

2013

EWSI Integration Dossier

Recognition of Qualifications and Competencies

In the context of a declining working-age population, the EU 2020 Strategy has set the target of a 75 per cent employment rate in the EU by 2020 and pinpointed the improvement of migrants' access to the labour market as a key action in meeting this target. In this perspective, the New Agenda on Integration has called for services to "be developed with the aim to enable the recognition of qualifications and competences from the country of origin facilitating immigrants' possibilities to take up employment which matches their skills". The present Integration Dossier uses EWSI content to draw attention to emerging national policy trends on the recognition of qualifications and competencies, and to highlight promising practices and tools.



Introduction

In contrast to EWSI Special Features which link an integration issue highlighted in current news with EWSI content, Integration Dossiers use the inflow of information on the EWSI to identify emerging policy or practice trends.

Focus of the present Dossier

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The present Integration Dossiers uses EWSI content to draw attention to emerging national policy trends on the recognition of qualifications and competencies, and to highlight promising practices and tools.

Pictures on the cover page taken from http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/multimedia/photos/index_en.htm

1. Definitions

The 2009 CEDEFOP [European Guidelines for Validating non-formal and informal Learning](#) differentiate 'qualifications' from 'competencies', as well as the process through which they are acquired. This distinction is important, firstly because it reflects different realities which are of equal importance in creating barriers to the participation of migrants in the labour market: the recognition of qualifications acquired in third-country education institutions, and the recognition of competencies acquired through informal and non-formal learning systems; and secondly because solutions to these two realities vary greatly in remit and process.

2. Non-EU migrants: an overqualified population in Europe?

Over-qualification¹ is one of the consequences faced by non-EU migrants when their qualifications and competences earned abroad are not recognised in the host country. It is measured by the proportion of the population with a high educational level and low or medium-skilled jobs.

According to Eurostat's [Migrants in Europe](#) publication, the over-qualification rate is particularly acute for non-EU migrants: 46%, compared to 19% for nationals.

¹ As noted in the *Migrants in Europe* publication, over-qualification *"can also result from the lack of networks, limited access to information and discrimination by employers"*. A [recent LINET study](#) confirms that access to labour market information plays a role in skills mismatch for non-EU migrants.

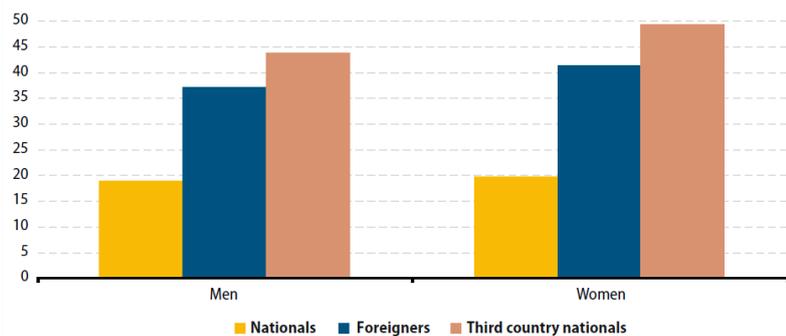
	Nationals	Foreign citizens	Of which			
			EU-27 citizens	Third-country nationals	of which from countries with	
					high HDI	low and medium HDI
EU-27	19	39	31	46	38	53
Men	19	37	29	44	36	49
Women	20	41	33	49	40	58
Recent migrants	36	43	37	48	38	54
Settled migrants	25	36	25	46	39	52
Born in the host country	19	25	23	28	29	:

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2008

Figure 1: Over-qualification rate of employed persons aged 25–54 by groups of country of citizenship, gender and duration of residence in the receiving country, EU-27, 2008 (%)

Over-qualification rates for non-EU migrants are particularly high in Greece, Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, Spain and Estonia, where the over-qualification gaps exceed 25 percentage points. Non-EU women are particularly disadvantaged, with their over-qualification rate being 6pp higher than that of men.

These trends are confirmed by other sources, including the [OECD’s recent study on immigrant integration indicators](#) as well as [CEDFOP’s report on skills mismatch among migrants and ethnic minorities](#). The fact that women are disproportionately more affected by overqualification than men is also evidenced by the European Women Lobby’s 2012 [case study report](#) and by the IOM’s [Crushed Hopes](#) report of the same year.



Source: Eurostat, LFS 2008

Figure 2: Over-qualification rate of persons aged 25–54 by groups of country of citizenship and gender, 2008

EU statistics on the share of overqualified young immigrants (15-30 years old) are harder to find. However, several documents on the EWSI indicate that young immigrants (including recent graduates) experience higher overqualification rates than their natives counterparts, for instance in [France](#), [Denmark](#) and the [UK](#).

The [EU Skills Panorama](#), launched as part of the [Employment Package](#) in April 2012, does not contain statistics on skills mismatch or over-qualification among non-EU immigrants.

2.1. What do migrants say?

In 2011-2012, the Immigrant Citizens Survey (ICS) asked immigrants in 15 cities in seven countries whether their current jobs matched their skills, and whether they had applied for

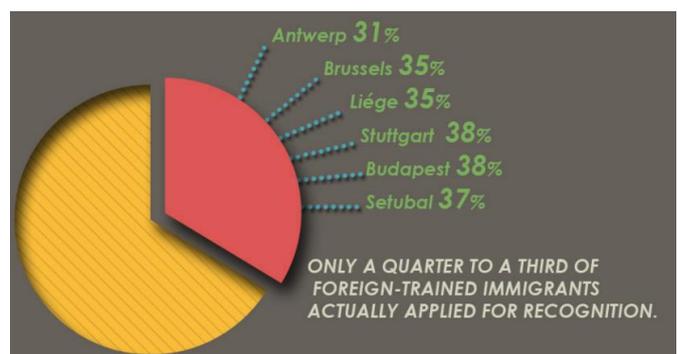
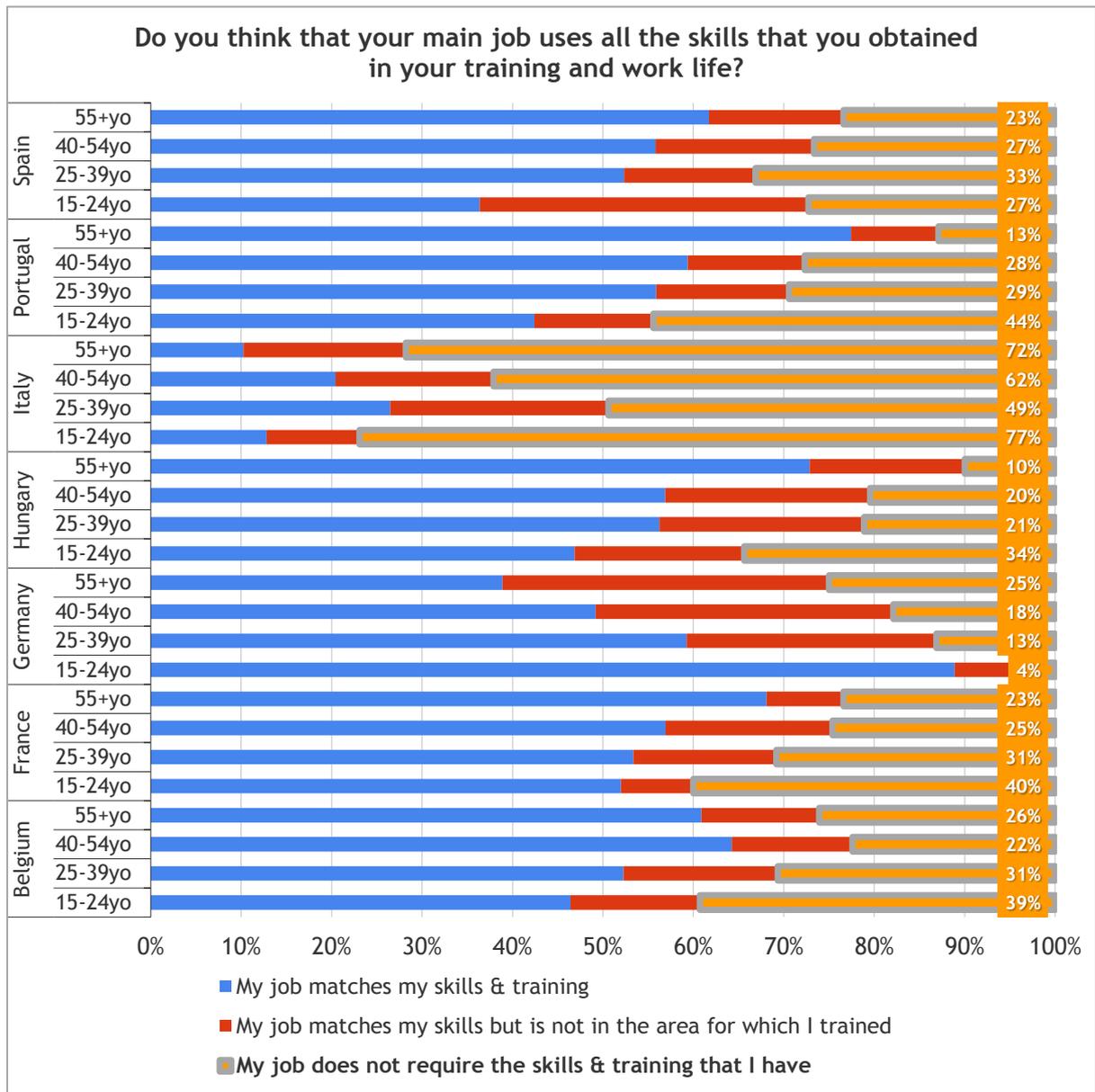


Figure 3: Foreign-trained immigrants who have applied to get their qualifications recognised (%)

their qualifications to be recognised. The survey found that a quarter to a third of surveyed immigrants who succeeded in finding a job perceive themselves to be overqualified, but that on average, only 27% applied to get their qualifications recognised.



An [additional analysis](#) of ICS data reveals that:

- Young migrants are more likely to feel overqualified for their job (see chart above). The feeling of over-qualification decreases with age, except in Germany (see chart above). This feeling is particularly acute in Italy and Portugal, where respectively 77% and 44% of respondents aged between 15 and 24 declared that their job did not require the skills and training they had acquired.

- Education obtained abroad is not easily transferable: when foreign qualifications are formally recognised in the country of residence, immigrants with a higher education from the country of origin are less likely to feel overqualified for their jobs. When the qualifications are not recognised, immigrants with higher education from the country of origin are more likely to feel overqualified.

3. What is the current EU framework on the recognition of qualifications and competencies, and how does it affect migrants?

The recognition of professional qualifications falls under internal market legislation and is framed at EU level by [Directive 2005/36/EC](#). Pursuant to other Directives, this legislation applies to third-country nationals who are members of the family of an EU citizen exercising his or her right to free movement within the European Union; who have the status of long-term residents; or who have refugee status in a member state. But it only applies insofar as the qualification has been obtained in an EU member state. The recognition of qualifications obtained in third-countries is covered by national legislations. As a result, many immigrants are excluded from the Directive's remit and depend on national rules for getting their qualifications recognised.

The [2011 proposal](#) modifying the Directive, which is yet to be adopted by the Council, does not include changes regarding the recognition of third-country qualifications. Such a move "[is not supported by Member States and proves to be over ambitious at this moment](#)".

However, under other Directives such as [2003/109/EC](#) on long-term residents and [2003/86/EC](#) on family reunification, equal treatment provisions apply to non-EU migrants. Under these Directives, third-country nationals should be treated equally to EU nationals when it comes to having qualifications recognised, regardless of where these were obtained.

The validation of informal and non-formal skills and competencies falls under EU education and culture policies. There is no EU legislative instrument in this area. A [2012 Recommendation](#) urged Member States to establish national systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2015. This would allow citizens, including non-EU migrants, to obtain a full or partial qualification on the basis of skills and competences acquired outside formal education.

Despite the fact that the Commission's 2012 [Employment Package](#) makes key priorities of coping with skills mismatches and ensuring better recognition of qualifications and skills, the phenomenon of over-qualified non-EU migrants is not mentioned.

4. What does the information on the EWSI tell us about current trends regarding the recognition of qualifications and competencies?

4.1. Political and legislative developments

4.1.1. European level

Recognising that there is currently no support from Member States for extending the scope of current regulations to qualifications obtained in third-countries, European elected and consultative bodies and civil society organisations are increasingly pressing the Commission to find alternative

frameworks to Directive 2005/36/EC and the Member States for immediate action – not only on formal degrees and diplomas, but also on informal and non-formal skills.

In its [March 2013 resolution](#), building on the February 2013 [Report on the integration of migrants, its effects on the labour market and the external dimension of social security coordination](#), the European Parliament “calls on the Commission, therefore, to come up with concrete proposals on how a mechanism for the recognition of qualifications and diplomas of third-country nationals could be set up, including effective skills evaluation in case of absence of documents”.

This follows comparable statements made by the European Economic and Social Committee in its March 2012 [Opinion on the European Agenda for Third-country Nationals](#) where it states that the recognition of qualifications “must be fully incorporated into the integration agenda”; and its April 2012 [Opinion on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility](#) where, repeating the call made in other Opinions, “arrangements for recognising the qualifications of immigrant workers and the validation of diplomas and skills (...) must be included in the Mobility Partnerships”.

In its [2011 Recommendation](#), the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers asked Member States to review the effectiveness of all relevant policy and practice in the field of recognition of qualifications and to introduce measures based on its guidelines.

European civil society organisations have expressed similar calls. In its February 2013 [Statement on the contribution of migrants to economic growth in the EU](#), the European Integration Forum recommended that European institutions and Member States “work towards converging standards across the EU Member States to recognise the qualifications (i.e. degrees, training certificates, etc.) of migrants as well as their “soft” skills, such as intercultural competence, multilingualism, informal work experience etc. to facilitate their access to the labour market. Mutual recognition could be a guiding principle in this process”.

4.1.2. National level

In Germany, the [Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act](#) was adopted in 2012. The March 2013 report of the Independent Network of Labour Migration and Integration Experts (LINET) on [Recognition of Qualifications and Competencies of Migrants](#) considers this law as promising “since it allows for taking into account operational experience acquired abroad in cases where foreign credentials are not sufficient for full recognition”. While considered as a “crucial jump in integration”² by experts, it has [recently been criticised](#) for improving the recognition of qualifications only for certain professions, and for therefore failing to harmonise procedures throughout the country.

In the first half of 2012 in Austria, the government agreed to launch contact points and other measures for the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications, including better coordination between competent administrations and consultation of social partners and experts. The contact points started work at the beginning of this year, but legislative changes are not explicitly planned³.

² “eine entscheidende Starthilfe für die Integration” (own translation), see sourced article in http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/news/newsdetail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=34323

³ Information provided by the [EWSI Country Coordinator for Austria](#). See Norbert Bichl: Österreich - Anerkennung von aus dem Ausland mitgebrachten Qualifikationen. Wien 2011 ; Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen: Leitfaden zu Gleichhaltung, Nostrifikation, Nostrifizierung und Beruflicher Anerkennung. Wien 2013 ; Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz: Konzeptentwurf

In Slovenia, the government proposed to [amend the Law on Foreigners](#) in May 2013 to ease the recognition of qualifications process for highly-skilled workers.

In neighbouring Slovakia, Act 341/2013 came into force in March 2013, simplifying procedures for the recognition of qualifications by defining equivalencies between levels of education in Slovakia and in other EU Member States and third countries.

No significant developments have taken place recently in this field in other Member States.

4.2. Challenges and innovative solutions

The March 2013 report of the Independent Network of Labour Migration and Integration Experts (LINET) on [Recognition of Qualifications and Competencies of Migrants](#) and the [final report of the European Integration Fund project REALISE](#), published the same month, identify the following challenges in the recognition of qualifications and competencies acquired in third-countries.

The EWSI good practice section includes a number of examples that provide innovative solutions in meeting these challenges.

4.2.1. Fragmented responsibilities

The process of getting qualifications and competencies assessed and recognised is rendered complex by the fragmentation of the responsibility for recognising qualifications and competencies, across levels of governance and types of qualifications, but also sometimes between different actors operating at the same level of governance.

Such fragmentation is acute in federal states, such as Germany where the recognition of qualifications for general practitioners falls under national law, but is regulated at Länder level for medical specialists; and Belgium, where the recognition of qualifications is made at community level – meaning that different systems apply in the Flemish, French and German communities.

The LINET report states that this complexity “*can hardly be reduced*”; and that, at the same time, “*it would also not be possible nor suitable to establish a single recognition path applying to all types of credentials and competences*”. The scope for progress therefore resides in a better coordination between competent bodies and in the harmonisation of procedures.

In the meantime, civil society organisations providing services to immigrants counter this administrative complexity by acting as an intermediary body or as single point of contact for all professions.

GOOD PRACTICES

[Information and advice on the process of recognition and validation of academic degree qualifications from foreign universities \(Spain\)](#)

In Madrid, the Association for the Integration of Immigrant Professionals (INPROIN) works with

immigrants who hold qualifications from third-countries in order to make the recognition process as smooth as possible. To this end, they organise multiple activities such as:



- Information workshops on the degree validation process (group activities), for individuals and staff working in immigration services. Workshops take place in different centres in the Madrid Region: Participation and Integration Centres for Immigrants (CEPIs), town halls, information offices, associations, etc.
- Personal interviews at our offices in Madrid. During such interviews, we analyse individual needs and give advice on: the validation of diplomas and degrees, the professional labour market in Spain, freelancing and business start-ups and the Spanish educational system. The interviews last about one-and-a-half hours and are followed up with successive sessions as necessary.
- Answering questions via email or telephone for people living outside Madrid.
- Organising conferences aimed at analysing and enhancing the visibility of qualified immigration.
- Maintaining contact with competent Spanish bodies to make them aware of difficulties immigrants find in validation processes

A [similar project](#) exists in Barcelona, coordinated by the Atlàntida Association for Intercultural Professionals.

In the Basque Country, an [analogous project](#) targets immigrant women – who, as we have seen, are likely to suffer more from over-qualification than men. This project also runs a campaign designed to raise local public awareness about the reality of the studies and training of immigrant women and the gap that exists with the work they do in the destination country.

Recognition of Qualifications of Migrant Doctors (Portugal)

The main goal of the project, coordinated by the Jesuit Refugee Service, was to create the necessary conditions that would enable migrant doctors to work according to their qualification in Portugal (thus contributing towards their integration in Portuguese society, through the recognition of their skills and qualifications), and also to address the shortage of qualified Portuguese professionals.



Throughout the implementation of the project, several activities were addressed, namely:

- Candidate selection;
- Gathering of all the required documents;
- Delivery of the documentation to the University of Medicine;
- Training period;
- Registration in the Portuguese Medical Council;
- Professional integration;
- Re-integration of those who did not pass the final exam;

The methodology used in the implementation of the project is based on individual guidance in each case. The background of each of the beneficiary doctors is known, and they are made aware of the path they have to take in order to achieve their academic and professional integration.

Financial support includes reimbursement of the costs associated with the translation of the diploma, the certificate of qualifications and the analytic program, as well as payment of the fees due for legalization of these translations.

In the first project period, 89% of the 120 migrant doctors who participated in the project managed to achieve their professional integration in the Portuguese medical system.

4.2.2. The information deficit of recognition practices among both migrants and employers

One of the reasons put forward to explain the fact that few migrants apply to have qualifications obtained in third-countries recognised in the country of residence is the lack of information about the recognition procedure.

This lack of awareness is also observed on the employers' side. The LINET study reports that *"many companies (...), including some of the countries' largest ones, are reported to ignore the work performed by the Agency for the assessment of foreign qualifications"*.

Possible solutions to this information deficit on both sides are to streamline awareness of the recognition qualifications in the pre-departure and/or arrival information packages and measures for migrants; to centralise information about general equivalence between third-country and national qualifications and to mainstream it in the databases of public employment services so that the information is readily accessible to employers.

The provision of such information in 'one-stop-shops' and similar migrant information centres is a trend that can be observed in EWSI good practices.

GOOD PRACTICES

IQ Netzwerk – "Integration durch Qualifizierung" (Germany)

IQ is an information and counselling network which improves working opportunities for immigrants in Germany. The network consists of six focal centres acting nationwide and thematic study-groups. IQ develops, tests and transfers instruments and strategies in the following fields of action: consulting, German at the workplace, business start-up, cultural mainstreaming, skill auditing and vocational qualification. Since 2011, it operates the Internet portal www.netzwerk-iq.de to provide online counselling services.



Its work on the recognition of qualifications aims at:

- Improving the access of people with a migration background to existing offers of professional qualifications through, for example, advisory and training opportunities;
- Supporting the development of the implementation of employee training related to the [Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act](#) and piloting this nation-wide.
- Systematically collecting regional training needs, comparing them with existing services and helping to eliminate gaps in provision.
- Developing and disseminating quality criteria, concepts and training.

'One-stop-shops'

The [National Immigrant Support centres](#) run by ACIDI in Portugal and the “[Facilitating the integration of TCNs into Romanian society](#)” project run by ADO SAH ROM in Romania provide ‘one-stop-shop’ services to immigrants in which advice and support on the recognition of qualifications is provided alongside other services such as help with residence permits, naturalisation, language and labour orientation. This helps in providing information on the recognition of qualifications as soon as possible after arrival.



Information portals

The information portals www.berufsanerkennung.at (Austria) and www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de (Germany) provide a single access point to immigrants for information on the different actors involved in the recognition of qualifications process, and on the different procedures. Both portals are accessible in English, so as to overcome language barriers.

**Berufsanerkennung.at
in Österreich**

**ANERKENNUNG
IN DEUTSCHLAND**

Pre-departure measures

The LINET report mentions that the 2012 [Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act](#) in Germany “has introduced the possibility for prospective labour migrants to have their foreign qualifications assessed prior to arrival in the country. This measure is in line with the European Agenda for Integration of Third Country Nationals (2011) which calls for pre-departure support to migrants in origin countries, identifying the improvement of methods for recognition of the migrants’ qualifications and skills as a key element”.

One improvement at European level could be to include information on the [EU Immigration Portal](#) about the recognition of qualifications and skills schemes that exist prior to departure for each EU country.

4.2.3. The low awareness of migrants’ non-formal and informal competencies

As the LINET report underlines, “where recognition procedures fail to account for formal qualifications, validating non-formal and informal learning can play a key role in the labour market integration of migrants. Successful validation procedures hold the potential of demonstrating the abilities and achievements of migrants both to the migrants themselves and to key stakeholders, including employers. This is a particularly relevant tool for encouraging and facilitating the labour market inclusion of non-economic immigrants, such as family and humanitarian migrants, as well as students”.

Despite the transposition of the [European Qualifications Framework](#) for lifelong learning into national frameworks and the [2012 Recommendation](#) which urges Member States to establish national systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2015, the latest update of the [European Inventory of 2010](#) on the validation of non-formal and informal learning has so far identified only four EU Member States as having a highly developed validation system (Finland, France, Netherlands and Portugal).

This leaves civil society organisations quite a lot of room for manoeuvre to develop alternative systems for assessing the non-formal and informal competencies of migrants.

GOOD PRACTICES

ISOK, Competence Development in Eastern Finland

ISOK is an Eastern Finnish co-operation project, which is coordinated by the Savo Consortium for Education in the North Savo region and funded by the European Social Fund.



The target group of the project is primarily immigrants in Eastern Finland as well as the staff of training organisations. The main purpose is to promote and develop efficient validation of non-formal and informal learning tools and procedures among immigrants and give training to trainers and guidance counsellors, who are involved in the validation process.

The validation procedure for the immigrants involves intense individual guidance, compiling their portfolio, interviews and monitoring. Under guidance, the candidate is interviewed by a professional teacher to verify the level of skills and competences. The candidate in most cases receives an on-the-job training position in the field of his/her experience and that highlights his/her competences. The counsellor, professional teacher and the work place tutor assess the candidate according to a learning outcome based criteria in the given field. The candidate is given a certificate where his competences are described in terms of learning outcomes.

The pilot training programme was carried out in four different organisations, with more than seventy participants. One pilot training was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which in turn contributed to the on-going development of a new national integration programme for immigrants.

Centre for validation of occupational skills (Sweden)

The City of Malmö has a Centre of Validation where diploma verification takes place and where clients work on their 'qualification portfolio', as part of the introduction program for new immigrants to Sweden.



The support process includes four steps: firstly the client fills in an exploratory survey, which is interpreted by a guidance councillor. The second step is a one or two hour intensive identification of occupational skills by a vocational teacher (this ends with a report). Thirdly a three to five day occupational assessment follows, in which the basic occupational demands are discussed and practised (this ends with a certificate). And fourthly, an assessment of 4-8 weeks follows possibly by taking a course in 'upper secondary school', which ends with an upper secondary school certificate. Whilst working on their portfolio, questions for clients include: What have I done? How did I carry out my work tasks? What responsibilities did I have? What skills were required? The portfolio can be handed over to employers.

78% of the evaluation survey respondents said that the scheme prepared them well for their future life in Sweden. The employment officers were also positive about the Qualification Portfolio: 30% found that the scheme made it easier to match job seekers against work.

Kompetenzenbilanz (Austria)

Angebot für beschäftigte Personen mit Migrationshintergrund, Personen mit maximal Pflichtschulabschluss und für WiedereinsteigerInnen. Angesiedelt ist die Kompetenzenbilanz unter dem Dach des waff Beratungszentrums für Beruf und Weiterbildung. Die TeilnehmerInnen an der Kompetenzenbilanz



sollen ihre Fähigkeiten erkennen, benennen und für ihre berufliche Zukunft nutzbar machen können. Die TeilnehmerInnen beschäftigen sich neben ihren Kompetenzen auch mit ihren Wertvorstellungen und ihren Zukunftszielen.

Die Kompetenzenbilanz versteht sich als Instrument non-formal und informell erworbene Kompetenzen der TeilnehmerInnen sichtbar zu machen und so gezielter damit umzugehen. Planungs-, Entscheidungs- und Handlungsfähigkeit der TeilnehmerInnen sollen hinsichtlich der beruflichen Zukunft erhöht werden. Die Kompetenzenbilanz wird als Unterstützungstool eingesetzt, um anstehende berufliche Veränderungen zu meistern und dient als Grundlage für eine gezielte Laufbahnplanung.

Im Einführungsgespräch werden der Kundin/dem Kunden die Vorgehensweise und die Zielsetzung vorgestellt. Entscheidet sich die Kundin/der Kunde für eine Teilnahme werden drei weitere zweistündige Coachingtermine vereinbart. In den Coachings geht es um die Erstellung eines Lebensprofils, das Herausfiltern der Tätigkeiten und der daraus resultierenden Kompetenzen der Kundin/des Kunden, um die Werte und um die Erarbeitung nächster Schritte zur Erreichung der Ziele der Kundin/des Kunden. Zwischen den Terminen bearbeitet die Kundin/der Kunde bestimmte Themenblätter mit denen im darauffolgenden Coaching weitergearbeitet wird.

Sowohl vor als auch nach der Kompetenzenbilanz kann die Laufbahnberatung des waff Beratungszentrum für Beruf und Weiterbildung in Anspruch genommen werden, wo auch finanzielle Fördermöglichkeiten abgeklärt werden können.

Die 2009 durchgeführte Evaluierung hat gezeigt, dass die Erwartungen der TeilnehmerInnen nach Selbstreflexion und beruflicher Orientierung durch die Kompetenzenbilanz in hohem Maße erfüllt werden.

Die Gesamtzufriedenheit unter den TeilnehmerInnen ist sehr hoch. Die Kompetenzenbilanz fördert auch berufliche Veränderung: ein Drittel hat durch die Kompetenzenbilanz eine passende berufliche Tätigkeit gefunden, 42 % haben eine Verbesserung der beruflichen Situation erzielt.

Valorisation des compétences acquises à l'étranger (France)

En France, les diplômés étrangers ou l'expérience professionnelle acquise dans les pays d'origine ne sont pas reconnus sur le marché du travail. Les étrangers diplômés ou ayant une expérience professionnelle depuis plusieurs années dans leur pays d'origine (infirmier, instituteur, ingénieur...) occupent souvent des postes sous qualifiés par rapport à leurs compétences initiales quand ils arrivent en France. L'action « Valorisation des compétences acquises à l'étranger » vise à valoriser ces compétences professionnelles et à faire accéder les étrangers confrontés à cette difficulté à un emploi ou à une formation proche de leurs compétences.



Une étude, menée sur Strasbourg en 2000, a fait apparaître les difficultés que les étrangers, notamment qualifiés et diplômés, rencontraient pour accéder à un emploi correspondant à leurs compétences. Deux raisons principales avaient été mises en avant : la maîtrise insuffisante du français et la non reconnaissance des compétences professionnelles acquises dans leur pays d'origine.

Les objectifs de l'action sont de :

- valoriser voire faire valider les compétences professionnelles acquises à l'étranger
- accéder à un emploi ou à une formation dans un domaine proche des compétences identifiées
- renforcer des compétences générales à visée professionnelle

L'action de formation consiste à proposer une formation en français (en lien avec le projet professionnel) associée à un stage en entreprise permettant de valoriser les compétences professionnelles acquises dans le pays d'origine. L'action se compose d'une formation au sein de l'association et d'une formation en entreprise.

Formation au sein de l'association :

- communication et vocabulaire professionnel
- formalisation des compétences acquises à l'étranger
- évaluation / vérification des acquis de l'expérience

Formation en entreprise :

- découverte des milieux de travail
- vérification et validation du projet professionnel
- évaluation des compétences professionnelles

Chaque session (1 seule par année) concerne 15 personnes. Depuis le début du projet, une soixantaine de personnes ont été concernées par cette action. A l'issue du stage, environ 1/3 des candidats a accès à un emploi ou à une formation dans un domaine proche des compétences identifiées. Mais les effets de cette formation ne sont pas toujours immédiats : l'accès à un emploi ou à une formation est parfois plus tardif mais cette action permet d'enclencher une dynamique.

5. Conclusion

Compared to EU citizens, non-EU migrants suffer more from over-qualification. This is the case in particular for young and women migrants.

The sole EU legislative instrument in this field applies to non-EU migrants only if they have acquired their qualifications and competencies through formal learning in an EU country. The recognition of qualifications and competencies obtained in third countries – whether obtained through formal, informal or non-formal learning – is regulated at national levels. It is unlikely that the recognition of qualifications and competencies acquired in non-EU countries will be regulated at EU level in the near future. European stakeholders are therefore pressing EU institutions to develop alternative mechanisms and to propose guidelines towards converging standards across member states.

In some countries such as Germany and Austria, significant developments are taking place, with a view to countering the horizontal and vertical fragmentation of the different bodies in charge of validating qualifications and competencies and to overcome the information deficit of the recognition process among migrants and employers.

In the meantime, local authorities and civil society organisations run numerous innovative projects to overcome the legislative gaps and the complexity of current administrative arrangements. They centralise information and act as intermediaries, assisting migrants before, during and after the recognition procedures. In cooperation with private sector employers, they develop systems for assessing informal and non-formal skills which help migrants in demonstrating their abilities and achievements.

ANNEX 1: FURTHER READING

The European Web Site on Integration offers a wealth of information regarding current trends in the recognition of qualifications and competencies of non-EU migrants.

Other EU databases also provide information regarding national and transnational projects in this field. The following services can be explored in particular:

DG Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion

- European Social Fund: <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&list=1>

DG Education and Culture

- All programmes: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/eve/
- Leonardo Da Vinci: <http://www.adam-europe.eu>