



Annual National Review (ANaR) on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNF-IFL)

on the national context

ANaR Report Year 3 – 2010

Country: Norway

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Updated comments for 2010 in blue

I. The general situation regarding VNF-IFL

Points to consider	Norway
<p>1. National strategy: is there one? What is in place re the VNF-IFL, at which level? If not, are there regional, local or institutional strategies?</p> <p><i>Any reference or URL links to official documents, Websites?</i></p>	<p>1.1 The Competence Reform</p> <p>Validation and valuation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes has been on the Norwegian adult learning policy agenda since 1999 as a part of the national life long learning strategy The Competence Reform. The Competence Reform was a result of the national wage negotiations between the state and the social partners and was based on acknowledgment of the fact that a well-educated population is the most important resource a country can have for the creation of new jobs, ensuring quality of life and preventing new class distinctions. The main objective of the reform has been to help meet the needs of individuals, society and the workplace in terms of skills and knowledge and give adult opportunities to acquire education and training to improve their qualifications.</p> <p>The main elements of the reform were :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give all adults a statutory right to primary and secondary education, and to give an obligation on educational providers to design the training offered in accordance with the needs of adults • To ensure the right for individual employees to obtain study leave of absence for further education and training • To provide state grants and scholarship for adults on equal terms with younger students • To establish a system for validation and formal recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes for people with low education • To acknowledge the workplace as an important learning arena and a place for innovation <p>1.2 The Validation Project</p> <p>According to the Plan of Action for the Competence Reform, one of its principal objectives was to establish a national system for documenting and validating informal and non-formal learning outcomes. This includes learning attained through paid and unpaid work, organisational involvement, and organised training.</p> <p>In order to accomplish this, the national Validation Project was formed in 1999. The priority areas for development in the project were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in the workplace

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in the third sector • Development of methods and tools for assessment and formal recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes, in respect of upper secondary education • Development of arrangements of admission to universities and colleges for students who lack formal qualifications • Adjustments and possible amendments of existing laws, regulations and agreements on the basis of experiences drawn from the project <p>The Ministry of Education and Research had the overall responsibility for the project. Vox, the Norwegian Institute for Adult learning, had the operational and professional responsibility in cooperation with the project board composed of members from the social partners, the educational system and the civil society.</p> <p>50 local development projects were funded by the national validation project. Different methods and tools for validation of non-formal and informal learning were developed in three sectors; educational, working life and third sector. Based on qualitative and quantitative data from these development projects and other surveys a new legalisation framework related to the individual rights for validation and accreditation in respect to upper secondary and higher education was set.</p> <p>1.3 Further strategy</p> <p>On policy level validation is included in the further strategy for LLL, this is described in the report “strategy for Lifelong Learning in Norway” : http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/KD/LifeLongLearningNY.pdf</p>
<p>2. main responsibility for VNF-IFL, regulations, monitoring and evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has the main responsibility for VNF-IFL? Which ministry (ies), which institution (s), organisation or body (ies)? Who gives the main impetus and direction? • Who regulates, monitors and assesses practices and pilots new initiatives? • Or are they local, regional, 	<p>2.1 Validation in Higher education sector</p> <p>2.1.1 Background and legal framework</p> <p>Until 2001 there was a demand for formal entrance qualification to get admittance to higher education. For adults with relevant prior learning but not sufficient formal education this was an obstacle for getting formal qualifications on higher education level.</p> <p>In 1999 and 2000 16 university colleges and one University had a piloting of admitting students on the basis of assessed non-formal and informal learning outcomes. The evaluation of the projects influenced to a change in the legalisation for Universities and University colleges.</p>

sectoral, institutional initiatives?	<p>Following an amendment to the 2001 Act relating to universities and university colleges, adults aged 25 and over can have their non-formal and informal learning assessed in order to gain admittance to a specific study programme. The Act also allows for candidates to be exempted from exams or courses on the basis of their non-formal and informal learning outcomes.</p> <p>2.1.2 Technical arrangements, responsibilities</p> <p>In higher education, applications for admission based on non-formal and informal learning outcomes are assessed by the individual university or university college. The qualifications of applicants have to be assessed in relation to the subjects or the programmes they wish to study. Each institution has the power to assess what kind of knowledge and skills they consider to be necessary and decide on the appropriate course of action for carrying out this assessment.</p> <p>The application form is sent to the current university or university college. It is the committee at each university/college who decides whether the applicant's documented prior learning fulfils the course entrance requirements. Applicants seeking admission on the basis of their non-formal and informal learning outcomes are ranked in relation to applicants with general admission requirements on the basis of a rough appraisal; it is not possible to have the study points calculated since the learning outcomes described is seldom graded.</p> <p>2.2 Validation in upper secondary education</p> <p>2.2.1 Purpose</p> <p>The purposes of recognising non-formal and informal learning outcomes in upper secondary education are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- to match the learning to formal qualifications set in the national curricula and shorten the study period- to give possibilities for a more streamlined and tailor-made study programme for each individual- to provide the individual with an accredited certificate or diploma (Proof of Competence) to gain promotion or career improvement, find a new job or increase mobility in the working life. <p>2.2.2 Laws and regulations</p> <p>During the development of the national system for validation and as a result of the implementation there have been changes in the legalisation leading to individual rights for adults.</p> <p><u>Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act)</u></p> <p>The Education Act No. 61 of 17 July 1998 with later amendments covers both primary and secondary education. Chapter 4A concerns education and training organised especially for adults. Adults who need primary and lower secondary education</p>
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have a statutory right to such education from August 2002. This education must be adapted to the individual's needs and life situation, such as when and where the education is to be provided and the rate of progression. The municipal authorities are responsible for providing this education.

Section 4A-3. The right to upper secondary education for adults

- Adults who have completed primary and lower secondary education or the equivalent but who have not completed upper secondary education have the right to take upper secondary education. [This applies to all adults above the age of 25.](#) Education for adults shall be adapted to individual needs. This right may, among other ways, be met by means of distance education facilities. The Ministry may issue further regulations concerning issues such as the question of who shall be entitled to this right, admissions, ranking and preferential rights.
- Adults admitted to upper secondary education have the right to complete the full course. This applies even if they do not have the right to upper secondary education pursuant to the first paragraph.
- In the case of subjects where the syllabus requires a period of instruction longer than three years, adults admitted to upper secondary education have the right to education in accordance with the period of instruction laid down in the subject syllabus.
- No charge shall be made for tuition. The county authority may require adults attending upper secondary education to pay for the teaching materials and equipment normally required for their own use in connection with the course. The county authority may require payment to cover the cost of copying such materials. The Ministry of Education and Research may issue further regulations.

Section 3-5. Trade and journeyman's examinations without apprenticeship or schooling.

It is possible to sit a trade or journeyman's examination on the basis of sufficiently broad working experience of a trade of duration 25 per cent longer than the stipulated apprenticeship period. The County authority as represented by the county vocational training board decides whether the working experience stated by the applicant can be approved, and may in special cases approve periods of experience shorter than indicated above.

2.2.3 Technical arrangements, responsibilities

The Norwegian parliament (the Storting) and the Government define the goals and decide the budgetary frameworks for education. The Ministry of Education and Research is Norway's highest public administrative agency for educational matters, and is responsible for implementing national educational policy. A common standard is ensured through legislation and through national curricula. The national curricula at upper secondary level are developed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training in close cooperation with the social partners. The Directorate is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research. In this capacity the Directorate has the overall responsibility for supervising education and the governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations.

	<p>In recent years considerable responsibility and decision-making authority has been delegated from the central government to county authorities. County authorities have responsibility for upper secondary education, including vocational education and training.</p> <p>As a part of the national Validation Project, every county authority received funding for building up an organisation of a validation and formal recognition system. Most regional authorities organise this work by means of one or more “assessment centres”. Adults can acquire information, guidance and help with the validation process in relation to upper secondary education from supervisors at these centres. The centres are also responsible for quality assurance of the assessment procedure.</p>
<p>3. Sectors: where, which sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does VNF-IFL apply to all educational sectors? Or to specific ones (vocational education & training, Further Educ. Colleges, universities, adult education etc....) • Or/ and does it apply to other sectors: 3rd sector, private sector <p><i>Name some examples or references to examples (websites, documents etc....?)</i></p>	<p>3.1 Education system</p> <p>Validation at upper secondary level (incl VET) and HE is regulated by law as an individual legal right. Please see more at 2.2.1 and 2.2.2</p> <p>3.2 Stakeholder cooperation</p> <p>Tripartite involvement in policy-making on lifelong learning in Norway has been important for the success of many of the different actions in the Competence Reform and the follow up of this reform. The validation system in Norway is grounded in a framework of legal rights achieved on the basis of tripartite cooperation between the state, social partners and other stakeholders in the field of adult education. This is a strength of the Norwegian policy process and this provides a good platform for the further progress and the continued development of the validation system.</p> <p>The national Validation Project had central steered bottom up approach, the overall responsibility lied with the Ministry of Education and Research and all the stakeholders were involved in the board and in the development projects. This formed a shared responsibility and a common ownership to the results of the project. The mandate of the national Validation Project (Realkompetanseprosjektet) was first geared towards the validation of non-formal and informal learning for persons wanting to enter the education system. The social partners moved to extend the mandate to the development of validation tools for working life as well. Nine experimental projects targeting the labour market or working life were carried out during 1999-2002. The projects were carried out by the social partners in different sectors, study associations and county administrations which cooperated with enterprises. Some projects were directed at specific sectors or industries, other projects were focused on a geographical area.</p> <p>The Basic Agreement is an agreement between the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO) including all its national and local associations and individual enterprises, and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)</p>

including all its unions and associations (divisions). The Basic Agreement for 2006 - 2009 Chapter VI on Development of competence has a new part, § 16-4 Documentation of formal, non-formal and informal competence: "The enterprise is requested to have a system for documentation of the individual employees' experience, courses and practice related to the conditions of work."

The new Basic Agreement 2010-2013 continues this focus, stating in § 16-4 Documentation of actual qualifications: "It is important that the enterprise has a system for documenting the individual's experience, courses and practice related to the employment relationship."

Example 3rd sector: The PCD tool- Personal Competence Document¹

The Personal Competence Document (PCD) is a system for mapping and documenting competencies based on self-evaluation. Development of the PCD was the result of the national validation project. The Norwegian Association for Adult Education (NAAL) has the overall responsibility for maintaining the PCD. NAAL is a national umbrella organisation for 19 study associations with around 600 000 participants per year.

The PCD is accessible on the NAAL web site. NAAL offer presentations, information and guidance regarding the PCD to organisations and institutions.

3.3 Cooperation between sectors

There is a general cooperation between the labour market (NAV) and different educational institutions on the local level in Norway, but there are some challenges linked to 'who is responsible for what'- so finding solutions is mainly left to individuals alone. One of the main challenges is connected to responsibility for career guidance. A barrier to efforts of cooperation seems to be that the aims of the different political fields are quite distinctive. For the labour market, the goal is to get applicants into ordinary jobs as quickly as possible, while the goals for the educational institutions is to ensure increases in the level of competencies.²

Unemployed persons with a right to complete upper secondary education can have an assessment of their non-formal and informal learning paid for by the employment office as part of an approved jobseekers' agreement. To work effectively, this requires close cooperation and coordination between the public education system and the employment service at county level.

¹ www.vofo.no

² ECON (2005): *Skjæringsfeltet mellom arbeidsmarkeds-og utdanningspolitikk i 6 utvalgte land*. Oslo: ECON.

	<p>For adults with work experience seeking employment (including the long term unemployed, immigrants and physically challenged), it is important that validation of their non-formal and informal learning is a part of the Labour Market Services work to further qualify them for employment through individual plans and adapted vocational courses from the Services and the county.</p> <p>A pilot project on “Increased use of assessment of non-formal and informal competence for persons seeking employment” was set up in three counties for the period 2005-2008. The Ministry of Education (through Vox) cooperated with the Ministry of Labour (through the Labour and Welfare Directorate) in the project.</p> <p>The pilot project aimed to improve services in the interface between labour market policy and education policy. The main objectives were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Attain/gain joint expectations and better routines for cooperation between the services (ii) Increase use of validation of non-formal and informal competence for persons seeking employment, to make more purposeful/focused qualifying and job seeking in all counties. <p>The project was completed in November 2008, and a project report was published. It concludes that routines for co-operation between the services have been established and also the use of common electronic tools which eases the transfer of information. The tool “Vigo Voksen” is used and accessed both by the education centre/institution performing the validation and the local Labour and Welfare Administration office when they co-operate to tailor provision for the individual candidate.</p> <p>Other results:</p> <p>An agreement on co-operation has been set up between KS, representing the education authorities in the counties, and the Ministry of Labour, as the owner of the Labour and Welfare Administration.</p> <p>Information for prospective candidates has been improved.</p> <p>Knowledge about the rights and opportunities of validation of prior learning has increased among local Labour and Welfare Administration staff.</p> <p>Another arena where differences between sectors persist is how prior learning is valued in working life and how it is valued in the education systems. Companies are primarily interested in recording what the individual can actually accomplish in relation to the strategies and tasks in the company, while the point of departure for education providers is to map the lack of competencies compared with a given curriculum.</p>
<p>4. Terminology: Is there a common definition of VNF-IFL, or are there specific terms used by different institutions implementing VNF-IFL? What would be the best way to translate it / them</p>	<p>The Norwegian term for ‘Recognition of non-formal and informal learning’ translates as “dokumentasjon og verdsetting av realkompetanse”. The term translated to English is “documentation and validation of formal, non-formal and informal competence”.</p> <p>The Norwegian concept of “realkompetanse” refers to all formal, non-formal and informal learning acquired. In practice, this means the sum of all the overall skills and knowledge individuals have acquired through the education system, paid and</p>

into English?	<p>unpaid work, organisational activities, family life and life in society.</p> <p>The Norwegian approach has been built on the idea that the documentation and validation methods must have value for users in different areas: of participation in working life/ carrying on a profession or trade, participation in the education system (admission and shortening of education) and participation in voluntary activities.</p>
<p>5. National Qualification Framework: How do VNF-IFL practices or initiatives relate to NQF in place or in construction, if they do? If not, why not? <i>Brief description of the NQF (diagram etc)? Reference to docs or website?</i></p>	<p>There <i>has been</i> much discussion in Norway about developing a national qualifications framework. A framework of qualifications may provide an important link between standardization in assessment arrangements and procedures of quality assurance enhancing legitimacy to the formal recognition system. Generally, it is also believed that the implementation of learning outcome oriented curricula can make it easier to recognize non-formal and informal learning. <i>In Norway, however, curricula working on a learning outcome basis have already been well-established in the formal school system for many years.</i></p> <p><i>The Ministry of Education and Research has launched a project to establish a National Qualifications Framework. This will be based on the education system but will also open up to other learning pathways.</i></p> <p><i>A working group was established in 2005, with a remit to develop a proposal for a national qualifications framework for Higher Education (HE). The working group presented its report in 2007 and a consultation process followed. A new overarching project group with several sub-groups has now been established to take forward the proposal for the full framework. Along with other national stakeholders, Vox is represented in the reference group of the project and is therefore able to present the perspective of what might be needed from the framework to support the delivery of validation.</i></p> <p><i>The aim of the project is to finish the planned full framework for all levels of qualifications in 2011, in consultation with national stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>The description, progress and results of the project can be found on the webpage of the Ministry of Education and Research (only in Norwegian).³</i></p>

³ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kd/tema/Livslang-laring/Nasjonalt-kvalifikasjonsrammeverk.html?id=601327>

II. Impact of Validation

<p>6. Impact on individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact has VNF-IFL had on individuals? On whom, in your opinion, has it had the most impact: Validation candidates/ learners, practitioners, teachers/ academics/ tutors/facilitators in adult education, careers advisers, human resource managers...any more? • In what way has it had an impact: • in the actors/ stakeholders' attitudes, practices and methodologies, interaction with each others, understanding of different types of learning, better understanding of adult learners' needs, assessment practices, etc...? • Do you have evidence whether it is felt as a positive, negative, problematic impact? 	<p>6. 1 Impact on individuals;</p> <p>Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals:</p> <p>The evaluation of the national Validation Project (Realkompetanseprosjektet) included two surveys to candidates who had their non-formal and informal learning validated in relation to upper secondary education by assessment centres in counties.⁴ Around 80 % of these were validated in relation to vocational upper secondary education, including trade certificates. Around 80 % of the candidates were women. In the 2002 survey, candidates were asked if they had been granted exemption from courses because of their validated competence. Almost 2/3 of the candidates (62 %) had been granted exemption, with exemption from one or more subject courses (41 %) and with exemption from part of a subject course or courses (21 %) in upper secondary education because of their validated non-formal and informal learning.</p> <p>A central topic covered by the Vox Mirror⁵ is the use of assessment and accreditation of prior learning (APL) among adults who want to participate in upper secondary education. The figures show that accreditation of prior learning can lead to a 60 per cent shortening of the training period.</p> <p>A national survey carried out by NIFU STEP shows that in the period 2001-2004 all universities and university colleges, public and private, received 123 applications for exemption from examinations based on documented non-formal and informal learning.⁶ Before the legal revision, representatives of higher education expressed in public committees and media some scepticism about granting exemption from examinations on this basis. However, it turned out that the majority (72 %) of the applicants were granted exemption from examinations, slightly more in university colleges (74 %) than in universities (65 %), in the four-year period. One barrier for exemption from</p>
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⁴ Agenda (2003a): Evaluering av Realkompetanseprosjektet. Sluttrapport. Sandvika: Agenda Utredning & Utvikling AS (p. 15).

⁵ <http://www.vox.no/templates/CommonPage.aspx?id=3021>

⁶ Brandt, Ellen (2005): *Avkorting av studier på grunnlag av realkompetanse*. Oslo: NIFU STEP. Skriftserie 5/2005.

<p><i>Some evidence/ reference to examples of this impact?</i></p>	<p>practice periods is national framework regulations for some professional studies. These regulations require supervised practice periods with reports during university college studies for teachers, social workers, nurses and other health professionals. As a consequence, most university colleges refuse exemption from practice periods in these studies to students that have earlier relevant – but not supervised – work experience or care experience.</p> <p>Update from the Vox Mirror 2009: “A total of 41 per cent of the participants in upper secondary education and training in 2008 had undergone validation of non-formal and informal learning. This proportion has remained unchanged from 2007. While only one quarter of the participants who aborted their education and training had undergone such validation, this applied to nearly 60 per cent of the participants who passed their final qualification in 2008. The extent to which adults undergo validation of non formal and informal learning varies with the different courses of study involved.</p> <p>Most of the adults who have undergone validation of non formal and informal learning are found in health and social studies (57 per cent). Validation appears to have a positive effect on the completion rate and the acquisition of a final qualification in these subject areas. Among those who obtained a final qualification in health and social studies a full 70 per cent had undergone validation of their non-formal and informal learning”.⁷</p> <p>6.2 Providing flexible personalised learning pathways</p> <p>The modular structure of upper secondary education makes it easier to adapt the education to the needs of adults with validated non-formal and informal learning.</p> <p>Vox did a survey of adults registered for examinations in upper secondary education courses in spring 2003; around</p>
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⁷ Vox (2010): Vox Mirror 2009.

⁸ Engesbak, H. & Stubbe, T.A. (2004): *I videregående som voksen*. Oslo: Vox. Rapport 4 i Kunnskapsgrunnlaget

⁹ (ibid)

¹⁰ Helland, H. (2005): *Realkompetansesstudenters bortvalg og studiepoengproduksjon*. Oslo: NIFU STEP. Rapport 6/2005 (p. 31).

¹¹ Brandt, Ellen (2002): *Høgskolenes erfaringer med realkompetansesstudenter fra forsøksordningene i 1999 og 2000*. Oslo: NIFU. Skriftserie 11/2002.

¹² Agenda (2003): *Evaluering av Realkompetanseprosjektet. Hva mener ”brukerne”?* Vedlegg til sluttrapport. Sandvika: Agenda Utredning & Utvikling AS (pp. 51-52).

	<p>half of these adults had earlier gone through assessment and validation of their non-formal and informal competence. Most of the adult candidates were in employment as they took the courses. The majority of the candidates, around 75 %, think that the educational offer in which they have participated, were adapted to their needs. Around 20 % think that the offer was partly adapted to their needs. This was the case for adaptations in relation to educational level, time of the day and place for the course. However, only 54 % think that the tempo of the education was adapted to their needs and 34 % think it was partly adapted to their needs. Some of the courses are quite intensive and tough to take while in full-time work. Another question is difficulties with reading and writing. A fifth of the candidates states that they have such difficulties, 40 % of them had been tested for these problems. However, only 16 % of them had got courses adapted to their reading and writing difficulties, while 27 % had the examination adapted to these difficulties⁸.</p> <p>6.3 Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation</p> <p>Studies to become a generalist teacher (primary and lower secondary school) or pre-school teacher are popular among applicants that seek admission with validated non-formal and informal learning. Of these non-traditional applicants, 17 % - 18 % or approximately 1,000 persons wanted teacher education in 2001-2002. Of the other applicants, only 8 % wanted teacher education or approximately 6,000 persons⁹.</p> <p>After the admission process in 2001, 25 % of the new students admitted on the basis of validated non-formal and informal learning (425 persons) were in teacher education. Of the other students, 11 % were in teacher education (3257 persons). Of all the teacher students, a minority of 11 % were admitted with validated non-formal and informal competence¹⁰. However, since these older non-traditional students are older in general have more work experience and often have own children in school age, they are considered by the university college staff to contribute positively to the learning of their younger fellow students.¹¹</p> <p>6.4 Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn</p> <p>To document one's total formal, non-formal and informal learning gives positive surprises to many participants. To have this learning assessed and validated makes the participants more confident of their abilities. Validation of non-formal and informal learning "has given me confidence that I know something" was agreed by 50-55 per cent of the candidates that had gone through validation at county assessment centres in 2001- 2002; it was considered the most important effect by 15 per cent of the candidates¹².</p>
<p>7. structural and institutional impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has it had an impact on education and training (or lifelong learning) policies? • On other legislation, official/ 	<p>7.1 Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.</p> <p>The evaluation of the national Validation Project (Realkompetanseprosjektet) included a national survey in 2001 and a county survey in 2003 to employees and employers that had participated in pilot projects on validation of non-formal and informal learning. The validation was considered useful for local wage negotiations by 50 % (2001)</p>

<p>governmental organisations, bodies, institutions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the negotiations between social partners (who are those anyway in your country?) • On human resource management in the private sector? • On civil society/ NGOs/ adult education sector? • On building bridges (of communication, working partnerships...) between different systems of certification, sectors etc? 	<p>and 65 % (2003) of the employees. The validation was considered useful for job seeking by 65 % (2001) and 85 % (2003) of the employees. Almost 10 % of the employees had got a new position in the enterprise/organisation in connection with the validation. Among employers, only 10 % considered validation useful for local wage negotiations¹³. Employees seem optimistic as to the future economic gains of their validated non-formal and informal learning.</p> <p>Projects for validation of non-formal and informal learning for employees in enterprises resulted in the joint development of Competence Passports signed by employers, describing the work tasks and responsibilities of the employee. A Competence Passport should be useful for the individual employee when applying for a new job in the labour market or when applying for admission to an educational institution¹⁴. An evaluation of the Competence Passports developed in technological enterprises had views from employers and employees on possible important areas of application. Individual wage stipulation was considered important by 40 % of both employers and employees. Job seeking outside the enterprise was considered important by 60 % of employers and 80 % of employees¹⁵. Both the stayers and the movers are likely to profit economically from having their non-formal and informal learning validated</p> <p>7.2 Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility)</p> <p>Based on demographic and economic models, Statistics Norway has estimated possible future supply-demand imbalances in the Norwegian labour market, as previously stated. The estimates show that there will be an increased shortage of nursing aids and engineers in the period from 2006 to 2010¹⁶. Validation of non-formal and informal learning plus possible supplementary courses has so far led to trade certificate as nurses' aide to many adult women with long relevant work experience.</p> <p>For small rural communities far from regional centres, it has been difficult to recruit and keep qualified nurses and teachers. One solution is that locally based inhabitants, mostly adult women with family responsibilities, take part-time studies, often decentralised and ICT based. These locals are stable employees after their studies and are very much valued by the employers. Validation of non-formal and informal learning has opened up this possibility for</p>
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¹³ Agenda (2003): *Evaluering av Realkompetanseprosjektet. Sluttrapport*. Sandvika: Agenda Utredning & Utvikling AS (pp. 126-128).

¹⁴ Skule, S. & Ure, O. (2004): *Lifelong learning – Norwegian experiences. Identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning*. Oslo: Fafo. Fafo-paper 2004:21

¹⁵ Skule, S. & Andersen, B. (2000): *Dokumentasjon av realkompetanse i teknologiindustrien. Evaluering av TBL og Fellesforbundets dokumentasjonsordning for arbeidslivet*. Oslo: Fafo. Fafo-rapport 363 (pp. 42-44).

¹⁶ Stølen, N.M. (2001): Tilbud og etterspørsel for ulike typer arbeidskraft. *Økonomiske analyser 6/2001*. SSB.

more individuals. This positive effect was stated by university college staff in the pilot projects in 1999-2000 before validation was officially decided¹⁷. Statistics show that the majority of applicants to higher education on the basis of validated non-formal and informal learning want professional studies at university colleges targeted at public employment. Of the applicants in 2002, 48 % wanted health- and social studies (31 % nursing studies) while 18 % wanted educational studies. Among the other applicants, only 14 % and 8 % wanted these studies¹⁸. For the health sector and education sector, validation of non-formal and informal learning implies a larger recruitment of motivated professionals.

In 2010, health and social studies is still the field in which we find most of the adults who have undergone validation of non-formal and informal learning at upper secondary school level. (See update on p. 11.)

In higher education, health and social studies, especially nursing, and teacher training have the highest proportion of adults applying for admission on the basis of VPL.¹⁹

7.3 Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc.)

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is useful for immigrants and refugees that often lack documentation of their education and work experience. Pilot projects for immigrants and refugees in two counties used vocational testing in the validation process²⁰. Most participants had Norwegian trade certificate as their goal, in order to enter the labour market or to get better jobs. The participants evaluated the vocational testing process positively, with interviews, showing what they could do and getting it documented. However, further guidance and cooperation between public services was needed to get training places in enterprises and supplementary vocational education for a trade certificate.

¹⁷ Brandt, E. (2002): *Høgskolenes erfaringer med realkompetansestudenter fra forsøksordningene i 1999 og 2000*. Oslo: NIFU. Skriftserie 11/2002 (p. 9).

¹⁸ Helland, H. & Opheim, V. (2004): *Kartlegging av realkompetansereformen*. Oslo: NIFU. Skriftserie 6/2004 (p. 54).

¹⁹ Vox (2010): *Vox Mirror 2009*.

²⁰ Hagen, A., Svendsen, E. & Folkenborg, K. (2002): *Dokumentasjon av realkompetanse gjennom yrkesprøving. En kartlegging av erfaringer med kompetansedokumentasjon for flyktninger og innvandrere*. Oslo: Fafo. Fafo-rapport 388

²¹ Hagen, A., Svendsen, E. & Folkenborg, K. (2002): *Dokumentasjon av realkompetanse gjennom yrkesprøving. En kartlegging av erfaringer med kompetansedokumentasjon for flyktninger og innvandrere*. Oslo: Fafo. Fafo-rapport 388.

	<p>For adults with work experience seeking employment (including the long term unemployed, immigrants and physically challenged, it is essential/important that validation of their non-formal and informal learning is a part of the Labour Market Services work to further qualify them for employment through individual plans and adapted vocational courses from the Services and the county.</p> <p>A pilot project on “Increased use of assessment of non-formal and informal competence for persons seeking employment” was set up in three counties for the period 2005-2008. (See further description of the project and project results on pp. 7-8.)</p> <p><i>7.4 Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included</i></p> <p>Validation of non-formal and informal learning is useful for immigrants and refugees that often lack documentation of their education and work experience. In county assessment centres, vocational testing is often used for these groups²¹.</p>
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III. Your analysis of the national situation regarding Validation

<p>8. Stakeholders' engagement: how would you rate the stakeholders' level of interest in your country regarding the VNF-IFL?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which stakeholders in particular are very interested? • Which ones are not so/ not at all interested? <p><i>Why is that so? Any particular or obvious reasons?</i></p> <p><i>Reference to examples, documents?</i></p>	<p>These are the major stakeholders involved in validation discussions in Norway: Social partners, voluntary/3rd sector, training providers/education sector, the Ministry of Education and Research/Vox, and the Ministry of Labour (through NAV, the Labour and Welfare Administration).</p> <p>All in all we can say that the engagement is on average at 3. (1 Very Low to 5 High)</p> <p>The training providers/education sector and the Ministry/Vox are the most interested stakeholders. The reason is that the education sector has the responsibility for the validation procedures and Vox has the overall responsibility for further development and implementation of the validation systems (in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Research).</p> <p>The voluntary/3rd sector is not very interested at local level, and the reason for that can be cultural; documentation and assessment is not traditionally a part of the responsibilities of the 3rd sector/voluntary sector.</p> <p>Social partners are very interested in getting a qualified work force. The social partners were the driving forces through the Competence Reform and they are involved in discussing the LLL strategy. Today validation is not high on the social partners' agenda and the reason can be that validation is seen as a part of the education systems responsibilities.</p> <p><i>On a local level some places validation is seen as very interesting and all stakeholders are engaged. A number of extensive co-operation projects in which all stakeholders are involved have contributed to increasing awareness about validation in branches of industry and/or in the local community in general.</i></p>
<p>9. Debates-discussions: Are there any (few/many) discussions concerning VNF-IFL?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has it stimulated discussion on specific issues (social inclusion, employability, learning society, accessibility for older learners, women, migrants...) • On the nature of assessment, knowledge...? • Between which stakeholders 	<p>Norway is participating in the OECD project "Recognition of non-formal and informal learning". After the expert visit OECD pointed out some challenges and these challenges has been discussed with the stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clearer official rationale for the development of Norway's recognition system. • Develop more reliable indicators of the performance of the Norwegian recognition system. • Improve the collection of data including the numbers entering a recognition programme at upper secondary and higher education level, the proportions who go on to an education or training course as a result and who successfully complete such a course, including the full costs of the assessment process. • Improve the flow of information concerning the right to adapted lower and upper secondary education for adults, paying particular attention to those with low educations, immigrants and the unemployed. • Conduct regular surveys of the training needs of assessors/supervisors in upper secondary education.

<p>mainly/ or within which sector mainly? <i>Any evidence or references to those?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards achieving greater consistency in terms of the way different counties approach adult learning and the opportunities they make available for adapted/tailored upper secondary education on the basis of assessed non-formal and informal learning. • Commission a survey of adult students in higher education to examine awareness of the right to exemption, the level of potential demand and how the flow of information might be improved to this potential user group. • Encourage universities and university colleges to share experiences of how they deal with applications for admissions and exemptions on the basis of non-formal and informal learning. <p>In addition to the input from the OECD project there are many other national and international projects who give input to the further development of the validation systems in Norway.</p> <p>Vox publishes an annual status report on adult learning in Norway. The publication is called "BASIS!". In the 2008 version validation is discussed and some of the challenges seen now is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The target group and individual legal rights for validation and training. Some groups of people are seen as vulnerable in the next phase into the knowledge society: adults lacking individual right to upper secondary education and training, drop outs, young immigrants, adults with low basic skills - Statistics shows that only 50% of adults in upper secondary education and training have been validated. A main goal is to find out the reason for the low number and to find out how to increase the number of validated adults - To reach the target group and to motivate for further training and education is a challenge. There is a need to bring the discussion about validation into a more holistic view and to build up a good system for career guidance and to develop models for adapted and tailored training so that the training provided is based on the individuals recognised skills and competences. <p>In 2010 Vox has issued a report on the status of validation in Norway, concluding that there is a need to improve co-operation and involvement in different sectors at county level, and between different levels of education. There is also a need to improve transitions between education levels and between working life and education. Furthermore, quality assurance is important; both as to methods and as to the training of assessors. So far the Norwegian system is very much based on mutual trust; previously there has been little emphasis on quality systems.</p>
<p>10. Research and VNF-IFL: Does research feed these debates? <i>Are there examples of this?</i> <i>Reference to reports, research</i></p>	<p>In Norway we are also moving towards evidence based policy making. "The Vox Barometer" "the Vox mirror" and "Basis!"²² are annual reports highlighting relevant topics related to adult learning in Norway. In addition reports from local, national and international projects influence further development.</p>

²² Update 2010: The "BASIS!" report series has been terminated.

<i>findings etc...?</i>	Please see an overview of white papers, surveys and reports below.
<p>11. Problems/ difficulties, and resistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any emerging? If so which ones? What type? (strategic, operational, organisational, attitudinal, cultural, financial etc...) <p>Is there resistance appearing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At which level? • In which sector in particular? • From which category of actors/ stakeholders? <p><i>Evidence available? Some examples?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to build up good systems and procedures for mapping and documenting competences and skills from working life and in the voluntary/3rd sector - to change the attitude (inn all sectors!) to what learning actually is

Any other comments

A chronological overview of some relevant reports and papers for the development and integration of the validation system in Norway.²³

White Papers:

St.meld. nr. 42 (1997-1998): *Kompetansereformen*. KUF

St.meld. nr. 27 (2000-2001): *Kvalitetsreformen*. KUF

St.meld. nr. 30 (2003-2004): *Kultur for læring*. KUF

²³ The literature list was updated in June 2010.

St.meld. nr. 27 (2004-2005): *Om opplæringen innenfor kriminalomsorgen, "En ny vår"*. UFD

St.meld. nr. 16 (2006-2007): *... og ingen sto igjen Tidlig innsats for livslang læring*. KD

St.meld. nr. 9 (2006-2007) *Arbeid, velferd og inkludering*. AID

St.meld. nr. 37 (2007-2008) *Straff som virker*. JD

St.meld. nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*. KD

Circulars:

Rundskriv F-16-03 (KD)

Reports:

NOU 1997: 25 *Ny kompetanse. Grunnlaget for en helhetlig etter- og videreutdanningspolitikk*. KUF

Reichborn A N, Pape A og Kleven K (1998): *Papir på egen dyktighet – dokumentasjon av realkompetanse i arbeidslivet (Fafo-rapport 245)*

Eldring, L. & Skule, S. (1999): *Kompetansedokumentasjon for ingeniører. Praksis, behov og utfordringer. Fafo-notat 1999:16*. Oslo: Fafo

Pape A (2000): *§20 - Fagbrev gjennom dokumentasjon av realkompetanse (Fafo-notat 2000:6)*

Andersen B, Hagen A og Skule S (2000): *Dokumentasjon av realkompetanse. Kommunesektoren som arbeidsgiver og skoleeier (Fafo-notat 2000:8)*

Skule S og Reichborn A N (2000): *Lærende arbeid. En kartlegging av lærevilkår i norsk arbeidsliv*. Fafo-rapport 333.

Skule, S., Andersen, B. (2000): *Dokumentasjon av realkompetanse i teknologiindustrien. Evaluering av TBL og Fellesforbundets dokumentasjonsordning for arbeidslivet*. Oslo: Fafo-rapport 363.

Stølen, N.M. (2001): *Tilbud og etterspørsel for ulike typer arbeidskraft. Økonomiske analyser 6/2001*. Oslo: SSB

Døving, Elstad, Haugland (2001): *Utvikling av realkompetanse på arbeidsplassen, uformell læring i tre norske virksomheter*. SNF-rapport 03/2001

Elstad, B (2001): *En teoretisk drøfting av dilemmaer i forhold til dokumentasjon av realkompetanse i tredjesektor*. Høgskolen i Oslo

UFD (2002): *The Competence Reform - Action Plan 2002-2003 3rd edition*

OECD (2002): *Lifelong Learning in Norway. Reviews of national policies for education*. Paris: OECD

Brandt, E. (2002): *Høgskolenes erfaringer med realkompetansestudenter fra forsøksordningene i 1999 og 2000*. Oslo: NIFU.

Hagen, A., Svendsen, E. & Folkenborg, K. (2002): *Dokumentasjon av realkompetanse gjennom yrkesprøving. En kartlegging av erfaringer med kompetansedokumentasjon for flyktninger og innvandrere*. Oslo: Fafo-rapport 388

Hagen, A., Svendsen, S (2002): *Billett til yrkeslivet (Fafo-rapport 394)*

Ellingsve: *Likeverdig kompetanse*. Vox (2002)

Vox (2002): *Realkompetanseprosjektet 1999-2002- i mål eller på startstreken? Sluttrapport*

Vox (2003) Haugerud, V., Røstad, S., Stubbe, TA: *Tallene vi søker - kunnskapen vi får*. Oslo

NOKUT (2003): *Godkjenning av utenlandsk høyere utdanning for flyktninger med mangelfull dokumentasjon*. Oslo: NOKUT.

Agenda (2003a): *Evaluering av Realkompetanseprosjektet. Sluttrapport*. Sandvika: Agenda Utredning & Utvikling AS

Agenda (2003b): *Evaluering av Realkompetanseprosjektet. Hva mener "brukerne"? Vedlegg til sluttrapport*. Sandvika: Agenda Utredning & Utvikling AS

Vox (2003) Engesbak, H., Haugerud, V., Røstad, S., Stubbe T.A.: *... men hvor skal vi henvende oss?* Oslo

Vox (2003) McHenry, J.H., Mohn, T.N.: *Transfine – National Study Norway*, Oslo

ECON Analyse: *Økonomi i dokumentasjon av realkompetanse* ECON-rapport nr 61/03

Nordisk Ministerråd (2003): *Validering av realkompetanse*. TemaNord 2003:504

Folkenborg, K. (2003): *Realkompetanse og tilpasset utdanning. Erfaringer med TBL og Fellesforbundets dokumentasjonsordning fra fire fylker*. Oslo: Fafo-notat 2003:09

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- Nordisk Ministerråd (2004): Forstudie om validering af realkompetence i de nordiske land
- Skule, S., Ure, O. (2004): Lifelong Learning - Norwegian experiences. Identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning. Oslo: Fafo.
- Ure, O. (2004): European Inventory. ECOTEC
- Hagen, A., Skule, S. (2004): Det norske kompetansemarkedet. En oversikt og analyse, rapport 461 Fafo
- Vox (2004) Engesbak, H. & Stubbe, T.A.: I videregående som voksen. Oslo
- Vox (2004) Haugerud, V., Røstad, S., Stubbe, TA: Intensjoner og realiteter. Oslo
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- Haugerud, V., Røstad, S. (2004):*Kunnskapsgrunnlaget, sluttrapport*. Vox Oslo
- Vox (2004) Røstad, S. *Yrkesprøving, en metode for realkompetansevurdering, Oslo*
- Vox (2004) Haugerud, V.: Deltakere i videregående opplæring arrangert av studieforbund
- Vox (2004): Realkompetansevurdering i videregående opplæring. Kursmateriell
- Vox (2004): Vedlegg til Realkompetansevurdering i videregående opplæring. Kursmateriell
- Haugøy, G., Moe, F. (2005): REFINE: Recognising Formal, Informal and Non-formal Education. Final report from the Norwegian sub-project. Bergen: SEVU
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UFD (2005): En ledende kompetansenasjon?

ECON (2005): Skjæringsfeltet mellom arbeidsmarkeds- og utdanningspolitikk i 6 utvalgte land. Oslo: ECON.

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Carlsten, T.C; Mohn, T.N.; Brandt, E.; Turmo, A. (2006): *Country Background Report Norway. OECD Activity on Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning*. Oslo: Ministry of Education and Research

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Cedefop (2007) *Recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning for VET teachers and trainers in the EU member States*, Thessaloniki: Cedefop Panorama Series;147

Vox (2007) Mohn, T.N.: Recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in Norway. Oslo

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Vox (2008): *Basis! Voksnes læring 2008 – tilstand og utfordringer*

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Utdanningsforbudet (2008): Om voksenopplæring. Temanotat 8/2008

Icara da Silva Holmesland & Judy Deanne Lundin (Eds.): (2009): Formal and Informal Learning: Shall the Twain Ever Meet in Higher Education?

Ellen Brandt, Taran Thune og Odd Bjørn Ure (2009): Tilbud og etterspørsel av etter- og videreutdanning i Norge: en analyse av status, strategier og samspill
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Nav Finnmark og Finnmark fylkeskommune (2009): Yrkesprøvingsprosjektet i Finnmark 2007 – 2009 Sluttrapport

Vox (2010): Vox Mirror 2009