



Plateforme européenne de la société civile pour l'éducation tout au long de la vie
European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL)

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING KEY TO TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT

Last week the European Commission published its proposal for a Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning – which will be decided on by the European Council in November. EUCIS-LLL welcomes the political will to involve civil society in the design and implementation of these validation systems.

The validation of non-formal and informal learning is a concrete instrument to tackle rising unemployment and achieve a better match between jobs and skills by acknowledging those acquired outside of the formal education system. It also gives opportunities for second chances, improves access to education, fosters social inclusion as well as enhances motivation to learn. EUCIS-LLL welcomes for that matter a specific mention to disadvantaged groups in the proposal.

EUCIS-LLL supports the proposal of the Commission in setting up a concrete timeline (up to 2015) for the implementation of national validation systems. Yet progress in this area remains slow: *“The Commission’s Recommendation identifies only 4 Member States currently have a legally anchored validation system and only 7 have started to implement some or have partial ones. There is still a long way to go,”* said Gina Ebner, President of EUCIS-LLL. However, non-formal education shall be valued for its intrinsic value and the implementation of systems should not lead to its formalisation.

By choosing the form of a recommendation, one of the most powerful soft-law measures for peer pressure on Member States, the European Commission shows a strong commitment as the recommendation targets both the Commission itself and the Member States and specifically involves stakeholders (among which civil society) in the development of validation systems.

Valuing grassroots initiatives from civil society is indeed one of the key elements to ensure the sustainability of validation systems with the increase of mutual trust between actors and a better use of existing tools. At European level, Michel Feutrie, former Secretary General of EUCIS-LLL, is a member of the EQF (European Qualifications Framework) advisory group, the main body overseeing the actions proposed under this recommendation.

By focusing on flexible pathways and learning outcomes, validation is a significant step towards more comprehensive and coherent national lifelong and life wide learning strategies. A partnership approach between stakeholders is essential to make validation a reality in all member states.

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For further information:

- [Proposal of the European Commission](#) for a Council Recommendation on Validation of non-formal and informal learning (Brussels, 5 September 2012, COM (2012) 485 final)
- EUCIS-LLL [General Report](#) of the Seminar “Recognition and validation of learning in Europe: from rhetoric to reality” (12 December 2011, Brussels)
- EUCIS-LLL key demands for the future Commission’s recommendation in its first [LLL Magazine](#) (June 2012) on validation practices across Europe

Note to the editor:

The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL) gathers 31 European networks working in education and training. Together, they cover all sectors of education and training including networks for secondary and higher education, vocational education and training, adult education and popular education; networks for students, school heads, parents, HRD professionals, teachers and trainers.

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