



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

The objective is to produce each year a state of play (approximately 3 pages in English) about main events, key issues, debates and discussions which have arisen during the year.

This grid is informal. It provides just few questions to guide your reflection.

You may wish to use it or not, or leave blank some of the categories, or increase the spaces for others, depending on what content you can provide. It is FLEXIBLE. It is only a tool to guide your report.

✿ *It would be useful for the Observatory to give references (when they only exist in your own language) and terms used in your **own language**, then give the English translation you think most appropriate for the terms used, or the official translation usually given; whichever, the question of terminology will be discussed throughout the project for the purpose of the Observatory itself.* ✿

ANaR Report Year 1 – 2008 (supplemented with data for the year 2 – 2009 and with data for the year 3 – 2010)

Country: Slovenia

Name:

Date: July/August 2008

Date of supplementation: November 2009

Date of supplementation: July 2010

I. The general situation regarding VNF-IFL

Points to consider	Your text
<p>1. National strategy: is there one? <i>What</i> is in place re the VNF-IFL, at <i>which level</i>? If not, are there regional, local or institutional strategies? <i>Any reference or URL links to official documents, Websites?</i></p>	<p>There is the Development Strategy of Slovenia, passed by the government in 2005. The National Development Programme 2007-2013 represents the operative document of the Strategy. The Operative Programme for Human Resources Development for the period 2007-2013 (co-financed exclusively from the European Social Fund) is a part of the National Development Programme. “Stimulating the employability of job-seekers and the inactive” is a development priority of the The Operative Programme. “Human resources development and lifelong learning development” is another development priority of the The Operative Programme. The Operative Programme says that an important part of Programmes which will take place preferentially in the framework of the first mentioned priority will be dedicated also to stimulating the acquisition and the validation of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge, skills and competences, to national vocational qualifications, to workplace training and to shorter trainings. The Operative Programme also says that, in the framework of the second mentioned priority, first of all, activities including those which mean also inclusion and recognition of different forms of education and learning (formal, non-formal, informal (occasional/opportunistic)), will take place.</p> <p>So, the strategic goal is also to operationalise the recognition of all forms of learning (formal, non-formal, informal (occasional/opportunistic)) and, in this way, to develop a national qualification framework – insofar as this development is necessary for this operationalisation.</p> <p>However, there is no umbrella strategy for development of system for recognition of non-formal and informal learning – that, of course, would also be in accordance with the existing legislation or with acts which link formal school education and certification system (the system of national vocational qualifications), enabling recognition of non-formally acquired knowledge, skills, competences, into a unique system (i.e. with the following acts: Vocational and Technical/Professional Education Act, Higher Education Act, National Vocational Qualification Act).</p> <p>It is then a matter of activities concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning which could be described as suitable and advantageous/favourable, however not as engaged and enthusiastic.</p>

	<p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategija razvoja Slovenije (Development Strategy of Slovenia): http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/projekti/02_StrategijarazvojaSlovenije.pdf - Operativni Programme razvoja človeških virov za obdobje 2007-2013 (The Operative Programme for Human Resources Development for the period 2007-2013): http://www.svlr.gov.si/fileadmin/svlr.gov.si/pageuploads/KOHEZIJA/kohezija-200207/op-ess_vlada-150207_koncno.pdf
<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, sectoral, institutional initiatives? 	<p>The responsibility for development and implementation of processes of recognition of non-formal and informal learning is in the hands of different institutions. The most important are the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. The main development organisation is the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training. At the operative level, there are also other institutions with important roles – like National Examinations Centre, chambers (The Chamber of Craft of Slovenia, The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia), employers, local employment services and a series of educational institutions, including universities.</p> <p>The system of national vocational qualifications or the so-called certification system represents the most valued form for recognition of non-formal and informal (occasional/opportunistic) learning in Slovenia. It was formally introduced in the year 2000, when the National Vocational Qualification Act was passed. This act regulates the procedures and bodies or institutions and organisations responsible for the preparation and adoption of vocational standards and catalogues of professional knowledge and skills standards, and conditions and procedures for the acquisition of national vocational qualifications. It was first amended in 2006 in order to link formal and informal education and work experience, to ensure partnership and cooperation in the development of NVQs and in their promotion. In July 2009 the government received a proposal of the Act on Changes and Amendments of the National Vocational Qualification Act. In October 2009 the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia passed the new National Vocational Qualification Act with 77 yes-votes and zero no-votes. The changes and amendments of the National Vocational Qualification Act are a consequence of the results of the permanent evaluation of the system of NVQs, which is the responsibility of the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training, and of recommendations and solutions, which resulted from the international project “OECD activity 2006-2007: Recognition of non-formal and informal education”, in which Slovenia also participated. The new Act is improving the transparency of the system of NVQs and determines the same assessment and recognition procedure for NVQs for all candidates, also for drop-out students. The new Act determines also some new tasks for the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training (for example, monitoring of the work of counsellors in the acquisition procedure of NVQs and the maintenance and development of the National Reference Point for Occupational Qualifications). The new Act determines also that the National Examinations Centre has to organise its monitoring of the work of the commissions for assessment and recognition of NVQs in a way that it will be at least once in a year present at the</p>

	<p>assessment and recognition procedure of NVQs at the individual institution performing this procedure.</p> <p>On the other hand the recognition of non-formal knowledge at the level of tertiary education, carried out by individual faculties in accordance with the Higher Education Act and on the basis of accepted criteria, represents a less valued form for recognition of non-formal knowledge in Slovenia. Until now, in this field, most was done by the Faculty of Management Koper. As a member of the University of Primorska this faculty performs the procedure of recognition of non-formal knowledge in accordance with rules passed by the Senate of the University of Primorska in the year 2009 and which are thus also the newest rules of this kind in Slovenia.</p> <p>However, the newest regulation in the field of recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Slovenia are the “Common guidelines and standards in procedures for recognition of previously acquired knowledge in higher vocational education”. This regulation, on the basis of which higher vocational schools determine detailed criteria in the procedure for recognition of previously acquired knowledge, was passed by the Commission for accreditation of higher education study Programmes in July 2010.</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>There are the following forms/ways of recognition of non-formal and informal learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assessment and recognition of national vocational qualifications in accordance with the National Vocational Qualification Act (the so-called certification system) - assessment or recognition of language knowledge (Slovene, English, French, Italian, Hungarian), based on national standards - recognition of knowledge at the level of tertiary education, carried out by individual faculties in accordance with the Higher Education Act and on the basis of accepted criteria - recognition of knowledge at the level of tertiary education, carried out by individual higher vocational schools in accordance with the Higher Vocational Education Act and on the basis of accepted criteria (determined by the “Common guidelines and standards in procedures for recognition of previously acquired knowledge in higher vocational education”) - recognition of knowledge at individual ministries on the basis of area acts - recognition of knowledge at chambers and employers. <p>Validation of non-formal and informal learning applies to the following sectors: vocational education and training, higher education, adult education; private sector, 3rd sector.</p>
<p>4. Terminology:</p> <p>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 into English?</p>	<p>Give the definition (s) and terms used in your own language, and your translation in English</p> <p>Commonly, the term “priznavanje neformalnega in priložnostnega učenja” is used – when it is a matter of validation of non-formal and informal learning. The term “priznavanje” could be translated as “recognition”. Translation for the term “neformalno učenje” is “non-formal learning”. And the term “priložnostno učenje” could be translated as occasional/opportunistic learning. The term “neformalno</p>

	učenje” evokes the same substantive associations as the term “non-formal learning”, but contrary to the term “informal learning” the term “priložnostno učenje” is to a large extent associated with randomised, mutually unrelated, leisure and voluntary forms of learning.
<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)?</i> <i>Reference to docs or website?</i></p>	<p>The goal of the development strategy of Slovenia is also to operationalise the recognition of all forms of learning (formal, non-formal, informal/occasional/opportunistic) and, in this way, to develop national qualification framework – insofar as this development is necessary for this operationalisation.</p> <p>However, there is no umbrella strategy for the development of a system for recognition of non-formal and informal learning – that, of course, would also be in accordance with the existing legislation or with acts which link formal school education and certification system, enabling recognition of non-formally acquired knowledge, skills, competences, into a unique system (i.e. with the following acts: Vocational and Technical/Professional Education Act, Higher Education Act, National Vocational Qualification Act).</p> <p>Or: it is then a matter of activities concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning - and, in this way, national qualification framework (insofar as the development of this framework is necessary for the operationalisation of the mentioned recognition) - which could be described as suitable and advantageous/favourable, however not as engaged and enthusiastic.</p>

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 	<p>Individuals who decided to undergo the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning were strongly motivated first of all by the fact that this is a short process. The reduction of time required to gain a recognised qualification, however, means also the reduction of cost for education - first of all the individual costs, and further the national costs. So, one of the impacts of this validation process was also the reduction of costs for education - individual and, further, national.</p> <p>Most of those who passed the validation process employed or re-employed themselves. So, another impact of this process was the reduction of unemployment rate.</p> <p>Insofar as meaning, not that validation candidates increase their educational level, but rather that they increase their mobility on the labour market, the validation process means also the following: to balance lack of skills on the labour market - and further, to increase economical growth.</p> <p>Or: insofar as meaning to rearrange existing human resources inside the enterprise, the validation process means also to reassure the balance between competences needed and existing working force.</p> <p>The validation process means also to increase educational level and literacy - and further, to assure</p>
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<p>positive, negative, problematic impact? Some evidence/ reference to examples of this impact?</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/ governmental organisations, bodies, institutions? • On the negotiations between social partners (who are those anyway in your country?) • In the private sector, on staff qualification and training strategies within companies? • On civil society/ NGOs/ adult education sector? <p>On building bridges (of communication, working partnerships...) between different systems of certification, sectors etc?</p>	<p>better employment opportunities.</p> <p>Insofar as meaning to establish new social institutions, the validation process means also to increase social, cultural equality and cohesive society, to increase values such as democracy, intercultural dialogue, the impact on lives of disadvantageous groups within society.</p> <p>The validation process, however, means also that individuals - validation candidates - re-gain self-esteem and awareness of their competences and skills.</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>Why is that so? Any particular or obvious reasons? <i>Reference to examples, documents?</i></p>	<p>1 to 5: Very Low to High?</p> <p>In Slovenian society there emerges a duality concerning attitude toward the system of recognition of non-formal and informal learning and toward qualifications acquired in the framework of this system. On one side, employers in many sectors warn that qualifications acquired in schools do not correspond sufficiently to workplace and that after finishing formal education individuals are not capable to use the acquired knowledge in practice, but on the other side, representatives of the educational system (as social partners), and also employers alone, rest sceptical toward the quality of qualifications acquired through the process of recognition of non-formal and informal education. So, it looks like that some partners play a role of status quo keeper rather than a role of progress promoter or development partner.</p>
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	Or: it is a matter of activities concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning, which are more individual, without mutual links or network and consequently without opportunities for information exchange, without cooperation between sectors and regions.
<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 mainly/ or within which sector mainly? <p><i>Any evidence or references to those?</i></p>	It seems that there is no serious discussion concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning on the national level, neither is there a serious national dialogue on this theme.
<p>10. Research and VNF-IFL: Does research feed these debates? <i>Are there examples of this? Reference to reports, research findings etc...?</i></p>	<p>In the framework of the international project “OECD activity 2006-2007: Recognition of non-formal and informal learning”, in which Slovenia also participated, also the following two documents were prepared: national report for Slovenia - prepared by Slovenian experts; and common policy analysis - prepared by OECD experts, after visiting Slovenia. These two documents are in any case a step closer to a serious discussion concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning on the national level or to a serious national dialogue on this theme.</p> <p>Reference: - Aktivnost OECD 2006-2007: Priznavanje neformalnega in priložnostnega učenja: nacionalno poročilo za Slovenijo (OECD activity 2006-2007: Recognition of non-formal and informal education: national report for Slovenia): http://www.cpi.si/files/userfiles//Datoteke/Novice/OECD_slo.pdf</p> <p>In the year 2007 also a special evaluation of the system of national vocational qualifications, co-financed by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, was carried out. The consequence of this evaluation was the publication of “Evaluation of the System of National Professional Qualifications”, published in the year 2008.</p> <p>Reference: - Kunčič, B. et al., Spremljava certifikatnega sistema (Evaluation of the System of National Professional Qualifications), CPI, Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje, Ljubljana 2008 (contains also the English translation); available on internet: http://www.cpi.si/files/cpi/userfiles/Publikacije/Spremljava_SLO.pdf (in Slovenian) http://www.cpi.si/files/cpi/userfiles/Publikacije/Spremljava_eng.pdf (in English)</p>

<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>	<p>There are the following problems/difficulties:</p> <p>The above mentioned duality concerning attitude toward the system of recognition of non-formal and informal learning and toward qualifications acquired in the framework of this system.</p> <p>The fact that it is a matter of activities concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning, which are more of an individual nature, without mutual links or network and consequently without opportunities for information exchange, without cooperation between sectors and regions.</p> <p>The fact that there is no serious discussion/debate concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning on the national level, and also that there is no serious national dialogue on this theme.</p> <p>The fact that there is the Development Strategy of Slovenia, whose goal is also to operationalise the recognition of all forms of learning (formal, non-formal, informal (occasional/opportunistic) and, in this way, to develop national qualification framework – insofar as this development is necessary for this operationalization, but there is no umbrella strategy for the development of a system for recognition of non-formal and informal learning – that, of course, would also be in accordance with the existing legislation or with acts which link formal school education and the certification system into a unique system.</p> <p>Development and implementation of non-formal and informal learning is restricted by financial regulation, together with legislation which is still not fully implemented in practice. Procedures for recognition of non-formal and informal learning depend on additional work of commission members and of other participating individuals, otherwise employed elsewhere. It is not clear what the future plans are concerning this issue.</p> <p>The concept of recognition of non-formal and informal learning is too much linked to solely one educational sector (vocational education) and especially to certain type of qualifications within this sector – to the national vocational qualification. It is possible that this close linkage will support the enforcement of recognition of non-formal and informal learning in the beginning, but hinder the enforcement of recognition in other sectors later, unless there are plans or strategies ensuring that recognition of non-formal and informal learning will not be limited to vocational education – what (i.e. if such plans, strategies exist), however, is not clear.</p>
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Any other comments

This report was prepared on the basis of data obtained in two phases:

- 1) Gathering information and other materials by exploring internet.
- 2) Gathering information and other materials by contacting the following individuals:
 1. Andraž Zgonc, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.
 2. Barbara Kunčič, National Institute for Vocational Education and Training. Ms. Kunčič works as a counsellor in the working area of connection of formal and non-formal education.
 3. Matej Križanič, Chamber of Craft of Slovenia. Mr. Križanič works as a counsellor in the following working area: assessment of knowledge in the field of social welfare.
 4. Metka Svetina, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Ms. Svetina works as a counsellor of the director of the Institute.

The 2009 supplementary data in the report was prepared on the basis of data obtained by:

- 1) gathering information and other materials by exploring the internet;
- 2) gathering information and other materials by contacting Mr. Andraž Zgonc from the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and Ms. Barbara Kunčič from the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

The 2010 supplementary data in the report was prepared on the basis of data obtained by:

- 1) gathering information and other materials by exploring the internet;
- 2) gathering information and other materials by contacting Ms. Barbara Kunčič from the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training and Ms. Metka Svetina from the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.