

2.7 Skills recognition

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Policy framework

According to the [Act on Volunteering](#) (OG 58/07, 22/13), upon the request of volunteer, the volunteer organizer is obliged to issue a Certificate of Competences Acquired through Volunteering if it is a long-term volunteering. The Competent Body ([MLPSFSP](#)), in consultation with the [National Committee for the Development of Volunteerism](#), adopts framework criteria for the recognition of competences, skills and experience gained through volunteering, whereby it defines the framework content of the Certificate of Competences gained through volunteering. The framework criteria and the framework content of the certificate are published on the website of the competent authority of the [Ministry of Labour, Pension system, Family and Social Policy](#). For the sake of easier understanding and filling, a [Guide for Filling in the Certificate of Competences Acquired through Volunteering](#), including an example of a completed Certificate, has been prepared.

[Croatian Qualification Framework Act](#) (NN 22/13, 41/16, 64/18) defines the objectives of the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CQF), among which is mentioned building of a system of recognition and evaluation of informal and informal learning. However, a rulebook has not been produced yet to regulate the area of ??recognition and evaluation of informal knowledge and skills as an integral part of the CQF (Balkovi?, 2016). Additionally, CQF does not have most of the bodies to deal with the approval of certain elements of occupation and qualifications - sectoral councils, detailed descriptions of occupations and qualifications (standards) and complete implementation instructions and formal rules that would make this system useful to qualification system users and other stakeholders and fully applicable (Balkovic, 2016). Part of the system of qualifications that has not yet been conceived and for which the legal basis does not exist is the one that supports the recognition and evaluation of informal learning (Balkovi?, 2016).

Existing arrangements

Although there is a possibility of obtaining a Certificate of Competences Acquired through Volunteering that organisers of volunteering issue to volunteer after long-term volunteering, there is currently no ordinance to regulate the area of recognition and evaluation of the outcomes of informal and informal learning, so that in reality there are no standardized mechanisms for recognition and evaluation of volunteer work, especially youth work.

Recognition and evaluation of volunteering of pupils and students is realized through a volunteer booklet as a form of volunteering certificate describing the name of the volunteer organizer, the number of volunteer hours and volunteering time and the type of specific activities. It is filled by the volunteer organizer, who is obliged to issue a certificate to the volunteer at the end of volunteering, and it is therefore certified by his/her stamp. The booklet may also include education related to the volunteer's education.

Higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia issue a diploma supplement in Croatian and English at the end of Bologna studies for all students free of charge. Further studies, scholarships and acknowledgments, as well as the extra-curricular activities of the student may be included in the diploma supplement. Extracurricular activities are those which contain the category that include volunteering activities. In addition to explaining the effects of student's work on qualification, this whole part allows a higher education institution to recognize additional work and success of a student during a study. If information is added herein that are not an integral part of the study program (e.g. student cooperative's work, student's presentation, awards or a success in a study not issued by a qualifying higher education institution), the higher education institution is obliged to provide all students with equal information for this part ([Diploma Supplement: Instructions, Regulations and Examples, 2008](#)).

The practice of enrolling extracurricular activities in the diploma supplement is only just starting at the Croatian higher education institutions, and it is not yet implemented both systematically or equally (Kotlar and ?ulum, 2014). In other words, universities are left to independently evaluate the volunteer work of students in the sense of awarding ECTS credits - there is no developed unique system for evaluating students both between universities and between components within a particular university.

It should be noted that the diploma supplement issued under the Croatian higher education system does not bear the designation of Europass, which is the only difference between the Croatian version of the document and the original which was developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO ([Europass](#)) as part of the Europass initiative.

Since 2010, each year a competition is being announced and a rector's award for a volunteer of the year is awarded at the universities in Croatia.

Youthpass as a tool of the European Commission to plan, monitor, evaluate and recognize non-formal learning outcomes in projects co-financed under the Erasmus+ program, placing policies into practice and vice versa.