VIDENCENTER FOR UDDANNELSES- OG ERHVERVSVEJLEDNING

Knowledge Centre for Educational and Vocational Guidance

IAEVG Conference
Mannheim, Germany
October 2012
Combining adult career guidance with recognition of prior learning for unemployed people and returning migrants

Carla Tønder Jessing - ctj@viauc.dk
The presentation

1. The project: Aims, objectives, partners and products
2. Models and tools
3. Challenges
The general **aim** of the project is to develop the practice of validation and recognition of competences as part of the counseling services offered by the local employment offices in order to improve their counseling services for unemployed people and returning migrants and increase their chances of entrance to the labour market.

Several objectives fall under this aim:

• to raise awareness on the importance of practice in validation and recognition of competences in the context of promoting matching between skills/competences and needs of the labour market

• to develop useful and easy-to-use counseling instruments that facilitate validation of prior learning outcomes and their match with job opportunities on the current labour market

• to enable employment offices' counselors, NGO representatives and assessors in assessment centres to use these instruments

• to permit exchange of best practices in the field of validation of prior learning outcomes and counseling services for unemployed between the partner countries
Partners

- IREA, Romanian Institute for Adult Education Timisoara, Romania – project management
- National Knowledge Centre for Validation of Prior Learning - NVR, VIA UC, Denmark
- MEH, Merseyside Expanding Horizons, regional non-profit org., Liverpool, England
- University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- DIE, Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenentbildung, Bonn, Germany
- ECET, European Centre for Education and Training, Sofia, Bulgarien
- ARCA, ngo, non-profit (associative partner), Bucharest, Romania
Products of the project

- Country reports
- 3 short films
- Online-tools (instrument and user guide)
- List of basic competences for career counselors
- Model for Self Evaluation of Competences related to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for career counsellors, EQF Level 6
- A Counselling Instrument
  Including:
  - List of competences – social activities, family life, hobbies, voluntary sector and work
  - Social activities
  - Family life
  - Activities done outside work
  - Voluntary activities
  - Work
  - Portfolio – pieces of evidence
  - Report
  - Case studies
The Canadian Guidelines and Standards (core competences and common skills and knowledge):

- Professional behavior
- Interpersonal competencies
- Facilitating Individual and Group Learning
- Career Counseling
- Information and Resource Management
### Basic competences for career counselors according to the EQF, level 6, related to The Canadian Competence Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic competences for career counselors according to the EQF, level 6</th>
<th>A career guidance counselor demonstrates ability to independently contribute to the organization, evaluation and quality development of guidance and counseling</th>
<th>The Canadian Competence Framework: The Canadian Guidelines and Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal competences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>] Possesses knowledge of theories, methods and practice in the field of educational, vocational and career guidance and counseling</td>
<td>• Respect for diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understands and is able to reflect upon the theories, methods and practice in the field of educational, vocational and career guidance and counseling</td>
<td>Facilitating Individual and Group Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Possess knowledge about how to facilitate learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Counseling</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
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<td>Information and Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates skills in using methods of practice grounded in established or recognized theories in the field of educational, vocational and career guidance and counseling</td>
<td>• Demonstrating Method of Practice in Interaction with Clients</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates skills in assessing theoretical and practical problems and challenges in guidance and counseling activities and to choose and argument for adequate solutions</td>
<td>Information and Resource Management</td>
<td>Identification and effective management of quality information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates skills in communicating professional problems and solutions to colleagues, cooperating partners and clients</td>
<td>• Establish effective communication around career information</td>
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### Basic competences for career counselors according to the EQF, level 6

**A career guidance counselor demonstrates ability to independently contribute to the organization, evaluation and quality development of guidance and counseling**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Competences</th>
<th>The Canadian Competence Framework: The Canadian Guidelines and Standards</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates ability to handle complex and dynamic situations in educational and practice contexts</td>
<td>Professional behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates ability to independently and professionally cooperate with relevant professions and professionals</td>
<td>• Adhering to a Code of Ethics and an Ethical Decision-Making Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates ability to identify own learning needs and ability to organize own learning processes in various learning environments</td>
<td>• Demonstrating commitment to professional development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Using analytical skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Managing your work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitating Individual and Group Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitate learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communicate effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop productive interaction with participants</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 3 steps Self-Evaluation of counselor competences related to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), EQF level 6

#### EQF level 6

**Knowledge**

- Present clear and accurate information on the service to be provided, and agree on course of action (creating the contract).
- Explain to the client what self-evaluation is and outline its benefits.
- Encourage the client to express his/her own personal experiences (autobiography) and assist him/her to extract what is relevant in order to reflect upon his/her competences.
- Understand and explain the evaluation scheme that the client can use to grade his/her competences.
- Comprehend the significance of assessment and valorization of learning.
- Demonstrate intercultural awareness.
- Develop, maintain and update a portfolio for assessment that reflects the total life situation of the client and present it the best possible way.
- Have a good grasp of specific methods of documentation that is required for recognition of prior learning.
- Understand the requirements of an external assessor and ability to explain the recognition process to the client.
- Ensure that the client has understood and gained ownership of the process.

### Step 1: Reflect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I have advanced knowledge in the field of recognition and validation of prior learning, and a critical understanding of theories and principles?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Theories and methods of formal, non formal and informal learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Theories of and methods for recognition, documentation and validation of competences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Knowledge of national and international lifelong learning strategies and laws.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Knowledge of educational system and labor market.</td>
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### Step 2: Specify

- Check and/or specify knowledge you may have acquired from e.g.: (the examples below may work as inspiration for you to discover/realize your knowledge)
- Keeping up with laws and regulations concerning educational and labor market policy.
- Attending relevant study circles.
- Attending relevant (Open University) courses.
- Attending relevant conferences.
- Keeping up with relevant articles and literature.
- Attending supervision at my work.
- Participating in relevant developmental work.
- Other/s: Please specify.

### Step 3: Assess

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Do I need further training to develop this?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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EQF level 6

Skills

Step 1: Reflect

Can I demonstrate advanced skills, mastery and innovation in the field of RPL and solve complex and unpredictable problems?

- Skills in using methods and tools for recognition, documentation and validation of prior learning
- Skills in communication, facilitation and collaboration with diversified target groups

Step 2: Specify

Check and/or specify skills that you may have from experience with e.g.:
(the examples below may work as inspiration for you to discover/realize your skills)

- The use of theories of learning, motivation, self-evaluation in teaching and counseling.
- The use of methods of recognition, documentation and validation of prior learning in working with competence development.
- Adjusting teaching and counseling to specific situations and target groups.
- Collaborating with different agents, companies and institutions.
- Other(s): Please specify.

Do I need further training to develop this?

Yes | No | I do not know

Specific competences required for conducting a RPL process

1. Present clear and accurate information on the service to be provided, and agree on course of action (creating the contract).
2. Explain to the client what self-evaluation is and outline its benefits.
3. Encourage the client to express his/her own personal experiences (autobiography) and assist him/her to extract what is relevant in order to reflect upon his/her competences.
4. Understand and explain the evaluation scheme that the client can use to grade his/her competences.
5. Comprehend the significance of assessment and valorization of learning.
6. Demonstrate intercultural awareness.
7. Develop, maintain and update a portfolio for assessment that reflects the total life situation of the client and present it the best possible way.
8. Have a good grasp of specific methods of documentation that is required for recognition of prior learning.
9. Understand the requirements of an external assessor and ability to explain the recognition process to the client.
10. Ensure that the client has understood and gained ownership of the process.
## EQF level 6 Competences

### Step 1: Reflect

**Can I manage and take responsibility for complex and unpredictable professional activities and take responsibility for managing professional development of RPL strategies?**

### Step 2: Specify

**Check and/or specify situations and examples of professional use of knowledge and skills you came across:**

(\textit{the examples below may work as inspiration for you to discover/realize your competences})

- Situations that demand professional insight, ability to analyze and overview.
- Examples of collaboration.
- Examples of initiatives and developmental work.
- Other/s: Please specify.

### Step 3: Assess

<table>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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### Ability to develop own practice concerning RPL in an interplay between theoretical reflection and practice.

### Ability to support and interface a client in an open-minded manner.

### Ability to act based on professional ethical standards.
The Instrument
- to help counsellors assess and validate experiences in the field of social activities, family life, hobbies, voluntary sector and work

The Back to Work counselling instrument has different parts:
• General information about the client
• List of competences: social activities, family life, hobbies, voluntary sector and work
• Reflection file
• Portfolio with pieces of evidence
• Case studies
• Glossary
List of competences – social activities, family life, hobbies, voluntary sector and work

Communication at work place
Working in a team
Planning the activity of a team
Diversity Orientation
Building Relationships
Problem Solving
Learning and development
Creativity
Innovation
Work Commitment
Time Management
Management skills
Job knowledge
Planning an activity
Organizing an activity
Decisions-making
Knowing the health and security norms in working activities
Quality assurance
Self development

For each of these competence areas: 4-17 statements about sub competences are to be valued on a scale from 1 to 4:

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Level 1:
The competence seems relevant to you but are not familiar with it.
Level 2:
You have that competence, but you do not reflect on it.
Level 3:
You apply the competence but reflect how to improve it.
Level 4:
The competence is an integrated part of yourself, you use it and you reflect on how to improve it.
Challenges in the project

Country reports from each partner country:
• Common focus on employment outcomes of current labour markets policies and various initiatives to enhance participation on the labour market and reducing unemployment rates
• Differences in economic and training support for unemployed
• Differences in provision of adult career guidance and validation opportunities for unemployed
• Differences in unemployment rates and number of returning migrants

Challenges:
• Differences in provision and understanding of adult career guidance
• Differences in provision, practices and tools in validation and recognition of prior learning in the partner countries
• Differences in concepts of the purpose of validation of prior learning – matching with jobs or a broader career guidance

Evaluative comments from the pilot in Bucharest, June 2012:
• A useful instrument if used flexible and adapted to local contexts and specific clients
• (Too) many statements at a rather advanced level when considering the low skilled clients

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Thank you!

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