

6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

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Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

The aim of the part-project "Expansion of the Initiatives in the Area of Lifelong Learning" of the first implementation phase of the Regional Development Concept (REK I), that was supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) was the awareness raising of adults in the German-speaking Community (DG) to lifelong learning. Over and above that, access to education information has been improved, above all by professional development guidance. Here people interested in professional development receive comprehensive information, guidance and advice on their professional development plans. The guidance provision also includes skills analyses. Parallel to this, information platforms such as the Professional Development portal (Weiterbildungsportal) with the Professional Development database on the internet and the Professional Development Manual have been (further) developed. For awareness raising, among other things the "Sommernacht der Sprachen" (summer night of languages) was started.

Against the background of demographic change, extended working life and with a view to the emerging shortage of specialised labour, it is the job of the European Union (EU) to promote lifelong learning even more strongly by emphasising throughout Europe the "non-formally" and "informally" acquired skills of the citizens more strongly by the introduction of "validation systems".

The main target audience for validation are people who have no to low qualifications but already possess many skills and capabilities from experience; people who would like to change professions and new arrivals whose foreign diploma has not been recognised in Belgium.

In the project development, care is taken that people with a disability also gain access to the system. All citizens of the German-speaking Community are to have paths and prospects flagged up to them that enable them to have their non-formally and informally acquired skills to be recognised.

In addition, care is taken in the project development that, irrespective of the validation system to be created, the classical school system retains its high importance.

Learning results that have been acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts can be used by means of validation. For this the government of the German-speaking Community will set up a central validation point within five years of the law coming into force. Then the functioning and procedure of the validation is still to be laid down.

Information and guidance

For anyone who cannot see the wood for the trees among the provision, the professional development service in the DG Ministry represents the ideal place to start. Free of charge and without preference to certain providers, the advisor first determines the actual aim jointly with the person seeking advice before he/she is shown the different educational paths to it. At the centre of the advice, which can be found online, is the customer with the abilities and knowledge he/she already had.

Quality assurance

There are no specific quality assurance measures for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in the German-speaking Community.