HORECA
4VET

VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION MODEL FOR HORECA4VET MARKET QUALIFICATIONS

RESULT 3: VALIDATION MODEL FOR HORECA4VET MARKET QUALIFICATIONS
RESULT 4: CERTIFICATION MODEL FOR HORECA4VET MARKET QUALIFICATIONS

Rezultat 3: Model walidacji kwalifikacji w projekcie HoReCa4VET

Rezultat 4: Model certyfikacji kwalifikacji w projekcie HoReCa4VET

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INTRODUCTION

The main goal of the **HoReCa4VET** project is to increase access to lifelong learning of formal, informal and non-formal nature in the HoReCa industry by developing and implementing validation and certification models in accordance to European Qualifications Framework.

Validation and certification of non-formal and informal learning is a crucial challenge of lifelong learning and a priority for national and European vocational education and training policies in all sectors, including HoReCa industry. A huge impact should be put on the development of the validation and certification model of qualifications. HoReCa is a sector in which there is a particularly urgent need for sectoral qualification framework in the light of current developments towards European market.

There is a need for transparency of qualifications and diplomas in the HoReCa sector, regardless of the country or vocational training and educational system in which they were acquired. To support national strategies for lifelong learning, some countries developed mechanisms for continuing training and upgrading workforce skills. To ensure the relevance and quality of training is to ensure that it is delivered by qualified VET trainers. That is so important to develop mechanisms to assess and certify trainer competences in the HoReCa sector.

Entities belonging to the HoReCa industry undertake activities related to market monitoring and then rapid response to the skills mismatch. There is a need of constantly following of the changes and adjustment the offer to the labour market needs, especially in terms of staff competences. Lack of practical skills and experience in the profession does not allow to become a potential job candidate, frequently having insufficient preparation to perform practical professional tasks.

In response to the needs of the labour there was established an European partnership project in the Erasmus+ programme titled: **Market qualifications - a signpost for minimizing competence gaps between education and the labour market in the HoReCa sector** (Project No.: 2020-1-PL01-KA202-082206). International consortium consists of European institutions of vocational education and training has developed a model of certification and validation of qualifications for HoReCa sector in **Cyprus (EDITC Ltd), Poland (Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Innowacji i Edukacji, Radom – project coordinator** and **EVACO, Cracow**), **The Republic of North Macedonia (Samerimpeks Impulsi DOO), Spain (FUNDACION EQUIPO HUMANO)** and **Turkey (AKDENIZ UNIVERSITY)**, based on ISO / IEC 17024:2012 - Evaluation of conformity. General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons and on the basis of Directive 2005/36 / EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005. On the recognition of professional qualifications, as well as the recommendations of the Council of 20 December 2012 . the validation of non-formal learning and informal learning (2012 / C 398/01).

The HoReCa4VET project contributes to the identification of learning outcomes in the framework of identified learning outcomes by employers based on current market demand, as additional professional skills in the European dimension, which can be acquired in three qualifications (1. **Creating flavours & decorating dishes; 2. Kitchen work management; 3. Management in the HORECA industry**) as part of the project.

The project is directed to lifelong learners of a formal, informal and non-formal nature of all age groups, broadening knowledge, raising the skills and competences of the workforce, and promoting flexible learning pathways, including through career counselling and confirmation of acquired competences. The main objective of the project was to increase the access to lifelong learning of people graduating in the tourism and catering industry and wanting to start a professional career in the HORECA industry (i.e. the hospitality industry) by

developing and implementing validation and certification models in line with the EQF due to cooperation with transnational partners and drawing on knowledge and experience from their activities in this field.

The developed validation and certification model is the basis material required for the development of future courses and training programs. Different approaches from partners' perspective allowed for the development of the learning outcomes and finally, to establishment certification processes and validation system. There were prepared recommendations obtained from comparative studies conducted in the partner countries taking into account the good practices of European partner institutions regarding the validation and certification are based on concrete competence requirements, which serve as clearly defined and agreed reference points for curricula for trainers and for assessing the competences gained at work.

Validation and certification are based on concrete competence requirements, which serve as clearly defined and agreed reference points[1] for building curricula and for assessing the competences gained at work. The requirements are stated in various documents: (a) occupational standards, describing the profile of a person providing training; (b) qualification standards, describing the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) that everyone with a trainer's qualification is expected to possess.

In learning at the workplace, the young become familiar with the world of work; those in employment develop their potential and continuously upgrade their skills. Training in companies can also help reduce the number of those who are low-skilled and increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning. A total of 60% of Europe's enterprises provide training for their employees and some studies suggest that trainers in enterprises probably comprise the largest trainer category across Europe. A Cedefop study pointed to a positive influence of VET on the economic performance of companies, especially when new knowledge and the competences of higher qualified workers are transferred to others.[2]

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1   European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. CEDEFOP 2009
2   Trainers in continuing VET: emerging competence profile. Cedefop, 2013

HORECA4VET RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In comparative studies it was adopted standardized research methodology to partner countries focusing on a comparative analysis of existing policies, tasks and competence standards and other related documents with validation and certification. In the HoReCa4ET project and in the conducted research it was established the glossary of terms based on the:

- Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning

- Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

- Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/C 398/01).

The uniform methodology was used for the study in all partners' countries that focuses on a comparative analysis of selected documents that describe, among others, models, schemes of the certification and validation of profiles, job training, qualifications, competence standards which may be a reference point for building the description of the professional competence standard for the HoReCa industry. In the frame of the methodology there were described the following elements:

- **Purpose of research** - the aim was the analysis of intentionally selected documents describing, among others, models, diagrams of certification and validation for the HoReCa industry in the partners' countries reading three selected qualifications: in three qualifications:

  1. Creating flavours & decorating dishes

  2. Kitchen work management

  3. Management in the HORECA industry.

- **The subject of research - t**here is a need for transparency of qualifications and diplomas in the HoReCa sector, regardless of the country or vocational training and educational system in which they were acquired. The subject of comparative studies covered the structure and substantive content of the description of the requirements for certification and validation for the HoReCa sector.

- **Research problems** - What are the links between validation of nonformal informal learning and national qualifications systems in partners' countries? How are the rules for validating of nonformal and informal learning developed in order to enhance the comparability and transparency of methods and approaches to validation in partner countries for the HoReCa industry? What kind of reference points are used for validation of nonformal and informal learning for main three qualifications in partners' countries?

- **Methods, techniques and research tools** - in order to verify formulated research problems there was prepared the method of desk research to identify and analyse selected documents describing, among others, models of validation and certification for the HoReCa sector which are a reference point for building the description of the standard of professional competence for HoReCa industry. The expert method was used in formulating conclusions and recommendations. During the conducted studies it was used the experts service - specialists in creating descriptions of competency requirements and specialists - experts from HoReCa sector.

- **Organization and area of research** - the research in Cyprus, Poland, Spain, The Republic of North Macedonia and in Turkey. It was carried out between November 2021 and June 2022 with the participation of external experts and stakeholders from partners' institutions. On the basis of the national reports, there

were developed a common analysis with the similarities and differences in describing the requirements for validation and certification requirements for the HoReCa sector.

Identifications of existing validation and certification models/systems in the HoReCA sector

In the Hospitality, Restaurant, and Catering (HoReCa) sector, various validation and certification models/systems exist to assess the skills and competencies of individuals. These certifications can help establish a standardized level of expertise and provide credibility

There are a few examples of the many certification programs available in the HoReCA sector. Certification bodies often collaborate with industry experts to develop comprehensive assessments that validate practical skills, knowledge, and professionalism in the field. These examples reflect the diversity of certifications available within the European HoReCa sector. Many of these certifications are designed to meet European standards and are recognized across multiple countries, making them valuable for professionals seeking to work in different parts of Europe. It is possible to find a range of qualifications and certifications in the hospitality sector that are recognized across Europe but there is no models dedicated to the HoReCa sector which offers a European Vocational Qualification (EVQ) system that aims to standardize qualifications within the hospitality sector across European countries. These examples reflect the diversity of certifications available within the European HoReCA sector. Many of these certifications are designed to meet European standards and are recognized across multiple countries, making them valuable for professionals seeking to work in different parts of Europe.

Validation and certification of non-formal and informal learning is a crucial challenge of lifelong learning and a priority for national and European vocational education and training policies in all sectors, including HoReCa industry. A huge impact should be put on the development of the validation and certification model of qualifications. The HoReCa industry is a sector in which there is a particularly urgent need for sectoral qualification framework in the light of current developments towards European market.

The study presents the comparative studies conducted in the partner countries taking into account the good practices of European partner institutions regarding the validation and certification are based on concrete competence requirements, which serve as clearly defined and agreed reference points for building curricula for trainers and for assessing the competences gained at work.

3.1. Poland

In Poland, the individuals who were employed in HoReCa sector and possess long-time vocational experience do not have the possibility to obtain a document, recognizing their qualifications if they do not finish earlier vocational school or do not participate in qualifying course. The examination, recognizing the professional qualifications may be entered by everyone who meets the criteria contained in the procedure for recognizing the qualifications. The examination, which recognizes qualifications, takes place few times a year, depending on the number of the applying persons in a given profession. It is possible to enter into the discussed examination in a given profession once a year.

In Poland, the confirmation of skills acquired through work is governed by the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 3 February 2006 on the acquisition and supplementing by adults of general knowledge, skills and qualifications in-school forms (L.G No. 31, item. 216).

Obtaining and replenishment of qualifications includes the following non-school forms of education: course; professional course; the seminar and professional practice. Professional practice is a non-formal way of

education with a duration dependent on the complexity of the skills necessary to perform professional tasks but not less than 80 hours of classes. It enables pupils to obtain or complement the practical skills of using the knowledge and experience of participants. The Regulation also regulates the terms, conditions and procedures for conducting education, including distance learning outside of the school.

The organizers of the exams, which confirm qualifications, are: Central and Regional Examination (Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna, Okręgowe Komisje Egzaminacyjne), chambers of crafts (Izby Rzemieślnicze) and examination committees appointed by the superintendent (Kurator Oświaty).

In Poland, the individuals who were employed in HoReCa sector and possess long-time vocational experience do not have the possibility to obtain a document, recognizing their qualifications if they do not finish earlier vocational school or do not participate in qualifying course. Separate legislation lays down the eligibility requirements (often with regard to the scope and content of training, as well as training centres), including special permission to perform a particular profession or professional tasks. Competence to determine the conditions for granting authorization and operation of training centres have ministers for various departments of government.

There are many different methods of recognition of previous education taking place outside formal education. Less complex are tests to measure the level of skills and competences. To more complex analysis methods should be called. portfolio - presented by the candidate briefcase with materials and documents that confirm knowledge of specific areas and the level of knowledge and skills.

To recognize the qualifications, obtained through work the following procedure has been employed:

1. **Classification of the professions**.

2. **Enabling to obtain information** on the possibility of recognizing the qualifications, acquired through work.

3. **System of information and advisory assistance for candidate.** The possibility will be created for the candidates who wish to confirm their vocational qualifications, in respect of obtaining the additional information on the way and dates of validation of qualifications and also, on the scope of the required knowledge and skills. To this end, the guidebooks for the candidates will be developed. The mentioned brochure contained information about the subject of the examination, the range of the examination, the requirements for the participants and the examples of examination tasks and the information about the run of the examination. One of them included general problems concerning the whole HoReCa industry and the second guidebook covered specialist issues for a given profession and for partial qualifications.

4. **Self-assessment**.

5. **Application form**.

6. **Examination, recognizing the qualifications**.

7. **Documentation of procedure**

Examination aimed at confirmation of qualifications was divided into two parts: theoretical part and practical part. Theoretical part was divided into two parts: tests concerning the knowledge of safety and hygiene of work (*bhp*) and knowledge of vocational qualifications. The limit of passing the theoretical examination from *bhp* was constituted by minimum 14 correct answers to 20 questions in the test. There were three answers to choose for each question; one of them was correct.

When assessing the passage of practical examination, the examining commission employed the following criteria: demand on materials for performance of practical task; preparatory operations before performance of practical task; organization and keeping of order on work post; observing the health and safty rules during performance of practical task; esthetics of performing practical task; performance of practical task in accordance with the obligatory rules.

It was adopted that the pilot confirmation of vocational qualifications in Poland would be carried out based on the decisions of and in conformity with the requirements of standard PN-EN ISO/ICE 17024:2004 "Conformity assessment – General requirement for bodies operating certification of person". INTERNATIONAL STANDARD ISO/IEC 17024 First edition 2003-04-01. Considering organizational costs, accreditation costs and time necessary for establishing and accrediting an entity certifying the personnel (minimum 8 months), it was decided that the best solution would be to use a simplified organizational structure for the purposes of the pilot implementation.

In Poland, there is no system of recognizing the qualification, acquired by work. The experiences obtained during the conducted pilot examination facilitate development of legislation background for confirmation of non-formal qualifications.

It is advisable preparation of the appropriate changes in code of labour, the law on education, and in case of HoReCa – building law and act of management of real estate in favour of popularization of recognizing professional qualifications as a distinguished element, confirmed e.g. by certificate by the entity, accredited by Polish Centre of Accreditation based on the document equivalent to certificate.

The good legal and formal basis for validation of qualifications achieved in the process of work is found in the norm ISO / IEC 17024:2012 - Evaluation of conformity. General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

Examination commissions exist only at the chambers of craft but they operate the examinations during the so-called departure session what is important especially in the case of apprentice exams.

There are about more than two thousand Apprentice and Master Commissions in the whole country, and they include about eight thousand professionals. They are recruited mainly from the craft environment, but not exclusively. In the committee's work are involved many people from outside this environment like Vocational school teachers, lecturers of vocational training establishments, as well as persons working outside the craft. Keeping this principle is essential due to the exchange of experiences, knowledge sharing, both the method of examination, as well as on technical innovations.

Local government of craftsmanship for many years has improved the system of self-exams always puts a lot of attention devoted to the organizational level of examinations, takes care for the proper selection of examiners and organized process of improvement. The internal rules (established by MEiN – Ministry of Education and Science) define formal qualifications of the candidate to work in committee.

In addition, the candidate must present the pedagogical training. Candidates from the craft environment should obtain a recommendation from the craft guild. It was established as a principle that members are not allowed to exceed 65 years of life (at the time of positive selection) and they are appointed for a term of four years, of course, the law re-appointment for another term.

After the appointment, the committee members are directed at training course of examinations methodology, formal rules of commission work or the mode of conducting exams organized by chambers of craft. The persons who have not attended such training are not allowed to take part in the commissions, according to the resolution of the Management Board of the Polish Craft Association.

A characteristic feature is conducting the examinations outside the home plant of the candidate and without the participation in the committee his master trainers - employers. Such a person should be excluded from the examination team. An important part of the examination system is its uniformity requirements for candidates for exams, regardless of their place.

Standards for examination on the example of master's examination degree

This exam consist of two phases: practical and theoretical. **Practical stage** involves an independent candidate tasks performed by checking the practical skills examination. The duration of the practical stage may not be less than 120 minutes and not longer than 24 hours, a total of three days. It is carried out with employers or in training workshops with organizational and technical conditions necessary for the implementation by the candidate's examination tasks.

Theoretical stage involves answering the questions posed in two parts; written and oral theoretical knowledge checking. In the written part of the range of topics: accounting professional with a quote, business documentation, rules and principles of health and safety at work and fire protection, basic principles of environmental protection, basic labour laws, basic issues in the field of establishment and business management, basics of psychology and pedagogy, teaching methodology. The duration of the written part can not be less than 45 minutes and not longer than 210 minutes.

In the oral part there is a of range of topics such as technology, theory of machines or materials science. The duration of the oral stage of theoretical may not be longer than 30 minutes.

As a result, positively passed master exam gives a master's diploma, which is a formal acknowledgment of qualifications obtained in different paths of education and in the labor process. From the master, a person holding a master's diploma, knowledge is required and skills related to the profession, in terms of employment or self economic activity and training of workers, including young workers and students expressed competence to:

- independent and properly perform the work assigned for the occupation - comprehensive implementation of specific items or services,

- organize workplaces,

- organize work in a small company and oversee the implementation of the work, as part of the line - planning and overseeing the work of the team Staff,

- Plan, organize and supervise technological processes related to the manufacturing of the product or service supplied,

- responsibility for staff: managing and leading a team of Staff engaged for a specific product or service,

- work and tasks in accordance with the rules of safe and hygienic work and fire protection,

- application of the principles of equal treatment of employees based on gender, age and nationality,

- work in accordance with the principles of environmental protection -Shooting profession in the process of manufacturing products or providing services to a greater or lesser impact on the environment eg. waste management, hazardous wastes,

- make use of the technical documentation, standards, manuals, guides and other resource materials concerning the work done within a given profession,

- legal regulations related to independent business activities, hiring and training employees,

- designing new product designs and process modifications to provide services,

- attitudes and behaviour in crisis situations and unusual appearing in the Staff band

- cope with unusual situations, resulting, for example against the problem of technical, technological or organizational during the manufacturing process or service,

- assessment of the situation in the company or on the assigned area of responsibility and formulate comments and proposals regarding necessary amendments,

- unusual tasks - specific orders that require a lot of experience, skills and knowledge of a given profession,

- responsibility for co-creating the image of a company or team of employees,

- the provision of instruction and guidance related to the professional development of employees within the company and through participation in various forms of continuing education,

- openness and a willingness to formulate their own path of professional development through participation in various forms of continuing education,

- assessment of the work and motivation of personnel,

- rules of social conduct and professional ethics.

Specified expectations of a master are verified by specific conditions for admission to master's examination (general and vocational education and professional experience) and examination requirements contained in the procedures of performing master's examination.

Conditions for admission to a master's examination

Master exam at the Chamber of Trade allows a person who meets one of the following conditions:

1) have a secondary school leaving certificate or existing secondary school and the title of journeyman or an equivalent degree in a profession in which passes the test, as well as:

   a) at least three years of occupation, which passes the test, after gaining a degree, or

   b) at least six years of occupation, which passes the test, including before and after gaining a degree;

2) a certificate of completion of secondary school or an existing secondary school and at least six years of occupation, which passes the test, in charge of their own economic activity;

3) a certificate of completion of secondary school or a secondary school and a former journeyman or an equivalent title in entering the profession the scope of the profession, which passes the test, and at least three years of occupation, which passes the test, after gaining a degree;

4) a certificate of completion of secondary school or a secondary school and a former champion in the profession within the scope occupation, which passes the test, and at least an annual period of occupation, which passes the test, after earning a master;

5) has an upper secondary school leaving certificate or existing secondary school, giving secondary education and trainees in the profession within the scope of their profession, which passes the test, and the professional title in the profession within the scope of their profession,

which passes the test, and at least two years' occupation, which passes the test, after gaining a degree;

6) has a high school degree at the direction of or in specialty in the area falling within the scope of their profession, which passes the test, and at least an annual period of occupation, which passes the test, after obtaining the professional title.

Validation of learning outcomes achieved outside the formal education system

In Poland in the area of validation of learning outcomes achieved in non-formal and informal learning we have to deal with a variety of solutions in different industries and with many projects carried out by various organizations and institutions. These include solutions with a long tradition, used on a large scale. There are also completely new projects - pilot projects dedicated to develop and test new methods and principles for validating learning outcomes.

In many professions in the context of vocational education or crafts, you can get a government qualification in a profession or professional qualification. An adult who has gained expertise through apprenticeship, under the fulfillment of certain conditions can take the exam conducted by the regional examination board or journeyman exam organized by the examination of Chambers of Trade.

Polish legislator, in the validation of learning outcomes in the formal education system, has created the opportunity to acquire education at the primary, secondary, secondary education and basic vocational education by external examinations, introduced by the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 January 2012. Extramural can also confirm their individual qualifications that make up this profession. Adopted in this year's amendment to the Act - Law on Higher Education and other laws of 11 July, it introduced the possibility of acknowledgment of learning outcomes acquired in an organized or unorganized institutionally outside the study. This solution has been provided as an alternative path for admission or a way to get part of the ECTS (not more than 50%) assigned to the training program. The possibility of joining the validation process will depend on the candidate held by level of education (diploma) and professional experience.

For other qualifications, the organizations wishing to certify competence must develop its own procedures or adapt solutions developed in other countries (eg. International standards exam). So the dividing line between skills, where there is an opportunity to gain certificates regulated by the State and those in which the path is not available.

Among the projects which have not been regulated at the state level, we can distinguish those in which:

Polish institutions give international qualifications, entering in the cooperation with international institutions; this requires a different level of innovation in order to bring solutions to the Polish context;

Polish institutions work out their own solutions.

In the case of projects based therefore on already developed and regulated by the State model validation (eg. Used during the qualification exams or by chambers of craft; in others - are worked out new solutions that have not previously been used on a wider scale. An example of a solution adaptation is to transfer to the Polish ground examination standards developed in other countries (eg. language exams TELC and TOEFL exams computer ECDL and financial EFA). in such cases, the examination standard developed by the international organization is fully (or with minor changes) introduced in Poland and therefore subject, procedures, methods and tools for validation are arbitrarily fixed, but about the quality of care throughout the process Polish institutions, cooperating with foreign, often accredited.

It is worth to underline that in any, even the most innovative ventures, it is difficult to avoid inspire solutions and materials worked out externally. On the other hand, in the case of some international certificates (eg. financial advisors) the scope of knowledge required must be adapted to Polish conditions - especially when it comes to information on the legal and financial regulations operating in Poland.

The validation of the learning outcomes regulated by the Polish state

Validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes is linked to mechanisms which are in place in formal education. Intensive work has been underway in Poland for several years to introduce changes in these areas. This involves not only the development of a system for validation, certification and transfer of learning outcomes and, consequently, of qualifications, but also the revision and standardisation of terminology.

In Poland, the government regulations on the validation of learning outcomes acquired in besides the formal system relate to tests conducted by Regional Examination Boards, including external examinations (in the field of general and vocational education) and the examination conducted by the Chambers of Crafts, as well as specific professional qualifications, type of building licenses and medical specialties.

In general education, there is the possibility of obtaining basic education level, lower secondary, basic vocational and middle after joining the external examinations in the field of general education, ie. with the mandatory educational activities specified in mainstream education for the following schools for adults: elementary school, middle school and high school, as well as external examinations with the terms set out in the general education curriculum for basic vocational school. A necessary condition for admission to these exams is to complete the appropriate grade lower level, depending on the exam, to which it joins.

The person can proceed to as many exams as many qualifications are distinguished in the profession. The achievement of the expected learning outcomes for a given qualification is confirmed by a certificate issued by the district examination committee after passing by the student (learner) exam confirming this qualification. After obtaining all qualifications taken in the profession and obtaining the required level of education a student receives a diploma confirming vocational qualifications. About this degree can also apply to persons who have acquired professional skills, educated at school forms (eg. taking part in the qualifying work course) or performing professional work. Such persons, in order to get a certificate confirming qualification in the profession, should pass an extramural exam is organized by the regional examination commission. To obtain a diploma confirming vocational qualifications, you get the certificate of any qualification separated for the profession and have secondary or vocational obtained after going through the process of education in basic vocational / technical / high school or after passing the exam extramural the scope of the core curriculum for general education vocational school or to a school which offers secondary education.

3. 2 Cyprus

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, the hospitality sector is facing the challenge of not being able to find the workforce it needs, in most EU countries. As a consequence, and despite a rising demand from customers, companies need to adapt their business models to the current reality (e.g. closing during some days of the week/ weekend; opting to serve customers for lunch or dinner (not both); not opening full floors in hotels; or not even being able to open new hotels, after the investment is done). On average, there is currently between 10% to 20% of the workforce missing in the sector in the EU compared to 2019 levels.

HoReCa sector also appears to be struggling to find a qualified workforce, particularly among young people. Social partners in the sector put this down to issues with education and training, as well as issues around the

attractiveness of the sector as an employer. Long working hours, seasonal, part-time and temporary work can all lead to prospective employees choosing to look elsewhere in the economy for employment.

Most workers in hotels and restaurants have a level of education that corresponds to 'lower secondary' or 'upper secondary' and this group is larger than in the overall workforce of the EU27. In 2022, in Cyprus there were 7,000 unfilled positions which represent approximately 25% of the total work force in the industry

However, employers in Cyprus find it hard to find qualified people for the Horeca Industry since many people do not want to work in this industry due to the low wages, the difficult working hours. Even the people that start to work in the HORECA industry they leave this industry very easily when they find a new job with better payment and working conditions. Also, employers do not want to invest in the training or skill updating of employees since the employees tend to change very easily work.

The upgrading of the human resources through planned and regular actions constitutes the cornerstone of the efforts made in order to increase productivity and improve competitiveness in the Cypriot market.[3] The establishment and operation of a System of Vocational Qualifications in Cyprus are expected to play a major role in this effort and is included among the priorities of the state. This crucial strategic objective constitutes a commitment of Cyprus vis-a-vis the European Union and has been included in the National Action Plan for Employment, the Lisbon Strategy Action Plan, as well as in the Operational Programme "Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion, 2007-2013.

The proposed National Action Plan for the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in Cyprus has been formulated as part of the second phase of the project „Preparation of a National Action Plan for the Establishment of Non-Formal and Informal Learning Validation Mechanisms".

The project is part of a larger project entitled „Establishing Non-Formal / Informal Learning Validation Mechanisms and Pilot Implementation", which is part of the Operational Program „Employment, Human Resources and Social Cohesion" 2014-2020.

The proposed National Action Plan contains elements on strategic targeting, principles, conditions, governance, and whatever is needed to operate a comprehensive non-formal and informal learning validation mechanism in Cyprus.

Upon completion of the National Action Plan, an Action Plan will be developed for the pilot implementation of the non-formal and informal learning validation mechanism in Cyprus in the fields of Volunteerism, Youth and Adult Education. The pilot implementation will be completed on 31/12/2023, during which date the co-funded project „Establishment of Non-Formal / Informal Learning Validation Mechanisms and Pilot Implementation" will be completed.

National qualifications framework

The Council of Ministers, by its Decision No. 67.445, dated 9/07/2008, approved a proposal for the appointment of a National Committee with the mission of developing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for Cyprus.

The national qualifications framework (NQF) includes all levels and types of qualifications from all subsystems of education and training, including non-formal learning.

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3   https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/cyprus/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning

The Cyprus NQF is not yet in operation. It will be established at the Ministry of Education and Culture as an in-service department and will be implemented gradually. New legislation on operation of the NQF is thought necessary.

The NQF's main objective is to classify qualifications according to predefined levels of learning outcomes. It is expected that the NQF will support recognition and validation of qualifications; enable progression and mobility; promote lifelong learning, e.g. by certifying learning outcomes acquired outside formal education; improve transparency, quality, and relevance of qualifications; and, strengthen links with the labour market. One important policy objective is also to reinforce vocational education and training (VET) at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels.

Development of Vocational Qualification Standards (VQSs) within the VQS System

Through a public consultation process and taking into account recommendations made by organized bodies, the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) has prepared an indicative list of the proposed new Qualifications Standards (QSs) to be developed in the context of the 2014-20 Program. The Qualifications Standards (QS) have the following characteristics:

- There are 8 levels of Professional Qualifications patterns
- The certification of qualifications by an official state body is an important asset to any professional course work.
- The Human Resource Development Authority has established and operates the Qualifications System, where the ability of a person in a particular professional field is examined in real working conditions and certified.

The list includes a total of 152 QSs, which consist of work areas in various sectors. The tasks are formulated in the form of learning outcomes for specific levels of knowledge, skills and competences as defined by the Cyprus and European Qualifications Framework (CyQF / EQF) Descriptive Indicators. HRDA is currently certifying professionals including Tourism Industry or Professional Training.

The validation of the evaluation results of the previous learning and the certification of the professional qualifications of the candidates in the HoReCa sector will help the unemployed and inactive persons to find a job and the employed persons to advance themselves.. In addition, companies that promote the certification of the professional qualifications of their employees, achieve the upgrade of their human resources and consequently increase their productivity and competitiveness. There is no financial burden for participants in the evaluation and certification process.

3.3 Turkey

The Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) is a national framework that aligns with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). It covers qualifications obtained from primary, secondary, and higher education, as well as other learning outcomes.

TQF indicates a national qualifications framework that has been designed in harmony with the EQF and represents all qualifications acquired through vocational, general and academic programs, including primary, secondary and higher education or other learning environments.

The Regulation on the principles and procedures regarding the application of the Turkish Qualifications Framework" was developed in collaboration with various stakeholders, including public institutions such as the Ministry of Education and the Council of Higher Education, trade unions and employers union, professional and non-governmental organizations, national and international experts, and academics, entered into force by

publication in the Official Journal by Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 2015/8213 of November 19, 2015. The Communication on the Turkish Qualifications Framework and the supplement to it prepared in accordance with the regulation entered into force by publication in the Official Journal under number 29581 of 02/01/2016.

The TQF is designed to encompass qualifications gained across various educational and learning environments, including vocational, general, and academic programs at different levels of education.

The establishment of the TQF and its alignment with the EQF is an important step to enhance the comparability and transparency of qualifications within the Turkish education system and across the European region. This framework allows for better recognition of qualifications, promotes mobility, and facilitates the transferability of skills and knowledge across borders.

National occupational standard (NOS) is the minimal norm that displays the required knowledge, skills, behaviours and manners accepted by Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) in order to successfully practice an occupation.

There are 857 national occupational standards defined in Turkey among these 26 sector. Under the HoReCa sector 33 occupation have been defined. Vocational Qualifications Authority (Mesleki Yeterlilik Kurumu), Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Association of Mediterranean Touristic Hotels (AKTOB) and Association of Entrepreneurs and Investors (TUROB) collaborated in order to determine the vocational standards in Horeca sector. The occupations in Horeca sector is related to housekeeping, food and beverage service, front office, cooking and tourist guiding. These are the organisations that develop occupational standards in HORECA sector in Turkey: Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turistik Otelciler, İşletmeciler ve Yatırımcılar Birliği (TUROB), Akdeniz Turistik Otelciler ve İşletmeciler Birliği (AKTOB), Türkiye Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Konfederasyonu (TESK), Türkiye Seyahat Acenteleri Birliği (TÜRSAB), Alanya Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası (ALTSO), Fethiye Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası and TAB Gıda Sanayi ve Ticaret Anonim Şirketi. There are also 512 defined national qualifications in Turkey and 24 of them are defined under the Horeca sector. In terms of qualifications learning outcomes and verification criteria are regarded as critical components.

In Turkey, validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL) is mostly valid for the learning outcomes leading to vocational qualifications. The Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) plays quite a functional role in this regard. The validation system in Turkey has some unique characteristics by which it deviates from the VNFIL model described in the 2012 Recommendation.

Recognition of previous learning (RPL) is the process of recognition according to a standard agreed on learning achievements obtained in the context of formal, non-formal and/or free learning. In addition to schools, knowledge, and skills acquired outside of formal education in work and daily life can be among these learning achievements.

Thus the qualifications become more important than ever in HORECA sector. The sector requires more and more diverse competences and qualifications today. Qualifications provides employers with qualified staff and enables employment for the employees in appropriate positions. The developed qualifications will make it possible to carry out the validation and certification procedure for people who have acquired learning outcomes within non-formal education and informal learning.

In terms of qualifications learning outcomes and verification criteria are regarded as critical components.

Testing, assessment and certification[4]

Assessment to be made for certification according to national qualifications based on occupational standards (Level 2, Level3, and Level 4) shall be carried out written and/or oral both theoretical and practical at measurement and assessment centers which provide the necessary conditions.

Method of measurement and assessment and principles of implementation shall be detailed in the national qualifications to be developed in accordance with this occupational standard. Procedures relating to measurement and assessment and certification shall be performed in the framework of Vocational Qualification, Testing and Certification Regulation.

Activities related to them are carried out by certification bodies authorized by VQA. These institutions should first satisfy the requirement to be accredited to offer the relevant qualifications within a system that has been established in accordance with the requirements of TS EN ISO/IEC 17024 Standard. This accreditation is awarded by the Turkish Accreditation Agency (TURKAK) or the accreditation bodies that have signed the multilateral recognition agreement within the European Cooperation for Accreditation.

Institutions meeting the accreditation requirement may apply to VQA for authorization. VQA examines, audits and evaluates the institution's management system as well as policies and procedures for assessment and certification activities. Having been found eligible, institutions are authorized to do assessment and certification based on NQs and are called Authorised Certification Bodies (ACBs). ACBs are only authorised for doing assessment and evaluation not for the provision of training. Authorization for provision of training is subject to the permission of MoNE in Turkey. ACBs offer individuals, regardless of educational status or work experience, to have the learning outcomes recognized which they have gained in any way.

As of May 2019, they carry out assessment and certification activities in 229 NQs.

ACBs develop the assessment processes in light of the requirements defined in the NQs. According to the principles set by VQA; all ACBs are obliged to take instant video-records of all the assessments they carry out. Decisions on the awarding of individuals are taken by the "decision-makers", while the assessors who have the minimum required competencies do the assessment of the candidates. The decision-makers take decisions on the awarding by evaluating the evidence produced by the candidates and the evaluation results of the assessors. In other words, the decision-makers validate the assessment activities conducted by the assessors.

People who have applied, participated or have been certified may raise an appeal to the decisions taken by the ACBs. Moreover, a person or an organization may make a complaint against an ACB or the activities of an ACB. Therefore, ACBs are required to have procedures for the acceptance, evaluation, and conclusion of appeals and complaints.

Following the decisions of the ACBs on the awarding of candidates who have been successful, VQA prepares and issues the VQA Vocational Qualification Certificates to the successful candidates. As of May 2019, a total of 608,000 VQA Vocational Qualification Certificates have been awarded in 229 NQs. Employers, education providers or others can check whether the people truly have the qualifications that they claim through VQA web portal.

3.4 Spain[5]

The evaluation and accreditation of professional competences acquired through work experience and non-formal and informal training is a crucial aspect of promoting lifelong learning and recognizing individuals' skills

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4   https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/turkey/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning
5   https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/spain/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning

and expertise. This process helps individuals gain formal recognition for the skills they have acquired over time, regardless of whether they were obtained through traditional education pathways.

In Spain, this system is a part of the broader effort to enhance the country's education and training systems, aligning them with the principles of lifelong learning, employability, and skills recognition. By allowing individuals to have their skills assessed and accredited, Spain aims to provide more opportunities for career advancement, employability, and personal growth. Here are some key points about this process:

- **Target Audience:** The system targets individuals who have work experience but lack formal professional accreditation, certificates, or qualifications. This might include people who have gained skills through on-the-job training, self-directed learning, or other non-formal avenues.

- **Validation of Professional Competences:** The process involves assessing an individual's skills, knowledge, and competences acquired through their work experience and informal learning. This validation recognizes that learning can occur in various contexts beyond formal education.

- **Non-Formal Education:** Alongside work experience, the system also acknowledges competences acquired through non-formal education, which includes learning from workshops, seminars, online courses, and other organized activities that may not lead to traditional degrees.

- **Accreditation:** Successful candidates receive formal accreditation for the competences they possess. This might take the form of a certificate or qualification, acknowledging their skills and making them more recognizable to employers and other stakeholders.

- **Lifelong Learning:** Lifelong learning is a fundamental concept in this approach. It recognizes that learning occurs throughout life and that skills gained from various experiences contribute to an individual's overall competence.

- **Career Advancement:** Accreditation of professional competences can lead to improved career opportunities, job mobility, and the ability to pursue higher-level roles within an industry.

- **Skills Recognition:** This process helps bridge the gap between informal, non-formal, and formal learning, ensuring that valuable skills are recognized regardless of their source.

- **National Qualifications Framework (NQF):** Many countries, including Spain, have established National Qualifications Frameworks that provide a structured way to understand and recognize qualifications, making it easier to compare skills and competences.

Overall, the system aligns with the principles of recognizing and valuing diverse learning experiences, promoting inclusivity, and supporting continuous professional development. It empowers individuals to have their skills officially acknowledged, contributing to both personal growth and the overall development of a skilled workforce.

Different reforms were carried out, both in relation to the training offer and in relation to the labour market, in order to adapt to the new times. However, the continual updating requirements imposed by technological innovation and increased competitiveness demand the renewal of qualifications and the promotion of training actions more adapted to the market.

In this way, the Organic Law 5/2002, of 19 June 2002, on Qualifications and Vocational Training, establishes the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training, providing it with the necessary instruments to achieve the objectives set by the European Union by promoting lifelong learning and facilitating the recognition and accreditation of professional competences acquired both through training processes and work experience.

Thereby, the Spanish administration has defined the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training as the set of instruments and actions necessary to promote and develop the integration of vocational

training offers, through the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications, as well as the assessment and accreditation of the corresponding professional competences.

Therefore, the National System of Qualifications and Vocational Training is the set of instruments that allow the identification, acquisition, recognition and assessment of professional competences.

Organic Law 3/2022 on the organisation and integration of Vocational Training (LOOIFP) includes and updates, in Title VI, the provisions relating to the accreditation of professional competences acquired through work experience or other non-formal or informal channels. However, this accreditation procedure has not yet been developed, and the draft Royal Decree establishing the Organisation of the Vocational Training System, which develops it, is currently being processed.

Until its processing is completed, it is published in the Official State Gazette (BOE) and it is enforced, the evaluation and accreditation process developed in 2009 (which follows criteria that guarantee the reliability, objectivity and technical rigour of the evaluation) will be the one in force. The National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications serves as an objective reference for this procedure, since it lists the vocational qualifications to be recognised and accredited, identified in the productive system on the basis of the skills required to practice the profession. It includes the most relevant vocational qualifications related to the production system. Such qualifications are organized within vocational families and levels and they serve as the basis and benchmark to elaborate the training offer of the different vocational training titles and the certificates or professional experience.

In order to facilitate knowledge of this procedure and its requirements, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MEFP) provides all stakeholders with the two following tools:

The tool ACREDITA through the TodoFP web portal.;

- the National Institute for Qualifications (INCUAL) website, the technical tool of the General Vocational Training Council (CGFP) which connects the world of labour with the training sector and is responsible for updating the National Catalogue.

All the education authorities publish different calls for the recognition of certain competences. The procedure comprises the following stages:

- Pre-registration information or guidance.

- The registration itself.

- Guidance, on the basis the documents provided: an advisor draws up a non-binding report. If it is positive, the candidate may have access to the evaluation stage. If negative, the report indicates the additional training to be undertaken by the candidate as well as the institutions where he/she can receive it.

- Evaluation of the professional competence: it is checked whether the candidate has the professional competence required.

- Accreditation and record of the professional competence: the accreditation is issued to candidates who have completed the evaluation stage for each competence unit for which the professional competence has been demonstrated.

On completion of the evaluation and accreditation process, the relevant authorities provide all participants with the necessary guidelines to complete training leading to the award of a vocational training qualification or professional experience certificate.

If the workers' professional competences that have been evaluated are not enough to achieve the level of qualification required by a vocational training certificate or a certificate of professional experience, they are

partially accredited. Thus, they can complete their training in order to obtain the relevant qualification or certificate.

In order to participate in the procedure for the recognition of competences, it is necessary to meet some general requirements, which are valid throughout the country. The Autonomous Communities may also establish additional requirements.

The tourism sector constitutes the largest volume of economic-productive activity on a national scale, with a more than significant impact on employment and in which, if we want to continue to be competitive in a market in which other tourist destinations appear behind other new powers, we have to respond to the ever-increasing levels of quality demands, adapting not only our offers or facilities but, above all, our human resources.

3.5 The Republic of North Macedonia

The 2012 Council Recommendation on the validation asks Member States to have in place, no later than 2018, validation arrangements (such as a legal framework, strategy and/or policy) that allow individuals to validate their skills and competences or obtain a (part) qualification through the validation of non-formal and informal learning.[6] While North Macedonia is not Member States and so are not directly implementing the Recommendation, their validation systems, as with their broader education and training reforms, look to European instruments and examples. This section looks at the extent to which their developing VNFIL systems are compatible with the Council Recommendation.

The Republic of North Macedonia has not yet officially started with the implementation of the process of validation and certification of non-formal and informal learning (VNIL), although it is fully conceived and created.

North Macedonia reported to start the validation arrangements in at least some parts (or subsectors) of the education and training area in General and Adult education and in the IVET, as well has some arrangements in place with regards to the labour market.

But there is still no official institution specialized in identifying and validating prior learning acquired through non-formal and informal learning. It is expected that during this year the Legislation will be approved which will regulate the process and all other details related to the implementation of VNIL in the country.

North Macedonia reported to have adopted VNFIL legislation in accordance with the 2012 Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL), but arrangements in the education and training area are still in development and not fully functional as yet. Additional legislation remains to be adopted and tools and systems (e.g. in quality assurance), still need to be implemented to allow the award of certificates as a result of validation. VNFIL has been integrated into broader national strategies for education and qualification system reform. North Macedonia is reported to have prioritised validation in initial education (it is the only out of the three countries that has arrangements in place in both general education and IVET).

In November 2012, the Minister of Education and Science established a working group to develop a National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES). This development resulted in the creation of the document " Macedonian Qualifications Framework - Basis" which was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in July 2013.

The main goals of MQF are to integrate and coordinate educational subsystems and to increase the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in accordance with the labour market and civil

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6   European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2018 update Final synthesis report for Kosovo, North Macedonia and Montenegro. CEDEFOP 2018

society. It was prepared by a working group, formed by the Ministry of Education and Science and based on European documents: the Copenhagen Declaration, the Bologna Declaration and the Decree on the National Framework of Higher Education Qualifications for the Republic of Macedonia.

In The document "Macedonian Qualifications Framework - Basis" the concept, the structure of the national framework and the structure for management and implementation of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework (MQF) is given. In it, MQF is defined as an instrument for developing, classifying, recognizing and acknowledging of the acquired qualifications through learning outcomes and is a reference point for the reforms of the education and training system in the context of lifelong learning.

In this context, the validation in the Republic of Macedonia is defined as "a process of confirmation, by an authorized body, that the individual has acquired the learning outcomes that are measured in relation to a relevant standard (EU Council, 2012, p.5) in order to:

a) Emphasis the knowledge that the individual has acquired outside the formal education and training and

b) Attribute value to what the individual has learned, regardless of the environment in which that knowledge took place, so that the individual could "transform" the results of that knowledge into future opportunities for learning and employment (CEDEFOP, 2015).

As a next step in the development of the validation system, the Center for Adult Education (CAE) together with the working group for validation of non-formal adult education and informal learning determine the details of the validation process in Macedonia, tasks and responsibilities of various institutions, procedures for quality assurance and other related procedures and regulations.

In North Macedonia it is reported that the groups that were reported to use validation initiatives to a greater extent (in general education, IVET and adult education) include low-skilled individuals, low-qualified, adult learners, and jobseekers / unemployed or individuals at risk of unemployment.

Older workers are also a target in adult education and early school leavers are a target in general education and IVET. In North Macedonia, a significant proportion of the general population belongs to various disadvantaged groups, including long-term unemployed individuals and those at risk of unemployment. Increased efforts are needed to improve their participation in lifelong learning and their access to the labour market. In this context, measures linked to Upskilling Pathways Recommendation are also needed, and in line with it, the establishment of skill audits.

Prioritization of target groups for validation depends on two factors: the needs of the labour market for qualified workers in certain sectors, and the general effort of the authorities to support unemployed people (especially with lower qualifications and skills) to access the labour market.

Unfortunately, there is also lack of standardised system of validation and certification qualifications related to HoReCa sector.

The four stages of validation (identification, documentation, assessment, certification) are covered in the education sub-sectors where validation arrangements are in place, except in the case of general education in North Macedonia.

In North Macedonia, draft legislation foresees that validation providers need to deliver all four stages of VNFIL, and therefore, to be accredited they will need to meet the criteria for implementation of all stages. In the labour market, all four stages are covered in North Macedonia.

In the education and training area, governmental organisations have a role in coordination (within and between sectors) and design of quality assurance mechanisms. They also design national strategies for validation, and set up standards. The Ministry will have overall policy responsibility for VNFIL and for overall management of its implementation.

The design of national strategies for validation is also carried out by education and training providers, as is setting up standards. Education and training providers are particularly important in North Macedonia as they also have responsibility for identification and documentation, assessment, and certification.

Licensed education providers also issue certificates. It is reported that the PES has a key role in North Macedonia, covering all functions related to validation, Also, the Centre for Adult Education in North Macedonia will provide technical and capacity-building support to the development and implementation of the VNFIL system.

In North Macedonia, it is reported that education and training providers cover the same functions as governmental organisations but with the addition of provision of IAG, identification and documentation, assessment and certification.

In the labour market, in North Macedonia it is reported that validation initiatives are not linked to the formal education and training area.

It is reported that there are national/ regional quality assurance frameworks (QAFs) specific to validation in North Macedonia. The roadmap and guidance note on VNFIL foresees procedures and measures for quality assurance. The MoES together with other institutions such as the CAE and the State Educational Inspectorate (SEI) will have overall responsibility for VNFIL quality assurance through accreditation, and monitoring and inspection of the system. In Addition, MoES will have overall responsibility for the accreditation of validation providers.

Validation tools and methods

In North Macedonia, tests and examinations, observations, simulations, and portfolios are frequently used in IVET and adult education. Tests and examinations are the only method used in general education. In North Macedonia, during 2018, with support from the Lifelong Learning Centre and international experts, the Centre for Adult Education (CAE) developed a methodology for validation processes. This will be followed by training for relevant 15 stakeholders, and the development of a package of training materials. CAE is also developing guidance materials for portfolio as a tool for validation.

In North Macedonia arrangements are still in development and not fully functional as yet.

VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION MODEL FOR HORECA4VET MARKET QUALIFICATIONS

1. Introduction

The validation and certification model for HoReCa4VET market qualifications has been developed based on the international standards and deeds:

- standard PN-EN ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons;
- Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications (Official Journal L 255, 30/09/2005 P. 0022 – 0142);
- Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (Official Journal of the European Union No. C 111/1);
- EU Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (Brussels, 5 September 2012 COM(2012) 485 final 2012/C 398/01).

Developed model effectively address a key need in the HoReCa sector, particularly for individuals who have accumulated substantial work experience and skills but lack formal qualifications.

2. Requirements of the international standard of PN-EN ISO/IEC 17024:2012

Certification of people in the EU **bodies operating certification** is generally conducted based on the requirements of the international PN-EN ISO/IEC 17024:2012 standard "Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons". According to these requirements, a body confirming people's competence and certifying their qualifications should establish criteria to be met by a candidate applying for a certificate, as well as other requirements ensuring the objectivity of validation and certification effects.

A body operating certification should be constituted by a legal person or a defined part of a legal person so that it can bear responsibility for its certifying activity. A body operating certification shall be able to award certificates, maintain their validity and recertify. It can decide on extending and limiting the scope of certification, suspending or withdrawing certificates. A characteristic feature of bodies operating certification of persons is conducting exams to measure professional competence and provide with assessment of outcomes, based on which the certificates of qualifications are awarded.

Tasks of the **body operating certification manager** shall include the coordination of works of all teams, including the appointment of chairpersons of the Boards of Examiners and their members from the group of sectoral experts applied by the Program Board chairperson. The manager chooses also a form of verifying competence and issues decisions on awarding a certificate based on its own assessment, founded on records of the Board of Examiners or the Appeal Committee.

A body operating certification should have a documented structure guaranteeing the reliability and impartiality of the validation and certification process, as well as independence and impartiality of a body operating certification's activity. This structure should enable all significantly interested parties to participate in development of the policy and rules concerning the certification system's scope and activity, without prevalence of interests of any of the parties.

Based on the PN-EN ISO/ICE 17024:2012 standard, it is assumed that the body to validate the competence and certify the qualifications of the vocational education and training in the HoReCa sector shall have an organisational structure as shown in Fig. 1.
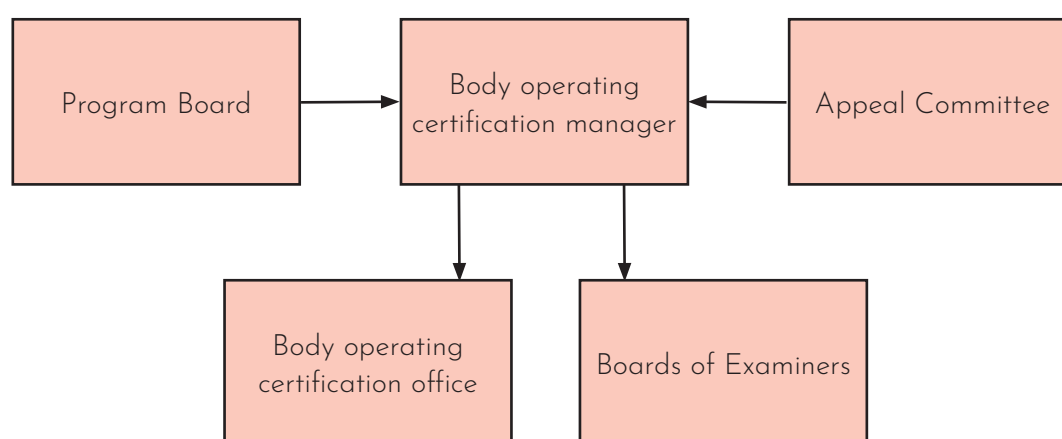

Fig. 1. Organisational structure of a body operating certification

A body operating certification should establish the **Program Board** to be responsible for the development and maintenance of the certification program for every certification type.

A body operating certification should define the policy and procedures (e.g. code of conduct) to deal with appeals and complaints from the applicants, candidates, persons under certification and their employers, as well as from other parties, concerning both the certification criteria and process and the policy and procedures of work performance by people under certification. These policy and procedures should ensure that the appeals and complaints are dealt with in an independent and unbiased way.

A body operating certification should hire, on a permanent or temporary basis, sufficiently numerous staff of sufficient education, training, technical knowledge and experience to perform the certification-related actions, as appropriate for a type, scope and size of performed works, acting under the supervision of responsible management.

A **certification programme** is a basic document defining the requirements. It includes the way of conducting the validation of competence, assessment criteria of competence, certification rules, as well as procedures constituting these processes.

A certification programme shall be assessed and approved by the **Program Board**, composed of representatives of all parties interested in certification, i.e.:

– body operating certification;

– people under certification;

– employers;

– training units;

– professional, sectoral environments and other social partners.

A body operating certification should implement and maintain the **management system** providing with efficient compliance with the standard requirements. This system includes:

– supervision of documents and provisions;

– system of internal audits and management reviews;

– provisions concerning continuous improvement of the system, corrective and preventive measures, including those preventing from conflicts of interests;

– staff involved in the certification process, including examiners holding appropriate subject-related competence within the scope of assessed area and psycho-social features ensuring their impartiality and objectivity.

A body operating certification shall also be obligated to establish the **supervision processes** for the certificate holders, including the **Appeal Committee**. Supervision aims at the provision of objective assessment confirming the competence maintenance by a person under certification at an acceptable level. The Program Board should accept the rules of supervision.

3. Validation and certification model

Qualification requirements for the vocational education and training trainer in the HoReCa sector

– One of the first issues discussed in the group of international experts completing the project included the matter of placing the trainer's competence and qualifications in international classifications of

professions/specialisations and education. The project partners agreed that the vocational education and training in the HoReCa sector combined three areas of competence related to:

— qualifications in the HoReCa industry in which it wants to be a trainer, confirmed with diplomas, certificates and other formal documents, plus with long work experience;

— general education qualifications entitling to conduct classes with youth and adults, confirmed with appropriate certificates recognised in the formal system;

— trainer's qualifications entitling to conduct practical activities in the workplace, in the system of non-formal adult education.

Acquisition of combined substantial qualifications in the HoReCa sector and trainer's qualifications allows for the assignment of a diploma or certificate of the vocational education and training trainer in the HoReCa sector to at least level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework.

Certification programme

Two processes are involved in the recognition and confirmation of competence of a person applying to a body operating certification:

— validation,

— certification.

A certification programme describing these two processes should include:

— validation and certification scope;

— description of work and professional tasks;

— required social competence;

— required knowledge and skills;

— prerequisites of admission to the validation and certification process;

— code of conduct ensuring impartiality and objectivity of assessments and decisions.

In particular, the **validation process** should include:

— requirements concerning the level of education and completion of specialist training courses approved by a body operating certification, confirmed with diplomas, certificates and other documents;

— requirements concerning an exam to confirm the candidate's competence in an impartial and objective way;

— methods of confirming relevant professional experience in the professional area being the subject of competence validation by a candidate.

In reference to the **certification process**, the programme should include:

— criteria of initial certification and recertification;

— assessment methods for initial certification and recertification;

— supervision methods and criteria for the certification process and certificates;

— criteria of suspending and withdrawing certification;

— criteria of changing the scope or level of certification.

Program Board

Tasks of the Program Board include the approval of:

- certification programme for qualifications in the HoReCa sector;
- criteria of validation and certification of qualifications in the HoReCa sector;
- set of documents related to the process of recruitment, validation and certification;
- guide for candidates for the vocational education and training trainers in the HoReCa sector;
- results of validation and certification;
- supervision of the course of the validation and certification process according to the PN-EN ISO/ICE 17024: 2012 standard "Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons" and the adopted certification programme for qualifications in the HoReCa sector.

Appeal Committee

Tasks of the Appeal Committee shall include the consideration of complaints and claims concerning the certification process and participation in the supervision process for awarded certificates, in particular care about compliance with the code of ethics by people under certification.

Boards of Examiners

Two separable Boards of Examiners shall be appointed, separately for Stage I and II of the validation and certification process. It means that people composing the Board of Examiners of the Stage I cannot be members of the Board of the Stage II. They shall include a chairperson chosen from a group of examiners appointed by a body operating certification manager, at the request of the Program Board. Each Board of Examiners shall include minimum three persons – examiners, and a secretary for administration service of the Board works.

All members of the Board must comply with the requirements defined in relevant legal regulations of a country where the validation and certification process takes place.

The Board of Examiners of the Stage I assesses the candidate's professional experience based on its portfolio and evidence collected in it. A positive decision of the Board of Examiners of the Stage I constitutes the basis to admit a candidate to participate in an exam constituting the Stage II of the validation and certification process.

The Board of Examiners of the Stage II assesses the candidate's competence based on a direct interview, having at its disposal an assessment sheet from the Stage I and proposals of questions included in it in three areas: knowledge, skills and social competence. Moreover, an examined person draws a card with three questions from the professional area constituting the subject of competence validation. In justified cases the Board may ask a candidate to perform a practical task in a specially prepared laboratory to test its professional skills.

At the first and second stage of validation, examiners shall use the candidate's assessment sheet, while in the case of a practical task – also the observation sheet.

The **Guide** for candidates for the vocational education and training trainers in the HoReCa sector shall provide the conditions of recruitment, forms, criteria and method of validation and certification of professional competence.

The following signatures shall be placed on a certificate confirming held qualifications:

- Body Operating Certification Manager,
- Chairperson of the Program Board,
- Chairpersons of the Boards of Examiners of Stage I and II.

Examiners

Examiners hired by a body operating certification should:

– understand the certification programme;

– be able to apply the exam procedures and documents;

– be competent in the area concerned by an exam;

– speak and write fluently in a language in which an exam shall be conducted (use of a translator's/ interpreter's service provided that the lack of translation/interpretation's influence on the validity and result of an exam is demonstrated);

– identify all known conflicts of interests to provide the impartiality of made assessments.

A body operating certification must monitor the work of examiners (e.g. observation during examination, review of reports, assessment sheets and other documents developed by examiners, obtaining information on the work of examiners from candidates).

Validation stages and credit criterion to pass

It is assumed that competence validation for the vocational education and training trainer in the HoReCa sector shall be conducted according to item 9.3. "Exam process" of the EN ISO/ICE 17024:2012 standard. It shall take place at two stages:

– Stage I: Assessment of held qualifications based on a portfolio submitted by a candidate.

– Stage II: Interview under validation.

Amount of credits granted to candidates at both stages comes to 100, including:

– Stage I: 70 credits,

– Stage II: 30 credits.

In order to participate in the Stage II of validation, the candidate's assessment at the Stage I should exceed 53 credits, i.e. 75% of 70 credits assigned to the Stage I. Analogously, Stage II shall be passed if a candidate gets at least 23 credits (75% of 30 credits).

It is recognised that the candidate meets the conditions of positive validation of acquired competence when it obtains at least (53+23)=76 credits jointly in two stages of validation.

Decision on certification

Decision on the candidate's certification should be made only by a body operating certification based on the information collected during the validation process. People deciding on certification should not participate in the candidate's examination or training.

Guide for a candidate

Every candidate expressing its willingness to try to validate and certify its professional competence should have access to the guide prepared by a body operating certification.

This guide should include:

– prerequisites for people applying for participation in the validation and certification process for their professional competence;

- information on the rules of validation and certification of professional competence;

- exemplary exam sheets with questions and answers;

- list of documents required at the submission of participation;

- date and place of submitting application forms;

- exam date and place;

- data of a contact point to obtain further information;

- code of ethics of the vocational education and training trainer in the HoReCa sector;

- specimen of an evaluation survey of the validation and certification process.

Validation and certification model

The figure below presents the validation and certification suggested model for the vocational education and training in the HoReCa sector which was developed within the project realisation.
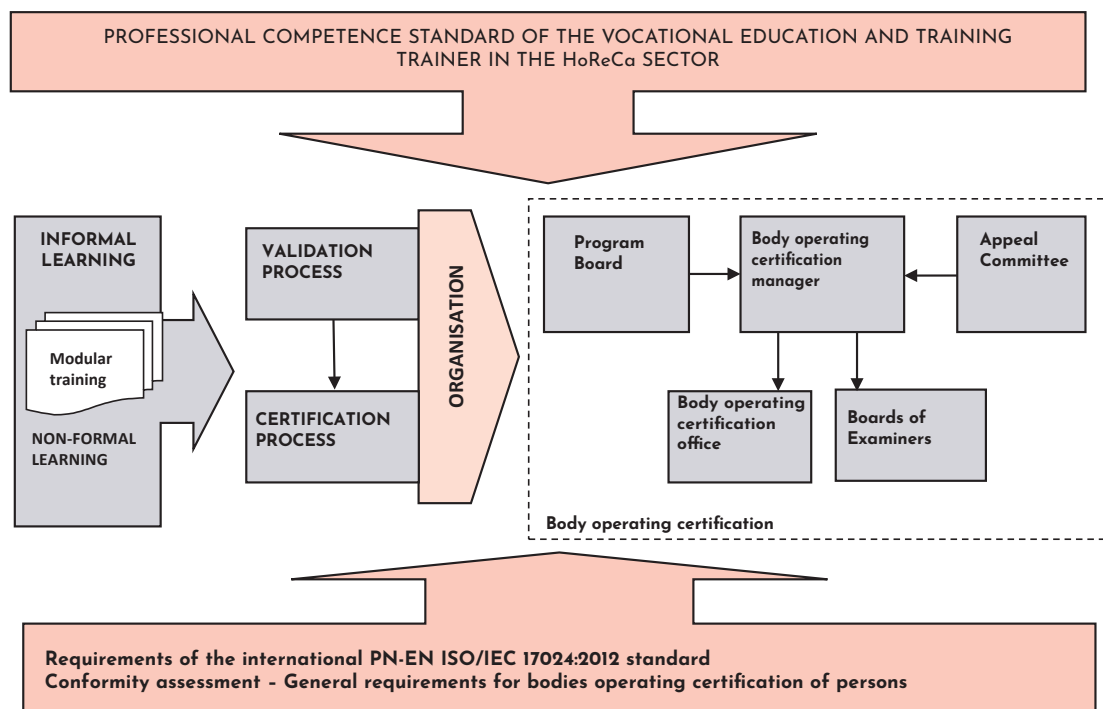

Fig. 2. The validation and certification model for the vocational education and training trainer in the HoReCa sector consistent with the PN-EN ISO/ICE 17024:2012 standard

Conclusions and recommendations

The main aim of the comparative studies conducted in the partner countries (Poland, Cyprus, Turkey, Spain and The Republic of North Macedonia) was to analyse the professional standards of competence profiles, professional tasks, descriptions of knowledge, skills and social skills for trainer of the education and training in

the HoReCa industry - with mainstreaming requirements of the European and national qualifications framework - need to develop standards of professional competence and model validation and certification of competences of coach education and training in the HoReCa industry based on ISO / IEC 17024: 2012.

The outcomes of the analysis, which included answers to research problems defined in this report are:

- model validation and certification of coach education and training in the HoReCa industry presented in Chapter 4 of this report;

- description of the standard of professional competence of coach education and training in the HoReCa industry, agreed in an international partnership project, presented in Report No. 3 "Standard professional competence of coach education and training in the HoReCa industry based on national standards of competence and the European Qualification Framework".

Therefore, to the further work is recommended:

- to use a developed model of validation and certification for VET trainer in the HoReCa industry in the **pilot studies**, after detailing of this model takes into consideration of the specifics, legislation and institutional forms appropriate for the partner country, which will run the pilot;

- the conclusions of the **pilot studies** should be used to **improve** the **original model** of validation and certification for VET trainer in the HoReCa industry, which is based on ISO / IEC 17024: 2012;

- in drawing up the **criteria for validation of competences and tasks** of examination (Part I and II) use requirements for knowledge, skills and social competence contained in the agreed standard of professional competence description o for VET trainer in the HoReCa industry;

- to use the description of the standard of professional competence of VET trainer in the HoReCa sector to develop a **modular training program** to prepare candidates supporting the process of validation and certification of professional competence;

- to allow candidates to complete a training in the formula "at a distance" (**e-learning**) - especially with regard to theoretical knowledge and professional skills provided in the professional competence standard for VET trainer in the HoReCa sector.

This study, through the main intellectual outcomes in the form of a professional competence standard and model validation and certification of persons wishing to pursue the profession of VET trainer in the HoReCa industry, will enable the development of a coherent vocational training program supported by e-learning.

The use of the certification procedure, as part of the development and improvement of the quality of complying with the requirements of ISO / IEC 17024: 2012 will provide the target group a recognized certificate according to accepted European standards of quality and at the same time consistent with the requirements of the European Qualifications Framework level 5.

In the presented model, validation and certification of professional competence is separate from the learning process. There is a verification of the required learning outcomes are in terms of their accordance with the professional competence standards adopted by partners for VET trainer in the HoReCa industry. Validating nonformal and informal learning makes visible the learning gained outside learning institutions. Across a country this represents a vast untapped resource of invisible knowledge and skills and, in addition to the rights of individuals to have their learning recognized, its increased visibility could lead to significant economic and social benefits for individuals, communities and countries.

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