for any additional responses. A further version (March 2006) was re-circulated and, with minor corrections, is the version presented as this Final Report.

1 SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

2.0 The nine members of this project contributed a total of 33 case-studies. Participants and case-numbers submitted were:

Belgium	(BE)	:	3
Denmark	(DK)	:	2
Finland	(FI)	:	3
France	(FR)	:	3
Ireland	(IE)	:	2
Italy	(IT)	:	10
Lithuania	(LT)	:	5
Slovakia	(SK)	:	2
United Kingdom	(UK)	:	3

3.0.0 The case-studies received in this project are summarised in Appendix B of this report. All references to individual case-studies throughout the remainder of this report cite codes detailed in that Appendix.

4.0.0 Five of the case-studies submitted do not relate directly to the validation of informal and non-formal learning for VET teachers and trainers. They are: BE3, IT2, LT1, LT2, and LT5 – each shown with an asterisk in the summary table of case-studies (Appendix B). They have been included within the returns, however, for what they contribute generally to the theme of vocational education and training.

5.0.0 Of the 10 submissions from Italy, 8 refer to short-term pilot projects or experiments mainly of one or two years' duration only. Given that none of these led to an established and continuing provision, they might have been discounted from this study as no longer current. There are, however, particular reasons for their inclusion in the analyses of this project report (see 4.2.4, below).

6.0.0 Excluding the 5 case-studies identified in 4.1.1, 28 case-studies have provided the base for the detailed analysis contained in later sections of this report.

7.0.0 Among these 28 :

- 9 refer exclusively to VET teachers

- 12 refer exclusively to VET trainers
- 7 refer to both VET teachers and trainers.

Though not equally balanced within these categories, there is, nonetheless a fair representation of provision available to teachers and to trainers, or to both.

8.0 National/regional policy for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning.

With the exception of Lithuania and Slovakia, all of the countries and regions represented in this report have national legislation in place to acknowledge the validation of informal/non-formal learning in vocational contexts or have in place general legislation for teacher education which allows for such recognition. Slovakia has relevant legislation prepared but not yet formally adopted

9.0.0 Of the nine countries featured in this report, France has the longest tradition for the validation of informal/non-formal learning going back to the 1930s. Subsequent legislation, in the 1980s and through to 2002, broadened the scope for such validation of prior occupational learning (*Validation des Acquis Professionnels: VAP*) and of learning from experience (*Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience: VAE*).

10.0.0 In the UK statutory recognition of vocational competences gained through experiential learning and assessed through on-the-job performance, was introduced in 1986. Awards, made at different levels of achievement, are known as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) or Scottish National Vocational Qualifications (SNVQs).

11.0.0 In most other countries represented in this report, legislation has been produced from the late 1990s onwards to enable (and thus to encourage) the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

12.0.0 Italy provides an interesting example of such recent policy change. In 2000 the Italian national government and the regional authorities agreed to establish a framework for the validation of vocational competences. The decrees of 2001 set out the requirements for the certification of vocational competences, which allowed for the validation of experiential learning. Some of the Italy case-studies, therefore, can be read as anticipations of these forthcoming reforms, and others can be read as immediate implementations of newly-introduced national policy at regional level. Their especial relevance to this project centres

upon the application of an adapted form of the French portfolio (*bilan de compétences*) as a means of validating informal and non-formal learning.

13.0.0 Taken together, the profiles of countries involved in this project represent therefore varying stages, from the well-established to the emerging, in the development of policies to recognise experiential learning of various kinds and in various contexts.

14.0.0 Detailed accounts of legislative and other initiatives in the field of validation of informal and non-formal learning, covering 24 EU/EEA countries, new Member States, and candidate countries may be found in Colardyn and Bjornavold (2005: 28-68)

15.0 Setting specific aims

National and regional legislation and policy enable practical examples of the validation of experiential learning to be developed. Whilst this report does not concern itself with theoretical justifications for the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning, it is important to note the aims set for the particular practices submitted to this project.

16.0.0 There is a high degree of convergence in the statement of aims defined within the case-studies. In general terms applying to most of the case-studies, these aims can be summarised by a combination of the statements made in the Belgian and French submissions. For the organisation offering validation of informal and non-formal learning, the aims are :

- to provide a more flexible/swifter learning route towards qualification.
- to avoid duplication of learning.
- to have prior learning valued (and accredited).

These aims combine to make an alternative route to recognition, especially in the context where awards (certificate/diploma) are the end-result of the process. All of these aims are seen as important means of motivating teachers/trainers as adult learners.

17.0.0 To these shared declarations of aims can be added other aims which are made explicit in the documentation of particular case-studies (though are present implicitly in other examples). The Finnish cases (FI1 and FI2) serve to illustrate two such aims as:

- to take into account individual learning needs
- to personalise the contents of a programme of study/learning

18.0.0 The United Kingdom (UK3) submission is worthy of note in that it especially refers to the intention “to professionalise and develop the workforce” of trainers in enterprises. This is very close to the statement of aim for one of the Italian case-studies (IT1) and is implicit in other case-studies.

19.0.0 The Ireland (IE2) case-study is also directed at trainers (in training organisations). The aim here, however, is “to promote investment in training by employers” through an assurance of the quality of such trainers validated for entry to a National Register of Approved Trainers.

20.0.0 Only the Belgium case-studies (BE1, BE2) refer specifically to the reduction of programme training costs in programmes for which applicants can claim exemption by virtue of our assessment of their experiential learning.

21.0.0 Whatever the individual differences among case-studies, their cumulative evidence clearly confirms that the validation of experiential learning enables particular aims to be set which distinguish the process from most examples of formal learning. At the least, these are distinguishing features of an alternative route to that of formal learning.

22 FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION

23.0 Identification refers to the processes by which informal and non-formal learning is made visible. Such identification results in making *explicit* the knowledge, skills, and competences already achieved by the individuals and shows how such learning has been applied, or can be applied, to the professional role of the teacher or trainer.

24.0.0 In addition to knowledge which is consciously-known to the individual, however, there is a dimension of tacit knowledge and understanding (Polanyi, 1973). Such knowledge is unformulated. It remains unformulated until it is first articulated (in speech or writing) when it may then be subjected to conscious analysis and appraisal. The full process for the identification of experiential learning, therefore, would record learning already known to the individual *and* enable the individual to recognise and express hitherto tacit knowledge and understanding. The means by which prior learning is made visible clearly influences what is identified so that its application can be appraised. The means adopted shapes the form taken by the learning.

25.0.0 The process of identifying personal informal/non-formal learning requires the individual to engage productively in the processes of learning from experience. The capacity to do so can not be assumed, since such identification is itself a learned activity. In order to pursue a claim for recognition of informal and non-formal learning, as examples which follow will exemplify, the individual must:

- select/identify and be able to describe particular and relevant experience(s)
- compare/contrast experience derived from a range of settings and circumstances
- extrapolate and synthesise elements of different experience
- analyse, reflect upon, and “make sense” of experience
- show, as a result, a greater understanding of underlying and informing principles and practices
- apply/transfer findings to other contexts
- identify, through reflection, the ways in which such learning has, and can, contribute to personal professional practice
- identify further development needs and opportunities

- be able to demonstrate the results of these processes structured in one or more of the forms required for recognition (as detailed in following paragraphs)

26.0.0 Within the process of identification the role of the tutor, or counsellor, is of critical importance in providing guidance and support to the individual claimant. Such a role is not simply one of providing information, but in fact one of eliciting information from the candidate and inducing reflection, by the individual, upon and across the range of experience identified as relevant. To that end, the support offered must enable the individual to articulate what has been learnt from experience. Such support itself requires a high level of tutor/counsellor skills, together with commensurate time in which to work with the candidate. Because of the close working relationship then established between claimant and tutor/counsellor, good practice suggests that the assessment of a claim should be conducted either by persons other than the supporting tutor, or that any assessment made by the supporting tutor should be verified by other competent persons constituting a panel or jury.

27.0.0 Analysis of the case-studies shows the following specific forms adopted for the identification of informal and non-formal learning.

- (structured) interview
- direct observation of teaching competences
- self analysis/self assessment of professional knowledge and skills
- mapping of personal learning needs
- preparation of individual learning plan
- submission of detailed training plan taught by the individual
- preparation of report on personal experiential learning
- submission of a portfolio/dossier

Each of these forms of identification appears several times in the separate case-studies. In most cases full identification incorporates two or more of these specific forms. The following paragraphs address in more detail each of these forms of identification with illustrations drawn from particular case-studies.

28.0 The interview

If the interview is to be a reliable form of identification – rather than an appraisal of personality – then it requires careful management. The purpose of the interview itself requires definition:

- a structured interview probing the pre-requisite knowledge of the candidate (BE2)

The interview may be conducted as a “job interview” (DK1) where, in this case, it is an application to be admitted to a Higher Degree programme.

29.0.0 Examples of good practice show that the interview itself is aimed at eliciting confirmation of experiential learning against specific targets. These may be expressed as learning outcomes and competences; but the interview itself is presented usually as a means of exploring evidences of prior learning supplied in one or more other forms. The BE2 case referred to above, for example, is specifically intended to probe other documented forms of identification. The UK3 case incorporates “a professional discussion with an accredited assessor” to explore and confirm the evidences of experiential learning supplied in portfolio form.

30.0.0 The value of the interview appears to be its supporting function which allows for further explorations, rather than in its reliability as the *prime* means of eliciting prior learning. The Ireland case (IE2) provides a good example of the interview in such a supporting role.

31.0 Observation of teaching competences

Direct observation and assessment of teaching competences is incorporated into the procedures for a number of case-studies (e.g. BE1, BE2, FI1, IE2, LT3).

32.0.0 In other cases, confirmation of teaching competences is incorporated into alternative forms of identification (most notably the portfolio) through, for example, assessments of practical teaching undertaken by the employing institution. Assessment of practical teaching competences may be a requirement for confirmation of prior learning or may be an optional form adopted for confirmation of achievements.

33.0.0 The IE2 case-study is of particular interest in that the identification requires the applicant to submit a “video [which] should demonstrate the applicant’s competences in presentation skills, communications, handling of feedback and use of visual aids.” In addition, assessors “will observe the applicant conducting a training activity in the field”.

34.0 Self-analysis/self-assessment of professional knowledge and skills

All identification of experiential learning necessarily involves description and is the first stage towards self-analysis or self-assessment. To some degree the analysis or assessment following descriptions of experience is implicit in most case-studies submitted to the project. Case-studies show differences, however, in the extent to which there is an explicit requirement to engage in self-analysis and assessment.

35.0.0 In one of the Italian case-studies (IT2), for example, where the intention was that the counsellors involved in the project “should reinforce their competences,” the whole process of validation “was based on the self-evaluation” offered by each individual. In IT5, however, that evaluation (submitted in the form of a report) was judged against sets of specific competences. In the one case, the individual identified personal outcomes; in the second, target outcomes were set by the individual towards which self-analysis had to be directed. In this respect, IT3 employed “guided evaluation”, as the bridge between individual and institutional assessment.

36.0.0 Analysis and assessment of experiential learning can identify:

- the individual’s development to date – that is, the knowledge, skills and competences which are already secure
- how the individual has progressed over a period of time
- what the individual needs to achieve in order to claim the full range of knowledge, skills, and competences
- development needs to progress to higher levels of professional achievement
- the individual’s orientation (including selection of pathway for further application and study or in order to draw up personal learning plan)

37.0.0 Two of the Ireland case-studies (IE1, IE2) illustrate that what is being looked for in the individual’s own analysis and assessment of prior learning is a sense of self-development. As well as detailing what has been learned in terms of knowledge and skills, the individual

must-show “an understanding of what has been learned and the possible applications of that understanding (that is, learning as an indicator of “personal growth”).

38.0.0 Such “personal growth”, in the professional context of teaching and training, is a product of the capacity “to reflect critically upon learning derived from experience” (UK2).

39.0.0 Critical reflection upon experiential learning may be demonstrated in a submission for a particular recognition (a certificate), or may be demonstrated throughout the duration of a programme of study which takes its shape from the prior learning of the individual. The Finnish case-study (FI3) provides such an example of “a continuous reflective and dialogic process with the teacher tutor”.

40.0 Mapping of personal learning needs

In many case-studies, the mapping of personal learning needs is implicitly incorporated into the descriptions offered. It is seen as a component part of other activities which are actually described. In other cases, the identification of personal learning needs may take its form either as a separate process or be integrated within the individual’s self-analysis and assessment of learning (both formal and experiential). Personal learning needs (as in 5.4.2) may be mapped against present or future professional roles and responsibilities. That mapping may be conducted also against programmes of training and development for VET teachers and trainers –in which such programmes carry their own statements of learning outcomes and competences to be achieved.

41.0.0 The Finnish case-studies (FI1, FI2) demonstrate, in the most fully-expressed form, the identification of learning needs within a programme of training leading to a recognised professional award. In both cases the vocational teacher “must analyse his/her own professional skills and knowledge, to map out the learning needs and analyse his/her own orientation”. The identification directly contributes to the making of an individual study-plan and the monitoring of progress throughout the programme of study based on individual needs.

42.0 Preparation of individual learning plan

The Finnish case-studies (FI1, FI2) cited in the previous paragraph illustrate most explicitly this form of identification. The programme of training demands that the individual must

“draw up an individual study plan and a plan for demonstrating his/her competence.” These requirements are set out more fully as follows:

Both the individual study plans as well as the plan for competence demonstration are based on a continuous and active observation and reflection on the student’s own learning and knowledge in relation to the objectives and evaluation criteria set for vocational teacher education.

43.0.0 The third Finnish case-study (FI3), a competence-based vocational teacher training programme, elaborates further this model through the design of an individual learning plan:

The basic “document” that steers the course of studies is the individual learning plan that is drawn up at the beginning of studies and modified in a continuous reflective and dialogic process with the teacher-tutor. The student always takes the initiative within this plan on how to utilise his/her prior learning. This initiative and plan is then negotiated and finalised with the teacher-tutor.

44.0.0 Many other case-studies (and all involving the submission of portfolios) allow the individual to address in his/her personal way the stated requirements for recognition of various kinds. One of the Italian case-studies, for example (IT8), allows for Training Managers to identify a personal training project to extend and enhance their range of competences held at the start of the programme of training.

45.0 Submission of training plan

One of the Ireland case-studies (IE2) details a form for the identification of prior learning which is unique among the studies submitted to this project. For registration as an approved trainer on a national Training Register, trainers must submit a detailed plan for one of their delivered training programmes.

The plan must indicate:

- (i) the scope of the training
- (ii) the timetable for delivery
- (iii) the target population
- (iv) the training objectives
- (v) an outline of context
- (vi) the proposed evaluation procedure

46.0.0 As noted in paragraph 5.3.2 the submission of this training plan must be accompanied by a video of the delivery of a segment of the training plan. Video and training plan must be accompanied by a critique showing how “the filmed segment relates to the submitted plan and relate the training plan to each of the competences outlined in the Trainer Profile”.

47.0 Report on personal experiential learning

A recent Italian innovation (IT5) for the recognition of prior learning is available to those who have a minimum of five years’ experience in training activities. In order to apply for University of Rome training credits, applicants must write a Report based on their work experience as trainers. That Report, prepared to a specific format, identifies knowledge and competences gained through informal and non-formal learning. It addresses four sets of competences in these domains:

- general and basic knowledge
- methodological knowledge
- relational competences (e.g. communication, interaction) acquired through working with clients
- knowledge related to social and legal contexts

48.0.0 Such a report appears to be progressing toward self-assessment and self-analysis models but in fact concentrates itself upon the first dimension of such models (5.4.2), that is: the identification of knowledge and competences which are already established.

49.0 Portfolio

The submission of a portfolio of one kind or another features in 19 of the case-studies drawn from 8 of the countries represented in this study. In addition to the portfolio (as named in 12 of the case-studies), there are two variants: the dossier, and the *bilan de compétences*.

50.0.0 The **dossier** (BE1, DK1, FR2) is a gathering of documentation which may include:

- the individual’s *curriculum vitae*
- letter of application
- the individual’s qualifications already gained (degrees/diplomas/certificates)

- work-related documents (contracts, job specifications)
- letters of confirmation (from e.g. employers/clients)

The contents of the individual's dossier may then be 'tested' at interview to determine the appropriateness of the individual's application for exemption (BE1), or suitability of work experience (DK1). The French case (FR2) determines the candidate's suitability to be recruited as a Counsellor in Continuing Training (*Conseiller en Formation Continue*) within the National Ministry of Education.

51.0.0 The **portfolio** itself is a more extensive and inclusive gathering of documentation whose particular form and contents will vary according to its purpose. One of the French case-studies (FR1) provides a description of contents which typifies several other case-studies. Such a portfolio:

- promotes descriptions of relevant experience
- identifies the working situations which relate to the range of competences required
- provides evidence of the experience cited (e.g. letters of confirmation from employers)
- maps non-formal and informal learning outcomes against the requirements of target-competences through a description of the context and content of work-experience

52.0.0 Some portfolio requirements (IE1, UK1, UK2, UK3) demand, in addition to the identification of experiential learning derived from informal and non-formal contexts, a demonstration of the ability "to reflect critically upon learning derived from experience". Such reflection, in these four case-studies, is seen as an indication of "personal growth".

53.0.0 A somewhat similar intention informs one of the Slovakian cases (SK1). In this case "personal growth" is shaped through the submission, within the portfolio documentation, of a "personal development plan" to show how the individual intends to meet a set of required standards.

54.0.0 Personal development is also seen as the key purpose for those portfolios structured as work-in-progress following admission to a programme of training. All three of the Finnish case-studies refer to "evaluatory material" maintained by the individual throughout the

programme of studies. The prime function of this form of portfolio is to promote the individual student's own assessment and analysis of personal development. The fullest description of such a portfolio is carried in F11:

The portfolio contains reflective analysis on the student's development as a teacher and his/her learning challenges. It contains:

- an individual study plan
- an individual plan for demonstrating prior learning
- documentation relating to the development of his/her teaching (plans/feedback/self-assessment)
- learning assignments
- plan for a development project and a report on the project
- a summarising self-assessment report which can contain part of a learning diary
- other documents which report on the student's knowledge and learning
- written descriptions of further development challenges and future plans as a teacher

Located within a competence-based programme of training for vocational teachers, all of these documents draw upon both prior experiential learning and the full range of learning (formal/informal/non-formal) accumulated throughout the programme of training.

55.0.0 A similar conception informs one of the Lithuanian case-studies (LT3) relating to a modular programme for initial vocational teacher training. The portfolio here records “theoretical and practical achievements” throughout this programme of part-time training, studied concurrently with practical teaching, and drawing on the participants’ experiential learning at all points.

56.0.0 The *bilan de compétences* is described in a working document submitted by the Italian project members as “the Italian way” (adapted from the French model) of designing a portfolio – and it is characteristic of the Italian case-studies only. In the French original the *bilan de compétences* methodology provides a largely formative function which “combines

the assessment of non-formally acquired competences with individual goals of the person undergoing the procedure. These goals may range from developing personal career orientations to increasing employability.” (Leney *et al* 2004: 151)

57.0.0 There is no easy English equivalent to *bilan de compétences*. *Bilan* derives from the accountancy term for a balance-sheet. Its figurative use then connotes a “weighing up” of experience. In the Italian version of the *bilan* such “weighing up” of experiential learning is intended to achieve results of three kinds, which are connected.

58.0.0 First, the *bilan* method identifies relevant occupational and personal competences, including those which have been acquired through informal and non-formal learning. Those competency outcomes, which cover all the Italian *bilan de compétences* case-studies, can be identified in five broad categories:

- knowledge (connected with branches of learning such as psychology, pedagogy).
- basic competences (in the content of the training being delivered)
- technical competences (related to professional role such as, designing a training project, planning a lesson)
- behavioural competences (e.g. working with others)
- attitudinal competences (e.g. leadership qualities, empathy, patience)

59.0.0 The second result of the *bilan* procedure relates to personal development needs, especially in connection with job-opportunities or career development, based on assessment (conducted by the individual in association with others). The outcome of such assessment “orientates” the individual towards that vocational and personal development.

60.0.0 The third outcome of the *bilan* procedure addresses these formative outcomes by identifying specific activities intended to promote the individual’s personal development. The final assessment made through the *bilan de competences* method then records both the initial sets of competences and those additional competences acquired throughout the period of training, including on-the-job training.

61.0 Process of recognition: a cautionary note

There was a concern, expressed in the conference discussion (Thessaloniki, December 2005) of an earlier draft of this report, that some forms of identification detailed here might be seen as solitary activities for the individual teacher/trainer. At best, the teacher/trainer would have contact with one other individual, acting as tutor/mentor to support and develop the individual's ability to identify and apply personal informal and non-formal learning. Where this is the case, there are two possible deficiencies to address. One relates to the fact that the individual then can not share his/her personal experiential learning with other practitioners and, therefore, learn from and through the experience of others – to the mutual enhancement of all. Allied to this is the possible feeling for the individual of isolation from a community of teachers/trainers, and thus from a sense of belonging to a profession and its defining values and characteristics. It was argued that teachers/trainers undergoing traditional forms of training for teaching in which they are located in groups or classes of people following more or less the same processes of preparation and study at the same time do develop such a sense of social cohesion and professional identity.

62.0.0 In some instances, where experiential learning is integrated within programmes of training shared with other learners, this is clearly not the case. The potential risks, however, appear greatest in those cases where the solitary teacher/trainer prepares a claim for recognition of informal/non-formal learning, mediated by a single tutor. One practice which counters such possible limitations gathers groups of claimants together specifically for the purposes of sharing experience and learning from each other, thus enabling all participants to proceed with greater assurance in the preparation of their own claim for recognition. Such sessions are supported also by individual tutorials.

5.10.2 Though this reservation has not been shaped as a specific recommendation to this report, providers of training for teachers and trainers are offered these observations as something worth bearing in mind in the design of mechanisms for the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

1. FORMS OF RECOGNITION

1.0 Before engaging with the specific forms of recognition represented in the case-studies submitted to this project, it is important to note a matter relating to recognition generally. Wide social recognition of informal and non-formal learning requires at the least an acceptance, or acknowledgement, of its worth. There can be reluctance among some stakeholders to accept that value, as was specifically noted in the Slovakia submission, but is one which is shared more widely. Such reluctance is a refusal to accept that:

- informal/non-formal learning can achieve the same results as those gained through programmes of formal study and training
- awards and qualifications built on, or incorporating informal/non-formal learning can have the same *value* as those achieved through formal study and practice

Both objections raise the question of the validity of informal/non-formal learning as an alternative to formal programmes of study and training. In the case of awards and qualifications gained, in whole or in part, through informal/non-formal learning the question is then one also of comparability or equivalence.

1.0.0 Comparability or equivalence must be addressed in two ways. First, by ensuring that the same spread and depth of knowledge, skills, and competences applying to formally-achieved awards are present in those achieved, in whole or in part, through demonstrations of experiential learning. This is a question of curriculum content. The second aspect of trust must be addressed through the requirements and procedures adopted for the assessment of informal and non-formal learning. They must be shown to be founded on sound principles and operated by impartial procedures. And these, in turn, must be transparent.

2.0 The identification of prior experiential learning, through the process of assessment, leads to recognition of various kinds. The forms of recognition represented in the case-studies of this project are:

- institutional or enterprise recognition through selection and appointment as trainer

- entry to a programme of study/training leading to a teaching qualification or Higher Degree
- exemption from part, or parts, of a programme of study/learning leading to a teaching qualification
- achievement of a professional award entirely through recognition of informal and non-formal learning
- integration of experiential learning within units of study leading to a professional qualification
- the personalisation of a training programme in order to meet individual needs
- entry to a national/regional Register of approved trainers

2.0 Two of the French case-studies (FR2, FR3) are concerned with *selection for appointment* in a training role. The first (FR2) details the recruitment procedures for appointment as a vocational training counsellor within Ministry of Education training centres. Based on the contents of the applicant's dossier, there follows an interview conducted by 4 or 5 persons. The second case in this category (FR3) concerns the appointment of in-house trainers within the large enterprise of SNCF (*Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer*). Many such trainers are recruited, and promoted, from within the workforce itself, either having been identified by management or having proposed themselves. Selection proceeds through interview, conducted by one or two persons, in which the candidate "defends" his/her application. There is also an associated psychometric test.

3.0 Recognition of experiential learning in one of the Ireland cases (IE1) takes the form of **entry to a training programme** for VET teachers/trainers. Each applicant submits a portfolio directed at specified learning outcomes. Assessment of that submission determines acceptance onto the programme and, if selected, the level of entry at which the individual is accepted. As such it is an example of a very particular form of exemption, allowing entry to those who lack the formal qualifications normally required for entry. The Danish case (DK1) allows experiential learning as exemption from the normal pre-requisites for entry to a Master's programme in Education.

4.0 Recognition of prior experiential learning as *exemption from part, or parts of a programme of study/training* features in 11 case-studies (BE1, BE2, FI1, FI2, FR1, IT4, IT5, IT7, SK1, SK2, UK1). The amount of exemption varies from case to case. In FI2, exemption may be

awarded up to a maximum of 10% of the programme requirements (in 6 ECTS points out of the 60 comprising the award). In one of the Slovakian cases (SK1), exemption may be awarded up to 80% of the total programme. Within this lower and upper limits for partial exemption, other case-studies show 25% (IT4, IT7), 50% (SK2, UK1), and up to 57% (FI1).

5.0 Achievement of a professional award entirely through recognition of informal and non-formal experience features in two case-studies (FR1, UK3). The French example is unique in that recognition as a trainer in apprenticeship centres can be achieved either in part or in full through the submission of a portfolio. The UK case-study, however, identifies an award which can be gained *only* through the identification of experiential learning and on-the-job assessments of competences. There are no formal units of study or training to be achieved, though advice and support is available to the individual seeking the award.

6.0 The *integration of experiential learning within units of study leading to a professional qualification* is illustrated in all three Finnish case-studies and in one of the Danish examples (DK2) and one of the UK examples (UK2). The Danish *paedagogikum* model of training for serving VET teachers integrates formal “block” periods of study with normal teaching duties. These blocks of study enable the teachers to incorporate on-the-job experience with their studies, allowing reflection and application of formal learning with experiential learning. In a sense this principle of in-service training where teachers/trainers undertake formal study and training towards a teaching qualification whilst teaching – either through part-time attendance or through flexible (including distance) modes of study. The difference in the Danish model is the scheduling of such studies to a block pattern. The Finnish examples (FI1, FI2, FI3) are constructed in a fully-integrated way through taking the identification of prior experiential learning as the starting point for the construction of an individualised programme of study (previously outlined in 5.4.5, 5.5.1, 5.6, 5.6.1, 5.9.5). The UK2 case-study makes critical reflection upon informal and non-formal experience the basis for the construction of a compulsory assignment whose completion counts towards the final award of a continuing professional development (CPD) Foundation Degree in Education and Training.

7.0 Entry to a national/regional Register of approved trainers is exemplified in two case-studies (IT1 and IE2). Recognition by the Italian Association of Trainers (AIF) confirms the individual’s “professional quality in training activities” through the submission of documentation directed to the standards which apply to a designated training role. The

adjudication by the Certification Commission of AIF may be supplemented by a call for additional documentation, or interview, or both. Recognition as an approved trainer on the Enterprise Ireland register (IE2) again calls for the submission of materials (see 5.7, 5.7.1) together with assessment by interview and by observation of practical training sessions.

2. CURRICULUM MODELS

1.0 Of the 28 project case-studies included for detailed analysis, 22 relate to the recognition of experiential learning which results in or leads to certification for VET teachers and trainers. As such they are of especial interest as working examples of “how to value non-formal and informal learning through a system of accrediting prior experiential learning and achievement” as a means of promoting the Common European Principle of “a well qualified profession” (EU, October 2005: 6, 9). This section is particularly directed towards that principle through a consideration of those case-studies *which lead to formal professional awards for VET teachers/trainers*. These cases are embedded in programmes of study and training from which five distinct curriculum models may be extrapolated based on their principal defining characteristics. Some of the defining characteristics of each of these curriculum models have been described previously in Section 5 of this report (**Forms of Identification**).

1.0.0 Some case-studies, whilst shaped overall to a recognisable curriculum model, do not adhere strictly and exclusively to the ideal of its type. Within an overall construction there may well be one or more features derived from other designs for the construction of programmes of study/training. Nonetheless, each type includes a distinctive feature that sets it apart and merits attention in its own right. Such models may well be useful as means of designing or extending possible routes to certification for teachers/trainers. Additionally, from the distinctive features of each ideal type it is clearly possible to generate hybrid models whose construction will then best serve particular needs, objectives, and circumstances.

2.0.0 Case-studies recognising the value of informal and non-formal learning for the purposes of certification operate on the broad principle either of *exemption* or *integration*. Within each principle there are different ways of organising a curriculum. Thus the first two curriculum models exemplify and emphasise different forms of exemption; the other three all illustrate different forms for the integration of experiential learning:

- (i) **exemption**
- (ii) exclusive
- (iii) **integration**
- (iv) concurrent
- (v) contract

- 2.0 Exemption Model:** on the basis of a claim for the recognition of informal/non-formal learning, the candidate is exempted from a part, or parts of a programme of study/learning leading to an award. The confirmation of the claim may also be expressed as a number of credit points to be counted towards the total number of credit points required to achieve the target award or certificate. Exceptionally, as is the case for the French system of *Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience (VAE)*, the *whole* of an award (certificate, diploma, title) may be gained through the submission of a claim based on experiential learning.
- 7.2.1** The exemption model is the most prominent among case-studies submitted to this project and features in case-studies submitted by all of the contributing countries to this project, with the exception of those from Lithuania. The amount of exemption varies from case to case (from 10% to 100%: see 6.4 and 6.5).
- 1.0.0** The exemption model works by mapping achievement against pre-defined requirements (of learning outcomes and/or competences) specified within a qualification *which can also be achieved through formal study*. The learning outcomes to be demonstrated by the applicant making a claim for recognition of informal learning and non-formal learning are identical with those required by those following a formal route to the same qualification. In most cases the claimant is supported by a tutor or counsellor in the preparation of a claim.
- 2.0.0** Whilst the exemption model is clearly effective for the purpose described, it is important to recognise also the limitations of what such a model can achieve. It will not, for example, necessarily enable or require the person to identify further learning/practice important to the realisation of personal development needs, and exemption relies heavily upon the production of evidence (or “proofs”) of achievement rather than reflection upon experience.
- 2.0 Exclusive model:** the *whole* of an award/qualification is attained through the submission of a portfolio of work *or* through work-based assessment *or* a combination of portfolio and work-based assessment. The award has been specifically constructed for achievement through the identification and demonstration of competences acquired through experience. The award is *not* available through formal means of study.

7.3.1 This model of certification is illustrated in the United Kingdom (UK3) case-

study, which is founded on the principles of the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) framework of 1986. In this case, the qualification aimed at by the candidate takes the form of a portfolio matched against target requirements, together with evidences in support of the claim. Competences are assessed on-the-job by a qualified assessor. The portfolio may be re-submitted if it fails to demonstrate all the required competences on first submission. Tutorial support is offered to the candidate throughout the process of compiling the portfolio.

1.0.0 The advantage of the NVQ system for the recognition of experiential learning and competence is that awards may be structured in ways which relate directly to the workplace and to different roles and occupations within a workplace. Further, a good deal of the assessment of competence is conducted in the place of work itself. A disadvantage of such awards is that, because they exist only in their own right, there is no benchmark of formal qualifications against which they can be measured. As a result, NVQ awards have taken several years to achieve wider stakeholder recognition and social acceptance.

7.4 Integration Model: an assignment based on reflection upon experiential learning is made a compulsory requirement of a certificated programme of study and carries with it an assigned number of credit points.

1.0.0 This model in its most obvious form is exemplified in the UK2 case-study. The form of the writing required is determined in the syllabus of the programme and must be met by all teachers/trainers on the programme. What is required, as specified in the programme documentation, is: “reflective writing... and the conceptual analysis it contains that is at the centre of [a] claim for credit, because this evidences the learning you have achieved: mere description of an activity or process is not enough.” Whilst the writing itself is individual, the task must meet specified criteria on which it will be assessed. The overall intention of the analysis and reflection undertaken is to contribute to personal professional development.

2.0.0 The advantage of this (as all integration models) is that the teacher/trainer *must* engage in reflection upon professional development through a review of prior learning and its application. In this particular form, it may also be argued that a centrally-set task of this kind means that all of the teachers/trainers on the programme, now in the role of learners, undertake the same task. There can be, therefore, common assessment criteria and a greater certainty that like is being compared with like. The disadvantage of this type of integration

model is that the freedom to negotiate a personal task can be limited by the nature of the task as set.

2.0 Concurrent model: programmes leading to professional certificates are organised so that experiential learning is supported by formal units of study. These units may be undertaken through sessions of study based on part-time regular attendance at the host institution, or at a distance (using ICT among other resources), whilst continuing work as a teacher/trainer. Alternatively, block periods of study may be organised when the teacher/trainer is released from work or is free to attend at times between teaching terms within the academic year.

1.0.0 To varying degrees the concurrent model applies to all cases for the certification of serving (“in-service”) teachers and trainers. The units of study draw upon experiential learning gained whilst teaching/training and is illustrated in the Lithuanian (LT3) case-study organised around 11 modules of study as an initial certificate for VET teachers. The mentor training programmes for serving VET teachers, also from Lithuania (LT4), is similarly organised. The Danish *Paedagogikum* model (DK2) inserts formal periods of study into the normal pattern of the VET teacher’s teaching duties.

7.5.2 The distinct advantage of the concurrent model of training and study is that it draws directly upon the individual’s personal experience (learning-by-doing) *and* enables the immediate application of new learning to the context of the individual’s own teaching/training. The gap between theory and practice can thus be reduced through the reciprocal influence of each upon the other. The disadvantage of this model is that it is still largely determined by and structured around the formal components of study.

3.0 Contract model: on the basis of self-assessment of learning needs, the individual constructs a personal project/assignment (as agreed with a supervising tutor) to promote professional development. That development will be expressed in terms of learning outcomes/competences.

1.0.0 The Italian case-study (IT8), one of several based on the *bilan de competences* methodology, assesses experiential learning against defined competences. Following that, “a personal project of training” is identified which the individual then follows. The final assessment includes both competences demonstrated prior to the training activities *and* those gained as a result of the personal training project. All three of the Finnish case-studies

exemplify contract learning through the identification of learning needs and the proposal for a development project or individual study plan.

7.6.2 The decided advantage of the contract model for learning is that the identification of needs and proposed learning in support of those needs is both particular and individual. Analysis of, and reflection upon, achieved learning and acquired competences is integrated within such a model in a more inclusive way than in the other curriculum models described. The processes of contract design, with the support of a tutor or counsellor, necessarily engages the individual in a thorough review of personal professional development. Further, such a learning contract enables actual targets for self-development to be set and monitored. A possible disadvantage of contract learning is that, precisely because it leads to different outcomes, assessment must somehow accommodate such diversity whilst maintaining comparability of results.

7.7 The foregoing sections are illustrative only of each of these curriculum models, as are the case-studies cited for each model. Their outlining here may provide curriculum-designers with a range of options and (perhaps even more importantly) a range of possible *combinations* of models on which to design fit-for-purpose curricula for the certification of VET teachers/trainers. The Finnish case-studies provide just such an illustration. Whilst allowing for some exemption, the integration of study actually takes the form of contract learning. Curriculum design and, more particularly, flexibility of design may well be one important means of addressing one of the EU priorities; that of bringing together learners and learning opportunities (EC 2001) where the learners in question are themselves VET teachers and trainers.

2 ASSESSMENT

1.0 The full process of validation requires that informal and non-formal learning is *assessed* in order to confirm the scope, levels, and application of knowledge, skills, and competences. Assessment is the process of ‘measuring’ learner achievement. As such, it will employ various methods, or tools, for making that measurement.

8.1.1 In the context of the case-studies included in this project, assessment is employed in 4 differing functions:

- (i) to confirm the learner’s achievement of learning against specified learning outcomes and competences
- (ii) to identify what further learning needs to be developed and confirmed in order to meet specified learning outcomes and competences
- (iii) to measure what new personal learning, not defined in advance by statements of required learning, has in fact been achieved.
- (iv) to confirm achievement of learning identified by the individual for his/her own personal professional development

1.0.0 Assessment is subject to both general principles and to specific principles attaching to particular practices and forms of assessment. The EC Draft Conclusions on informal and non-formal learning (see para.1.3) contain various guiding principles directed at issues of assessment. Trustworthy approaches and systems for the identification and validation of informal and non-formal learning, for example, raises the matter of the validity of assessments made. Where the validity of assessment can be questioned, confidence and trust in the process, procedures and criteria for the validation of experiential learning are put in doubt.

2.0.0 Such processes, procedures, and criteria must be “fair, transparent and underpinned by quality assurance mechanisms.” Further, “the process of assessment should be impartial and mechanisms should be put in place to avoid any conflict of interest.” Finally: “the professional competence of those who carry out assessment should also be assured.”

3.0.0 Illustrations of good practice as demonstration of these guiding principles will be drawn on later in this section. Illustrative examples of good practice will also be cited to exemplify assessment procedures and principles attaching to specific forms of assessment.

2.0 Forms of assessment

There are 3 nominal forms of assessment:

- diagnostic
- formative
- summative

Whilst each of these nominal forms of assessment can be employed as an exclusive function, it is often the case that two (sometimes all three) forms of assessment may be present in the conduct of any one assessment.

8.2.1 Diagnostic assessment enables a judgement to be made as to whether particular learning (skills or knowledge) is present or absent. Diagnostic assessment is not simply “fault-finding”. It is an important first assessment which can provide useful information to the individual as a means of directing development. Diagnostic assessment can highlight strengths as well as identifying particular weaknesses.

1.0.0 To some extent, therefore, any claim made for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning has engaged the claimant, and possibly others, in diagnostic assessment. Diagnostic assessment is conducted wherever the individual is called upon to undertake self-analysis or self-assessment (see entries under section 5.4 for examples). Such self-assessment may also be aided through the provision of a tutor/counsellor/guide to enable first identifications of prior learning to be made visible, and then to make an assessment of learning to determine personal development needs.

2.0.0 Assessments made of the individual’s practical teaching competence (e.g. BE1, BE2, FI1, IE2, LT3) may also serve a diagnostic purpose. They could identify the range of skills and knowledge shown to be present, or indicate what was missing from the event.

3.0.0 Formative assessment is intended primarily to monitor the progress of an individual’s learning and to provide feedback. That feedback is essential to the enhancement of learning

and promotion of performance. Engagement with such feedback can provide an important basis for discussion between learner and tutor. Such practice is explicitly integrated within many of the case-studies presented to this project, and is specifically detailed in two of the Finnish case-studies (FI1 and FI2).

4.0.0 It is quite possible for assessment to serve the dual function of diagnosis and formation. Diagnostic assessment might indicate, for example, that something was “missing”, and, at the same time, indicate how that missing skill or knowledge might be developed.

5.0.0 Summative assessment provides an overall judgement at the end of a given process (course, assignment, for example). Summative assessment determines whether or not the learner has demonstrated the requisite knowledge, skills, and competences. It is the judgement made, for example, in all cases involving the submission of a portfolio. That summative assessment, however, might also be formative in those instances where the applicant’s first submission was not accepted. Feedback might very well indicate what still remained to be addressed in order to succeed with a later re-submission.

3.0 Questions of Fairness

There is a range of questions which can challenge the overall credibility of assessments. The first questions of fairness are usually thought of as challenges to the *validity* and *reliability* of an assessment. Good practice answers the questions: does the form of assessment adopted measure what it is intended to measure? And, is the assessment of any given form of assessment consistent from one case to another?

1.0.0 *What* is being assessed, in the context of this project, is the content of those forms of identification of learning produced by the learner – the form in which learning and competences achieved by the learner have been made visible (see Section 5 of this report). The assessment of each of these forms (interview, portfolio, practical demonstration, etc) in good practice is made valid through the attachment of clearly-stated criteria and requirements for assessment. Case-studies previously cited show also that assessment may include more than one form for the demonstration of learning (e.g. portfolio and interview, portfolio and practical teaching) in order to ensure a valid coverage of target criteria or outcomes.

8.3.2 The reliability of an assessment is addressed in case-study examples of good practice by ensuring that there is some moderation of assessment results. In several case-studies (e.g. FR1, IE1, IT4, UK2) results are adjudicated respectively by a jury, panel, committee, teaching team.

1.0.0 Questioning the reliability of assessment questions also the reliability of the assessors. Submissions to this project make it very clear that the assessors must themselves meet certain specified requirements. These requirements may be variously described as:

- expertise in the subject matter and programmes or curricula (BE1)
- experienced trainers of VET teachers/trainers and tutor for *VAE* (*validation des acquis de l'expérience*) (FR1).
- a range of (specified) knowledge, experience, and competences (IT4, IT6)
- certified trainer and member of team teaching the programme and approved by Certification Board (SK1)

In brief, good practice seeks to ensure that assessors are competent to undertake the range of assessments required. The Ireland case-study (IE1) assures even greater reliability by specifying that one of the assessors (in a team of three) will be external to the institution. One of the Slovakian case-studies (SK2) similarly requires the appointment of independent assessors.

2.0.0 In the context of the competence of assessors, the Lithuanian case-study (LT4) merits special attention. It is the only contribution to this project which deals with the role of the mentor in supporting VET student teachers. An essential part of that role is the assessment of the student teacher's competence. Though the mentor training programme, for experienced VET teachers, involves formal modules of study, the priorities of the programme are shaped according to the skills and abilities of the mentors.

3.0.0 In most of the cases in which prior learning is assessed through, for example, portfolio submission or the design and completion of a project, a personal tutor is appointed to assist and guide the learner. In such instances the tutor is involved in making formative assessment. To ensure that the summative assessment is impartial, however, good practice suggests that persons in addition to the personal tutor should be involved. The introduction of a panel or external representative would here assure greater impartiality of assessment.

2.0 Quality assurance of assessment

Assessment is the core activity in the validation of informal and non-formal learning. The guiding principles of assessment are: fairness, transparency, and reliability. From a review of the good practices exemplified in the case-studies submitted to this project, it is possible to construct a set of practical applications to guide assessment.

1.0.0 Those practices can be summarised as :

- ensuring the form of assessment adopted is fit-for-purpose (that is, appropriate to the achieved learning being assessed)
- ensuring that clear and explicit criteria and requirements are set for the assessment of each item and for all items overall (as in a portfolio)
- ensuring that clear outcomes are set for what can be achieved through the demonstration of informal/non-formal learning (e.g. what can be exempted from formal study).
- ensuring that all requirements, assessment criteria, and procedures are known in advance to all candidates
- making available to each learner appropriate support/guidance in the preparation of a claim for recognition or production of work based on or incorporating experiential learning
- providing diagnostic (where appropriate) and formative assessment to enable the learner to target learning needs and further personal, professional development
- ensuring that appropriate specifications are set for the appointment of approved assessors
- ensuring that summative assessment results are moderated/confirmed by a panel of appointed assessors
- involving external representation on the panel or jury confirming results

2 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 In their Final Report to the European Commission, Leney et al (2004: 145) put the following paradox:

One of the core problems of vocational educators' search for professional recognition is based on a paradox: while vocational teachers and trainers are essential to supporting skill development in the workforce, they are not high status for this role.

The results of this TNet project illustrate various ways in which this paradox is being, and can be addressed even further, through the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

9.2 The question of VET teachers' and trainers' status is bound up with the question of their professional qualification for the role. Whilst competence may be developed in the performance of the job undertaken by VET teachers/trainers, confirmation of that competence in the form of certification promotes wider public and stakeholder recognition of that professionalism. That recognition, critically, includes fellow communities of teachers and trainers who do hold professional teaching/training qualifications.

9.3 In the context of wider stakeholder recognition (see 3.2.1), the Final Report cited in para.1, above (2004:143), notes that almost all member states "are opening up for recognition of non-formal learning" – though the state of development for the validation of experiential learning varies from well-established to emerging practice. The case-studies of actual practice collected in this project supply reference-points to consolidate and to extend reflection upon the design and implementation of further innovation.

9.4 The first of the (revised) Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications refers to the need for "a well-qualified profession". As well as being highly qualified in their professional area, initial vocational education teachers should have "a suitable pedagogical qualification". Whilst the Common Principles paper confines itself to teachers only (see 2.4.1 of this report), the principle of a well-qualified profession should be extended to include all VET teachers and trainers. To that end, this report identifies both initial and continuing routes to professional recognition of different kinds.

- 9.5** The evidence of this project shows also that, through the recognition of experiential achievement, there can be offered routes or pathways to pedagogical certification equivalent to a full initial teaching qualification, for both VET teachers and trainers, other than by means of conventional pre-service programmes of study and training. Whilst case-studies clearly identify actual ways in which such validation is currently operated, there is also clearly scope for further innovation and exploration.
- 9.6** The construction, in particular, of routes (or pathways) to certification made possible by the validation of experiential learning has particular advantages in terms of access to such certification by VET teachers/trainers. First, such access values what the learner has already achieved – thus serving as an important incentive to VET teachers/trainers to engage in further development. Second, such opportunities can reduce the time needed to achieve particular forms of recognition. Third, the acknowledgement of prior learning can make possible the construction of more flexible programme designs, enabling VET teachers/trainers to achieve professional recognition in ways which can be more easily accommodated within their work commitments. This is especially the case where defined competences can be demonstrated and assessed in the workplace. This particular possibility is one deserving of further exploration.
- 9.7** By valuing what the learner has already achieved, confirmed through assessment of appropriate kinds, the VET teachers/trainer is more likely to be encouraged to pursue professional certification, not only at initial levels of qualification but also at continuing professional development (CPD) levels. In the case of teachers in those countries with statutory requirements for initial qualification, the emphasis on CPD routes to further professional certification for teachers should promote developments in which experiential learning can form important component parts. There are case-studies within this report, for example, of progression routes which enable non-graduate teachers/trainers to achieve graduate status and, by virtue of exemption for achieved learning, to engage in higher degree study.
- 9.8** There are also examples within this study of routes to additional (“stand-alone”) CPD qualifications for teachers/trainers based on the principle of the recognition of experiential learning and the integration of that learning with formal study and practice. The cases provided here of the accreditation of Information Technology skills, and of the preparation of VET teachers for the role of mentor to student teachers, might well serve as models for the development of additional programmes to enhance teacher/trainer competence.

1.0 In the case of trainers working in and for enterprises there are, similarly, examples of national/regional recognition designed to promote the credibility of individuals accepted onto a register of approved trainers.

9.10 The findings of this project confirm the validation of informal and non-formal learning as a valid *alternative* means of achieving professional recognition for the VET teacher/trainer. In order to achieve wider social and stakeholder recognition of the validity of this alternative route towards recognition, the validation of informal and non-formal learning must not be seen, however, as promoting inferior or second-rate certification. The validity of qualifications achieved, in whole or in part through confirmation of prior experiential learning, must engender confidence and trust.

1.0 The promotion of wider stakeholder recognition, including that of social partners (see 3.2.1), will be achieved in large measure through the credibility of the assessment procedures attaching to the confirmation of results. Assessment must be rigorous. The evidence of the case-studies examined in this report provides established procedures to assure the validity and reliability of assessment within the validation process. Collectively, they form a template against which current and prospective validation of informal and non-formal learning can be reviewed and consolidated on sound quality assurance principles and practices (see sections 8.3 and 8.4).

9.12 The alternative routes to professional qualifications for VET teachers and trainers made possible through the validation of informal and non-formal learning may serve the additional function of helping to recruit and retain mature entrants to vocational teaching and training. The validation of informal and non-formal learning, in this context, may lead to swifter professional qualification. Such innovation will be of particular interest to those countries/regions which, because of an ageing population among teachers, may expect teacher shortages within the medium term (OECD, 2005).

9.13 In the promotion of the VET teacher/trainer as reflective practitioner there are outlined various curriculum models which can be used to design specific forms of professional recognition (certificates, diplomas, degrees). There is also the potential of combining elements of these models to create new designs for the delivery of fit-for-purpose outcomes. Whilst the exemption model for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning is well-established, curriculum designers could use the results of this study to create opportunities for the closer

integration of achieved learning with the acquisition or development of new learning and competences.

9.14 Even where validation does not result in certification, the process of identification of prior experiential learning can achieve distinct professional development results. The engagement of the VET teacher/trainer in such identification promotes active analysis of the individual's professional level and range of achieved learning and performance. That, in turn, promotes the model of the professional reflective practitioner. In so doing, the VET teacher/trainer is made an active participant in the culture of lifelong learning, thereby serving as a model to those learners whom he/she teaches or trains.

9.15 There are in any case persuasive reasons why the validation of experiential learning should be promoted in its own right. As case-studies in this project confirm, the interplay of actual experience against set requirements and criteria produces a paradigm of learning which distinguishes itself from formal study. In this paradigm learning is personal, involving the individual in appraising his/her own learning achievements. In the best cases reviewed in this project, the individual learner to varying degrees sets his/her own 'programme' for professional development – rather than being directed by a formal pre-set syllabus.

1.0 Finally, there is a need, strongly expressed and fully endorsed at the TTnet Annual Conference of December 2005, to share further the collective experience and expertise of practitioners actually engaged in processes and procedures for the validation of informal and non-formal learning. Further opportunities, in the form of workshops among practitioners, are required to enable interested parties either to design validated applications for the recognition of experiential learning or to promote further developments and extensions of current provision. One particular outcome envisaged would be the production of Handbooks which could guide the practice of those seeking to initiate or develop provisions by which VET teachers and trainers could be recognised for learning achieved informally and non-formally, especially within professional awards (certificates, diplomas, degrees).

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.0 The recommendations which follow should be seen in the light of:

- (i) the increasing emphasis upon vocational education and teaching as a means of pursuing common European economic and social goals
- (ii) the changing, and expanding, roles of VET teachers and trainers
- (iii) the common European principles for teacher competences and qualifications

The changing roles of VET teachers is the subject of another study: *PROFF: Professionalisation of VET teachers for the future* (Cort, Harkonen, and Volmari, CEDEFOP, 2004). The changing roles of VET trainers have already been referred to in this present report (2.4.3).

Two of the Common European Principles which this report has addressed specifically are those of:

- a well-qualified profession
- a profession placed within the context of lifelong learning

The recommendations made in this report confine themselves to the contribution which the validation of informal and non-formal learning can make to the realisation of these aims, set within the broader European policy decisions already established. Whilst these recommendations are specific to each of two groups of stakeholders, their implementation will necessarily involve all stakeholders and their interests (see 3.2.1), including social partners (such as are represented by professional organisations and associations and teacher Trade Unions).

10.2 Before setting out the particular recommendations to each of the major stakeholder groups, there is a necessary preamble to be addressed to all parties. It is the continuing issue of the VET trainer. Given that teachers, in most national/regional systems, belong to a regulated profession, there was widespread concern within both the project group and the European TTnet community in general, that both sets of stakeholders need to consider how best to ensure that VET trainers can be included within the Common European Principles of a well-

qualified profession set within a context of lifelong learning. If anything, as the Testing Conference Report noted: “Informal and non-formal learning opportunities are of particular importance to trainers” (October 2005: 4). Policy-makers must address the challenge of enabling trainers to become, and see themselves as, members of a profession. Providers need to review their traditional “teacher” qualification programmes to accommodate the needs of VET trainers working in different environments.

1.0 Recommendations to policy makers

Policy makers should:

- (i) develop a culture of lifelong learning among VET teachers and trainers by ensuring they have access to and support for developing their professional roles through the validation of informal and non-formal learning
- (ii) develop, with other stakeholders, a higher level of trust and confidence in the recognition of experiential learning through wider understanding of the principles and procedures by which such recognition results
- (iii) promote, within such dissemination, a wider valuing of qualifications achieved via the alternative route of experiential achievement so that they can be seen as comparable qualifications or valid in their own right
- (iv) ensure that VET teachers are valued professionally for the roles they undertake and to require VET teachers (where it is not currently the case) to achieve recognised teaching and other professional qualifications
- (v) exert influence upon enterprises to encourage trainers to achieve recognised teacher qualification. There is a principle of equity here not always acknowledged. It is that the vocational *learner* should have an entitlement to parity of teaching/training competence demonstrated by both VET teachers and VET trainers as he/she moves among and between schools, colleges, training organisations, and enterprise employers.

- (vi) encourage, in pursuit of that aim, the development of pathways, through the recognition of informal/non-formal learning, leading to equivalent full teaching certification:
 - for those VET teachers not currently included within systematic pre-service requirements via formal programmes of training
 - for VET trainers, including trainers in and for enterprises
- (vi) encourage and support the access of experienced trainers to initial programmes of teacher-training through exemption from part(s) of study by virtue of achieved prior experiential learning
- (vii) encourage, support, and create opportunities for serving teachers/trainers to undertake continuing professional development through the provision of experientially-based qualifications:
 - which reflect the changing and expanding roles and responsibilities of VET teachers/trainers
 - which lead to higher academic qualifications (diplomas, degrees, higher degrees)
- (i) consider the setting-up of a national/regional register of approved trainers, especially in the case of trainers working within or for enterprises and organisations
- (ii) invest in enhancing the quality of VET teachers/trainers through:
 - developing mechanisms to provide VET teachers/trainers with entitlements to pursue both initial and continuing professional recognition via experiential learning
 - supporting providers of teacher/trainer education and training (universities and other Awarding Bodies) in the design and implementation of innovative programmes of initial and continuing VET teacher/trainer awards based on the greater flexibility made possible by the recognition of informal/non-formal learning
- (x) sponsor working parties, drawn from the TTnet community of practitioners experienced in this field, to assist in the design and development of methods and opportunities for the validation of informal and non-formal learning – especially in the case of those countries/regions which do not yet have such practices in place

2.0 Recommendations to providers

By providers is here meant university and other Awarding Bodies who provide professional recognition, of various kinds (including certification) to VET teachers and trainers, both at initial stages of qualification and at continuing professional development levels. Providers should:

- (i) review their provision of forms of recognition available to VET teachers/trainers through the incorporation of experiential learning
- (ii) ensure that such provision includes the initial recognition of VET teachers/trainers and offers progression routes to higher levels of recognition
- (iii) identify, from the expanding roles and responsibilities of VET teachers/trainers, shared development needs which could be met through the design of additional and specific certification (in e.g. IT, counselling) based on experiential learning
- (iv) work with enterprises to offer versions of programmes leading to initial teaching qualifications which take into account the particular contexts within which VET trainers operate, and to accommodate learning gained in such contexts
- (v) review their curriculum models which recognise informal/non-formal learning with a view to designing or re-designing programmes which do not simply exempt qualifying candidates from certain requirements, but which in fact incorporate experiential learning in a more integrated way as the basis for further professional development
- (vi) consider, in this context, the full range of forms of identification which may be used, individually or in combination, to create the most appropriate assessments of achieved learning
- (vii) review and monitor quality assurance systems and processes for the assessment of experiential learning in conformity with best practice
- (viii) work with all stakeholders, and policy-makers especially, to promote wider understanding of the principles and practices for the validation of informal/non-formal learning, and through such activity promote confidence and trust in professional recognitions gained in this way
- (ix) seek funding for transnational workshops among practitioners to initiate or develop further opportunities for the validation of VET teachers' and trainers' informal and non-formal learning

11. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Briefing papers

For case-study codes please refer to Appendix B.

BELGIUM

The three cases described for Belgium relate to a quite recent political initiative. An Action Plan for lifelong learning was proposed in 2000 for Flanders and a Decree on the Vocational Certificates (*Titre de compétence*) in 2004, both of which recognise the value of prior learning and experience. A new Decree on the Flexibilisation of Higher Education (2004) provides for AP(E)L.

Recruitment for teachers and trainers is made in accordance with national regulation which requires particular degrees or qualifications. Teacher training is delivered at Universities and at High Schools. An alternative third way to become a recognised VET teacher/trainer is to follow a GPB-course when at work to achieve a Certificate of Teaching Competence. Some organisations which employ VET trainers (such as VDAB and VIZO) adapt the training programme for the training of their own trainers.

For Belgium, to safeguard the future performance system of IVET and CVET, it will be essential to revalorise the VET teacher's function in order to attract technicians and craftsmen from industry with work experience to this role. It is therefore essential that these technicians and professionals can have access to a flexible and equally relevant training programme to prepare them for their new roles. The growing number of participants to the GPB (CAP)-programmes for adults proves that it answers the needs of the would-be trainers.

Shortfalls in specific training programmes and recognition of the adult trainer or further education trainer are being addressed currently through some major changes. The GPB-programme, for example, is being reshaped into competency-based modules and new modules for the adult trainer are under construction.

The case-studies supplied to this TTnet study are integrated in the above context. Of the two Flemish cases, one is directed towards obtaining a University diploma as an initial teaching award for VET teachers (BE2). The second, operating through the GPB programme, results in a certificate which has the same value as a University-based training (BE1). The third Belgian case-study

relates to the delivery of a vocational certificate (*Titre de compétence*) in the Brussels Region (BE3).

The major influences upon the Belgian system for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning for teachers and trainers derive from both France and the UK. From France there is the influence of *validation des acquis de l'expérience* (VAE), and from the UK there is the influence of methods for the accreditation of experiential learning (APEL). We can observe, therefore, a “French approach” (including terminology) in Wallonie and the Brussels communities, especially in the Decree Vocational Certificate for the Walloon Region and the French Community. On the other hand, a “UK approach” can be observed in Flanders under the principle of EVC (*Erkenning van Verworven Competenties* - Recognition and Validation of Acquired Competences).

In the first of the Belgian case-studies (BE1), the whole process of training (which may take up to 4 years) is under the responsibility of the GPB programme and its stakeholders (25 Institutes of Higher Education delivering the GPB modular training in Flanders). The system of recognition can allow exemption from some of the modules for those adults already teaching in VET centres without a GPB certificate. This exemption can be obtained after an examination by the Management Board of a “dossier” with work experience documents and information about prior studies (diploma, certificates or credits). If it is agreed that a first assessment may be done, then an interview take place to allow the candidate to participate in the final examination session.

In the second case (BE2), the process is under the responsibility of an associate directorate of University and Higher Education institutions or an independent body under the authority of one or more association bureaux. The competency inquiry of candidates is conducted through a combination of methods (including interviews, direct observations, portfolio construction). The decision confirms exemptions expressed in study points towards the achievement of the diploma.

The third case (BE3), leading to the award of *titre de compétence* (or vocational certificate) is not specifically aimed at teachers and trainers. This vocational certificate has been developed already by 5 public providers (but can be open to others to make similar provision). Its aim is to provide an alternative route towards qualification for those who do not have one of the named “equivalent” qualifications for access to the diploma programme. Any person with work experience can follow the process to obtain a recognised qualification described by documented dossiers (standards and practice test -- *référentiels de validation*). The candidates have to demonstrate the capacity to perform the key competences in a given profession through practice tests and interview. Assessors

are appointed by each authority involved and are controlled by an external body auditing the validation centres organising the procedure. The first *titres de compétence* were awarded in 2005.

DENMARK

In the Danish IVET system, teachers have to be skilled workers, must be graduates from an educational institution at tertiary level, and have at least two years (commercial training) or five years (technical training) of relevant work experience. Teachers with no formal teaching qualifications have to complete the post-graduate educational training programme (*Paedagogikum*) in the Danish Institute for Educational Training of Vocational Teachers (DEL).

Following recent policy for Adult Education within the fields of education Reform (2001) and the Government Action Plan for “Better Education” introduced in 2002, individuals who lacks formal qualifications now have a right to have their “real” competences validated.

The first Danish case (DK1) is about accreditation of non-formal and informal learning leading to a tertiary level (Master of education programme), and the second case (DK2) relates to obtaining the certificate in *Paedagogikum*.

The first case is under the responsibility of the Danish University of Education and concerns teachers as well HRD and management personnel, school leaders, and trainers who apply to be admitted to a Master programme without meeting the formal entry requirements. Those requirements are, normally: a bachelor degree, a postgraduate diploma, a Master degree or the completion of a medium-term higher education qualification (e.g. nurse, physiotherapist). Knowledge and experience in the fields of education, competence development and educational planning/ administration are assessed within the context of a specific Master programme (in terms of level and content). Proofs of experience are the basis of an interview during which the coordinator assesses the qualifications of the applicant.

The second case is an example of an integrated learning model. Teachers employed at vocational colleges are appointed on the basis of their formal and non-formal qualifications. The recruitment requirements are: skilled worker (VET) with at least two years (commercial training) or five years (technical training) of work experience; or graduates at tertiary level with at least two years of work experience. A special agreement allows teachers with formal/non-formal teaching skills to be exempted from the programme which are normally compulsory for all teachers employed at the

vocational colleges. Teachers without formal teaching skills have to go through the postgraduate educational training programme within the first years of their employment. These teachers work and function as teachers while they follow the training programme, and the interaction between theory and practice plays an important role in the *Pædagogikum* and the way it is planned. The procedure is developed under the responsibility of DEL and vocational colleges. The teacher has to plan and carry out a teaching session and afterwards be able to reflect on his/her own performance. An assessment (pass/fail) is awarded based on a holistic assessment of the teaching, notes, and discussion with the teacher.

FINLAND

Becoming a teacher in Finland requires the fulfilment of the qualification requirements set in the legislation (Decree on the Degrees in Education and Teacher Training (576/1995). For teachers of common core subjects (such as mathematics and languages) it specifies that it is necessary to have a Master's degree (300 ECTS) comprising studies in one or two subjects that are taught in different schools, together with teachers' pedagogical studies (60 ECTS). The pedagogical studies focus on didactics as well as teaching practice.

Vocational studies teachers should have an appropriate Master's degree or an appropriate polytechnic degree or, if such do not exist, the highest possible qualification in their own occupational field. In addition they must complete pedagogical studies with a scope of 60 ECTS as laid down in the Decree on Vocational Teacher Training 357/2003. Those studies comprise (1) basic studies in pedagogy; (2) studies in vocational education; (3) teaching practice; (4) other studies.

In Finland recruitment is always by so-called open recruitment, i.e. job-specific. For example, in the case of teachers in upper secondary vocational education and training the employer is in most cases the education provider. The municipality advertises the individual posts and the selection is normally done together by the municipal authorities and the school head.

There is no separate procedure for accreditation or recognition of informal and non-formal learning. A Development Plan for Education and Research (1999-2004) had insisted on the importance of increasing the recognition of prior knowledge acquired in working life; and since 2000 there is in place a National plan for Employment stimulating methods and initiatives for assessing and recognising knowledge and know-how acquired earlier in working life, through civic and other

activities. Such recognition and validation, however, concern mainly levels of education other than higher education. All teacher education is given at higher education level: general teacher education at universities, and vocational teacher education at the teacher education colleges in the polytechnics.

Universities and polytechnics enjoy a fairly high degree of autonomy in Finland. Each university pedagogical faculty and vocational teacher education college draws up its own education programmes within the limits of legislation and agreements made with the Ministry of Education.

For the three cases described in this study the recognition of prior learning is embedded in the whole programme of the vocational teachers' pedagogical studies. The Helia case-study (FI3) concerns teacher-trainees already working as teachers at vocational institutes. One aim of the programme is to provide different forms of teacher education (vocational upper secondary, adult education) for teachers who are not only good teachers and professionals in their field, but who will also develop and network their own organisations and region. Another aim is to obtain tools for coping with the changing teacher profession (projects, networking, special needs students, internationalisation, curricular development). The teacher tutor assesses the individual study plan and the demonstrations of competence. The student should demonstrate mature pedagogical thinking and development potential through a portfolio, reflective essays, project reports. Nothing is exempted in this programme: the students admitted to the programme must fulfil a certain set of criteria (vocational degree, professional experience, teaching experience). The programme is more flexible and can be taken in a relatively short time because of its competence-based construction. Both the individual study plan and the plan for demonstration of competence are based on a continuous and active observation and reflection on the student's own learning and knowledge in relation to the objectives and evaluation criteria set for vocational teacher education.

Jyväskylä Polytechnic, a vocational teacher Education College, provides two case-studies. The first (FI1) concerns persons who are already working as teachers but who lack the pedagogical studies required for a formal teacher qualification. The teacher education model requires the person to have a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience and that he/she has completed the basic pedagogical studies in education, adult education or vocational education (see the second Jyväskylä case study, FI2). These studies correspond to about 23 ECTS. The training enables the students to recognise and define their own expertise and their particular learning needs (including lifelong learning objectives). During the process, the student has to follow these 4 steps:

- he/she must understand and reflect (in relation to himself/herself) the objectives, contents and principles of vocational teacher education as well as build a framework for him/herself to demonstrate his/her knowledge/prior learning;
- he/she must analyse his/her own professional skills and knowledge, in order to map out personal learning needs and analyse his/her own orientation;
- he/she must design an individual study plan for demonstrating his/her competence;
- he/she must collect “evaluatory” material into his/her “competence-based” APL Portfolio.

Students do not need to participate in some study modules if they can demonstrate that they have mastered the contents and practical application of that module. Equally, they do not need to produce separate learning assignments within modules; instead, they can demonstrate the knowledge and practical skills in their development project, in their demonstration lessons or in their portfolio.

FRANCE

In France there are two categories of teachers:

- teachers in mainstream education. Their entrance examination is based on academic knowledge in a particular discipline (such as history, mathematics, French, etc.)
- teachers in vocational and technical education. Their entrance examination is based on their professional knowledge and on previous professional experience in the relevant trade (accountancy, hotel management, cabinet-making, etc.). The minimum level of qualification required before taking the vocational and technical education entrance examination is Baccalaureate + 3, although Baccalaureate + 5 is preferred. A University Doctorate is the equivalent of Baccalaureate + 8, and is sufficient for teaching at a university. There is, however, no national regulation governing the status of trainers or other training professionals. Trainer is the generic term for anyone involved in continuing training. Those involved in continuing training in France are far from constituting a uniform body. A large majority of trainers are private contractors, working full- or part-time. They are selected on the basis of their qualifications and/or skills and professional experience in a particular sector.

Apprenticeship, an employment contract intended for young people from 16 to 25 years of age, is a special case. This form of education is under stringent State control, and is provided by Apprentice Training Centres (CFA) and enterprises. Teachers in apprentice training centres are often ex-tradesmen and women, experts in the field they are teaching (baking, engineering), and they may be employed on a contract (full- or part-time) in the Apprentice Training Centre, or they may be self-employed. They must have a certificate of “non-opposition to teaching”, issued by a national apprenticeship inspector.

The principles of recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning have been in place for some 20 years, though they became effective only at the end of the 1990s. Since 2002 those principles have become incorporated into the system of *Validation des acquis de l'expérience* (VAE). The recognition of working and personal experience can be used to exempt the individual from requirements before entering a training course, and to be exempted from some of the assessments of units within a diploma. VAE specifies the particular evaluations used, as a final examination, to obtain some or all of the units of a diploma. It is a global approach to the outcomes of experience which are considered as efficient as formal training to obtain the learning outcomes.

The three cases proposed in this study include two cases of recognition via a professional qualification without certification (one for continuing training counsellors, FR2; the other for internal training in a national enterprise, FR3) and one case of VAE, the aim of which is to achieve the title of apprenticeship trainer (FR1).

Case-study FR2 concerns the recognition of continuing counsellors in GRETA (Ministry of Education continuing training centres). Their recruitment is open to teachers or civil servants already working for the Ministry and for other professionals holding a higher diploma (Bac +3). To be recruited the applicant must create a dossier explaining his/her competences, through work analysis, together with the knowledge of and capacity to translate the link between work and training. The dossier is examined by a jury, composed of 4 or 5 professionals in continuing training in the academy and completed with an interview. Each academy has its own practice but uses the same criteria to select their employee. Selection allows entry to a one-year training with some theory delivered in the training centre, some in enterprise and some through tasks and activities within GRETA itself. At the end of this curriculum, there is an assessment confirming qualification and recruitment.

The second case (FR3) concerns the recognition of workers' experience in the national railway *SNCF* as appropriate to be appointed as trainers in the enterprise training centres. Experience in communication and in the training field are noted and recognised by the human resources team. No proof is required except for guarantees of occupational experience (employers' certificates, wages, contracts). The applicant has to demonstrate his or her capabilities through explanations presented in a dossier and given at interview.

In both cases the standards and content of competences required are defined by an internal process. The process is lighter than in the case of *VAE*. Both cases may result in job appointments and carry qualifications specific to either *GRETA* or *SNCF* which will not be recognised elsewhere.

The third case (FR1) relates to the processes of *VAE* and results in the applicant being awarded a title which is a recognised qualification within the field of apprenticeship centres. The procedure is available also to workers in those centres who have not the theoretical background as workers, having a high academic level but not the pedagogical competencies. The *VAE* procedure requires the help of a tutor to build a dossier and produce the proofs of outcomes from experience which demonstrate competences in understanding of the system, ability to work in partnership, and demonstration of pedagogical skills. Assessment combines portfolio description, proofs of work experience claimed, and observation of practice in action. The jury can decide to award the whole title or some of the units towards that title.

IRELAND

Any person who wishes to teach in any of the schools within secondary level education must meet the criteria laid down by the Department of Education and Science (DES) and be eligible for registration by the Teaching Council. The minimum requirement for a teacher at this level is a first degree in the subject being taught together with a Higher Diploma in Education. All teachers employed in a state-funded institution must be named on the Teachers Register, which is maintained by the Teaching Council under the Teaching Council Act 2001 (registration does not apply to teachers employed in private schools and colleges.)

There are no set criteria for the employment of trainers in Ireland other than the criteria set by a prospective employer. In public sector providers, some broad criteria are 5 years' industrial experience together with relevant technical qualifications and/or relevant instructional qualifications. Instructional qualifications may range from a foundation course to a diploma course

in training and education from a recognised university (or similar qualification of equivalent merit). For trainers in the private sector there are no rules or regulations currently governing their qualification requirements. Each company/organisation employing a person as a trainer will specify their particular requirements as part of the job specification.

Principles for the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning were defined in 1999 by the National Qualification Authority. The Awards Councils -- the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) and the Higher Training and Education Awards Council (HETAC) -- have specific policies to encourage providers exempt learners from programme requirements, to obtain credits towards an award or to qualify for a full award within the Irish framework of qualifications.

The two cases proposed in this study are integrated within national policy and context. The first case (IE1) concerns tutors and senior lecturers who have not completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Third Level Learning and Teaching and who do not have one of the named 'equivalent' qualifications. By completing the required portfolio they can gain exemption from a course or courses normally set as entry requirements to the Diploma in Third Level Learning and Teaching. Through this APL procedure, 13 learning outcomes (theory of learning, design educational, educational technology....) may be evaluated by three assessors (one external and two internal). This award is mainly for Dublin Institute of Technology staff but is becoming popular externally. The award is approved by the National Qualifications Agency (NQA) of Ireland.

The second case (IE2) concerns trainers in Training Organisations. Trainers, in this context, may be individual trainers, sole traders, or trainers in training and educational companies, or in organisations involved in the provision and delivery of training and development programmes. They will not, however, have obtained the required qualifications or its FÁS/EI (Enterprise Ireland) approved equivalent; but they will have at least ten years experience as a trainer. By submitting themselves for assessment of their training competences, by undergoing the Training Competency Assessment procedure, they access recognition via registration as an approved Trainer on the FÁS/EI Training Register. This National Trainers Register contains a list of approved trainers who may be used by organisations seeking grant aid towards training costs. Following application for recognition as an approved trainer, assessors will adjudicate the application. That decision will take into account observation of the applicant conducting a training activity in the field, evaluated against the submitted training plan, and supported by an interview to establish that the candidate has

demonstrated and achieved the required level of trainer competences. Assessment will rate the applicant's competence on each of the 15 aspects of the Trainer Profile (of Competency Standards).

ITALY

Until 1997 the situation in Italy concerning the recognition and validation of competences (in general) was characterised by the absence of any clear approach. From that date many important laws were approved to introduce a system for such recognition. The reform of the education system (law 59/97) and the law relating to the certification of training organisations (196/97: article 17) were important legal steps aimed at identifying a more structured approach to the recognition of competences.

From the year before these statutory measures, and subsequently, various experiments were carried out in the field of training with a view to modifying the structure of training on offer. Isfol developed a catalogue of training unit values based on the idea of competence units linked to credits.

It was clear that the possession of a formal degree alone could not guarantee the "quality" of teachers or trainers. At the same time, the new Italian laws on education and training (e.g. law 53/03 and Ministerial Decree 166/01) developed further an approach based on the recognition, in general, of competences. Several experiments were aimed specifically at designing a potential system which could be applied to the recognition of trainers' and teachers' competences.

The 10 Italian cases proposed and analysed for this study were undertaken in the period 1999-2004 and can be grouped into three main "macro" types of innovation:

- projects aiming to renew the organisation of regional training systems in which the recognition of trainers is one of the most important aims (e.g. IT3, IT4, IT6, IT7). In general these projects followed the two most important reforms in the field of training structures and certification (law 196/97 and Ministerial Decree 166/2001). The projects were conceived as a practical application of these legal innovations, and were intended to develop clear approaches to guarantee the quality of the system. Each project was developed by consortium, which included the training organisations in a region. The design of each project referred to the definition of standards, the content of a portfolio, and the final

assessment. At the end of the projects, applicants received a certification confirming the professional quality required for teachers and trainers in the region.

- projects aimed at identifying a methodology for the formal recognition of the competences of trainers and operators in employment services and agencies (IT1, IT2). In the main these projects were based on the same processes as above, the differences being that in these two projects the consortia were formed from private organisations and crossed regions. The quality references were taken from external organisations at a European level.
- projects aimed at identifying a methodology useful for the award of training credits in University activities (related to training systems) and to create a personalised way of studying. In one case (IT10) work experience could be recognised through the award of up to 40 credits (the total number of credits to obtain the degree standing at 180). In the second case in this category (IT9) the university made the specific award of a “certification of competence”, resulting from analysis of the application submitted and a report on work experience in the field of training.

In the Italian cases, the methodology used for recognition of non-formal and informal learning is based on two steps:

- the identification of competences. The main toolkit used in these projects to identify the competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning is based on the *bilan de compétences* methodology. The “Italian way” of this methodological approach is characterised by the aims to merge both developmental needs and actual competences acquired. This process is a sort of mix between orientation and assessment (or self-assessment) activities.
- the evaluation of identified competences. The process of formal evaluation is connected with the identification of formal structures (e.g. Commissions) and procedures which lend themselves assessment activities.

Overall, these projects made a valuable methodological contribution in developing practical means of implementing the general aims embodied in laws and other formal declarations.

LITHUANIA

The White Book of vocational education will require a VET teacher to possess:

- (a) the subject qualification, awarded by a higher education institution
- (b) at least 3 years of practical work
- (c) a didactical qualification.

Of the 5 Lithuanian practices submitted to this project, the Vytautas Magnus University case-study (LT3) is the one which most closely relates to learning outcomes and a student-centred approach. Developed by Vytautas Magnus University in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University and other EU partners in 1999-2000, the programme has been implemented for VET teachers in Lithuania in from 2002 to 2004. The award of an initial teaching certificate or diploma for VET teachers already in employment is designed as a modular programme of vocational pedagogy. The assessment of learning achievements and acquired competences is portfolio-based (total number of credits: 41.5).

The programme aims to teach VET teachers how to address the main activities involved in teaching and learning. The teaching and learning processes within this programme of pedagogical study and training are themselves based on the practical experience of VET teachers following the programme – most of which will have been gained in non-formal or informal ways.

The programme itself consists of 11 study modules. Each module aims to integrate theory and practice. Theoretical studies are organised in the higher education institution as practical assignments to be carried out by the student-teachers in vocational schools.

The programme tutor and a mentor (overseeing practice) and the student all make comment and evaluation as part of the portfolio process. Cognitive achievements are checked by a test. Test tasks are formulated according to study (learning) outcomes that identify concrete competences. Psychomotor achievements are checked by various practical tasks that are also dependent upon competence. A competence is signed-off only when a student reaches not less than 80% of the required outcomes identifying each required competence.

Being modular the programme is also flexible for the assessment of non-formal and informal learning, providing opportunities to combine the prescribed study modules with learning

experience. Didactical competencies can be acquired in an external way. An applicant (i.e. a person who is ready to prove his/her competences in an external way) proves possession of the competence when he/she passes a theoretical examination/test (of cognitive achievements) and fulfils the practical task (of psychomotor achievements). Possession of the competence is confirmed by a committee, consisting of 3 or more people, including a representative of the institutions for education management and a lecturer for a particular module within the programme. If an applicant receives a positive evaluation, he/she obtains a certificate proving that particular competence. Confirmation of all the required competences leads to the award being confirmed.

SLOVAKIA

Slovak current educational laws and systems do not recognise the difference between VET teachers, lectures and trainers. VET in Further Education and all strategic documents use only the term “VET teachers”. The terms trainer and training are recognised only as a part of management development training programmes mostly for private companies. The new reform of education in Slovakia is an opportunity for the implementation of the Common European Principles and common terminology for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning overall. At present the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, as well as national certification for trainers and teachers, are new concepts which are not yet structured.

The two cases proposed for this study concern, in the first case (SK1), the use of APEL for delivering an Atena certificate in learning and training for VET trainers and personnel consultants, and is considered as a full initial training qualification within these categories. Standards for the programme were defined by the TVU London or ASTD USA and all the processes follow the steps and content used for APEL, through which up to 80% of the Award can be accredited.

The second case (SK2) concerns VET teachers employed in different types of formal education institutions in Slovakia. The IT qualification is a part of full qualification for VET teachers, and is delivered by INFOVEK, an awarding body approved through the Education Coordination Board. To obtain the certificate it is necessary to follow a specific course but work experience, demonstrating IT skills, can be evaluated and can lead to an exemption of up to 50 % of the award. The required sets of skills and knowledge are defined within modules composing the award. Recognition and validation of experience operate through a combination of APL and APEL, of which APEL is the most important (accounting for 80% of exemptions granted). Each trainee is allocated a personal tutor, who helps him/her to complete a personal development plan (PDP) to achieve certification.

UNITED KINGDOM

It is now a requirement that teachers in further education, whether newly-appointed or already in post, obtain a full teaching qualification (a Certificate in Education or a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education, PGCE). The introduction of this mandatory requirement for VET teachers been the single most important policy innovation in the training of VET teachers/trainers legislated in England (2001) and Wales (2002). Training towards a full teaching qualification is provided by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and by other Awarding Bodies for both pre-service and in-service teachers.

VET trainers, on appointment, will hold qualifications appropriate to their own occupational area of work, together with work experience. Such trainers may also either hold or study for a range of nationally-recognised training and development awards. All trainers with responsibility for assessing the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) competences of their trainees must obtain a recognised assessor award. Trainers appointed to publicly funded enterprises included in this broad range of provision may also undertake programmes to achieve a full teaching qualification (Certificate in Education or Post-Graduate Certificate in Teaching).

For both sets of teachers/trainers there operate two distinct forms of recognition of previous experience.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

This recognises formal learning through the achievement of awards previously gained. For the purposes of entry to a programme of either initial or continuing training, certain awards already held by the candidate will be recognised for exemption from a part or from parts of the programme of training applied for.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

This form of recognition credits the teacher/trainer for experience gained through informal and non-formal learning. Though not subject to legislation, such accreditation of learning is widely accepted and practised among providers of initial and continuing training for VET.

The three case-studies for the UK are integrated within the context of APEL. The first case (UK1) concerns the use of APEL for VET teachers and trainers employed in Further Education colleges

and in training enterprises, and leads to a Certificate or Post-Graduate Certificate in Education. In this case-study the procedures are those operated by a Higher Education Institution, the University of Greenwich. To apply for recognition of Experiential (informal/non-formal) learning, the applicant must create a portfolio which:

- demonstrates the capacity to identify experiential learning derived from non-formal and informal contexts
- demonstrates an ability to reflect critically upon learning derived from experience
- provides a mapping of experiential learning to the learning outcomes of the target programme.
- provides evidence of the experience cited (through, for example, letters of confirmation from employers)

Up to 50% of the individual courses (units) composing the award may be exempted.

In the second case (UK2), also relating to the University of Greenwich, APEL is used as a compulsory requirement integrated within a Foundation Degree award (which allows non-graduates to proceed to graduate status). Integration of informal/non-formal learning is integrated within a major assignment which all students on the programme must complete satisfactorily. Up to two further re-submissions of the assignment are permitted following the first submission where it is deemed not to have met the prescribed learning outcomes.

The third case (UK3) concerns a different target group: managers of training in the workplace, commerce, industry, and the public, private and voluntary sectors. Accreditation (APEL) in this case is integrated within the National Vocational Qualification (level four) for training managers. The process is controlled through a non-university Awarding Body (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, CIPD). Experiential learning, and the evidence to support that learning, are judged against current (two years) experience, and all competences identified by the national standards for each unit within the award are assessed on-the-job.

APPENDIX B: Summary of project case-studies

	<i>Case study</i>	<i>Brief description of case-study</i>	<i>Target Group</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
BELGIUM	BE 1	GPB training programme (Flemish Community).	Unqualified, intending or serving teachers/trainers within further education colleges and enterprises. Open to graduates, holders of craft/trade qualifications, and those without prior formal qualification.	Award of GPB (<i>Getuigschrift Pedagogische Bekwaamheid</i>): Certificate of Vocational Competence having same value as university-based training programme.
	BE 2	Initial training programme for VET teachers (Flemish Community).	Entrants to 18 Higher Education Institutions delivering programmes of initial training for vocational education teachers and basic education teachers	Exemption from parts of study leading to teaching diploma.
	*BE 3	Recognition of vocational competences	All adults (18 and over), employed or job-seeking. Not specifically applicable to serving or intending VET teachers and trainers.	Award of a specified vocational certificate. Award <u>may</u> be step in process towards becoming vocational teacher/trainer.
DENMARK	DK 1	Master of Education degrees at the Danish University of Education.	Serving teachers and trainers with Bachelor or Master degree, or medium-term tertiary education, or diploma <u>and</u> minimum of 2 years work experience.	Selection for Master of Education programmes with exemption from pre-requisite entry requirements.
	DK 2	The <i>Paedagogikum</i> model of vocational teacher training, Danish Institute for Educational Training of Vocational Teachers.	In-service teachers, without teaching qualifications, employed in vocational schools.	Completion of post-graduate training programme.
FINLAND	FI 1	Certificate/Diploma competence-based teacher education model (Jyväskylä vocational teacher education college).	Teachers without formal teacher qualifications but with a minimum of 5 years teaching experience who have completed basic pedagogical studies in vocational education.	Identification of prior experience in order to personalise the training programme and to achieve up to 57% of the teaching qualifications through assessment of informal/non-formal learning.
	FI 2	Basic vocational teacher studies leading to Certificate/Diploma (Jyväskylä vocational teacher education college).	Teachers without formal teaching qualifications.	Assessment of informal/non-formal learning as part of selection process <u>and</u> up to 10% of award achieved through accreditation of informal/non-formal learning.
	FI 3	Competence-based model of vocational teacher training (Helia vocational teacher education college).	Teacher trainees working as teachers in vocational institutions.	Demonstration of teaching competences integrated with informal/non-formal learning: flexible completion time.
FRANCE	FR 1	National vocational	VET teacher/trainers working in	Recognition as trainer in

		certification (Level III) for trainers.	apprenticeship centres.	apprenticeship centres; award made in whole or in part through validation of experiential learning (VAE: <i>Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience</i>).
	FR 2	Recognition as vocational training Counsellor.	Training counsellors in Ministry of Education Training Centre for Continuing Education.	Appointment and confirmation in post as Counsellors in Continuing Training (CFC: <i>Conseillers en Formation Continue</i>).
	FR 3	Selection as trainer within <i>SNCF</i> (<i>Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer</i>).	Workers in enterprise whose job involves some training element.	Selection and appointment as: 1.occasional trainer. 2.full-time trainer 3.specialist consultant.
IRELAND	IE 1	Access to Postgraduate qualification in Learning and Teaching (Level 3).	VET teachers and lecturers employed in Further and Higher Education institutions.	1.Level of entry to programme (Certificate /Diploma/MA). 2.Exemption from course(s) normally required as entry requirements.
	IE 2	Registration as trainer on National Register of Trainers.	Private trainers and trainers within professional training organisations, companies, educational establishments.	Approval for national registration.
ITALY	IT 1	Italian Association of Trainers (<i>AIF</i>) quality system to confirm practitioners' professional status.	For specific groups of vocational trainers in enterprises: 1.Teacher/trainer 2.Project Manager 3.Training Designer 4.Training Manager	Recognition within Italian Association of Trainers (<i>AIF</i>) and certification valid for 5 years in specific role.
	*IT 2	Project Europaform (1999-2001), a consortium of private organisations.	Public and private sector workers in employment services and agencies.	Identification of personal competences to further personal and professional development.
	IT 3	Project Formez (2001-02); a private Centre for Training.	Personnel employed in Training Centres within the Molise region aimed at requalification of professional trainers.	Certification of competences recognised in Molise region.
	IT 4	Project Icaro (1998-99), a consortium of training organisations, Emilia-Romagna region.	Trainers, counsellors and others employed within training organisations.	Certification integrated within a quality process of professional recognition for Emilia-Romagna region.
	IT 5	University of Rome, Faculty of Training Sciences: recognition of Students' experience in training activities.	Students following degree programme with Faculty of Training Sciences, University of Rome.	Award of University credit points (to a maximum of 39) towards degree (180 credit points).
	IT 6	Certification of training (2001-02) via requalification and upgrading, Sardegna region.	Personnel employed in varying training roles within training organisations.	Certification of competences integrated within a quality process of professional recognition for the Sardegna region.
	IT 7	Project SFIDE (2002-04) to recognise and	Training operators with varying roles employed within training organisations.	Certification to upgrade competences and requalify for training role, achieved via

		endorse professional roles of trainers, Emilia – Romagna region.		exemption from up to 25% of the training credits required.
	IT 8	Advanced training for training managers (2002-04), Turin University.	Managers in training organisations and employment services.	Assessment and certification of competences towards Master's degree (for graduate entrants) or award of 30 university credits (for non-graduates).
	IT 9	AT1 Veneto (2002-04) project, to develop specific training competences integrated with 'on-the-job' experiences.	Training operators within training organisations.	Certification of competences acquired by trainers and professional recognition within Veneto region.
	IT 10	Advanced training for training managers (2002-03), Venice University.	Managers in training organisations and employment services.	Certification of specific competences acquired and award of 40 ETCS credit points (European Transfer Credit System).
LITHUANIA	* LT 1	Research into relationship between formal qualifications and teaching competence among VET teachers	VET teachers.	Profile of VET teachers' competences.
	*LT 2	Development of professional standards for VET teachers and trainers.	VET teachers and trainers up to university level.	Framework of competences to define <u>minimum</u> teaching qualification for vocational teachers.
	LT 3	Modular programme for initial training of VET teachers, Vyntantas Magnus University, (2002-04).	In-service VET teachers	Award of teaching certificate or diploma.
	LT 4	Mentor training programme to support teacher trainees.	Mentors working with VET trainee teachers in schools.	Development of mentor expertise – particularly in assisting VET teachers to prepare their competence-based portfolios.
	*LT 5	Leonardo da Vinci programme to facilitate access to lifelong learning	Employees and job-seekers requiring recognition of competences gained through work.	Interim results only of the project available at this stage.

		through development of procedures to recognise informal and non-formal learning.		
SLOVAKIA	SK 1	Atena Centre (Society for non-formal education) providing full initial qualification for VET teachers and trainers.	VET teachers and VET trainers employed in training centres and enterprises.	Award of Certificate in Learning, Training and Personnel Development, with variable exemption achieved through recognition of informal and non-formal learning.
	SK 2	Infovek Accreditation of IT skills for VET teachers.	VET teachers employed mainly in primary and secondary schools.	Award of Certification in IT skills, recognised as part-completion of full initial qualification for VET teachers.
UNITED KINGDOM	UK 1	Post-Graduate Certificate in Education/Certificate in Education: full initial teaching qualification, University of Greenwich.	Graduate and non-graduate VET teachers/trainers employed in Further Education Colleges and in training enterprises.	Exemption from part or parts of the programme leading to the award.
	UK 2	Foundation Degree in Education and Training: a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) award.	Non-graduate VET teachers/trainers holding a full initial teaching qualification (Certificate in Education) and employed in Further Education Colleges and training enterprises.	Completion of unit of study based on experiential learning integrated within programme for the award.
	UK 3	Non-university Awarding Body recognition of experiential learning.	Training managers working within industrial, commercial, and, voluntary enterprises in the private and public sectors.	Level Four (National Vocational Qualifications) award in Learning and Development, recognised in the UK as a vocational award for training managers.

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