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## **A2: Guidance in Validation within the Nordic region**

**Challenges and recommendations**

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# Guidance in Validation



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- ◆ Report produced by NVL – Nordic network for adult learning
  - ◆ Working group from the guidance- and validation networks
- ◆ The purpose of the study:
  - ◆ To provide information on how guidance in the process of VPL is carried out in the Nordic Countries
  - ◆ To create common ground for discussion and development of guidance in validation
- ◆ Information from the Nordic countries
- ◆ Dr. Raimo Vuorinen provided feedback and support





# Guidance in Validation



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## Method:

- ◆ Mapping instrument – grid
- ◆ Overview summaries (based on grid)
- ◆ Cases
- ◆ SWOT analyses based on the gathered material
  - ◆ Focus on bringing forth a national view of main challenges and possible solutions





# Guidance in Validation



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The mapping grid – 7 focus areas, divided into 3 categories.

## Policy level (macro)

1. Laws and regulations, for guidance in validation
2. Policies and financing, for guidance in validation

## Organisational level (meso)

3. Responsibility for delivering guidance in the validation process? (What institution/organization/specialists?)
4. Qualifications of guidance personnel and need for expertise in each phase
5. Feedback for quality and evidence base regarding guidance delivery in validation processes

## Practical level (micro)

6. The purpose of guidance in different phases of validation
7. Methodology used in the different phases of guidance in validation





# Guidance in Validation



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- ◆ Differences in how guidance in validation is practiced in the Nordic countries
- ◆ Guidance – Career guidance/  
LL guidance (ELGPN glossary)



# The phases of validation and the role of guidance



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Council recommendation 2012	Nordic working group on guidance in validation
	<p>INFORMATION and introduction of validation to individuals – rights of the individual – spreading information on VPL through guidance deliverance</p>
<p>IDENTIFICATION of an individuals learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning</p>	
<p>DOCUMENTATION of an individuals learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning</p>	
<p>ASSESSMENT of an individuals learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning</p>	
<p>CERTIFICATION of the results of the assessment acquired through non-formal and informal learning in the form of qualifications, or credits leading to a qualification, or in another form, as appropriate</p>	<p>FOLLOW-UP based on the results – guidance towards continuing competence development and/or career perspectives</p>

<b>5 phases of validation</b>	<b>Examples of aims/purpose of guidance identified in each phase</b>
INFORMATION and introduction to validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Providing understanding of the process, benefits and obligations</li> <li>-Reviewing competences and experience of the individual</li> <li>-Reviewing further/connected learning opportunities</li> </ul>
IDENTIFICATION of competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Informing about qualification standards</li> <li>-Informing about evidence needed on existing competences</li> <li>-Reviewing competences and experience of the individual</li> <li>-Introducing documentation tools</li> <li>-Informing about available competence development</li> </ul>
DOCUMENTATION of competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Guiding, assisting and motivating the individual through the documentation phase</li> <li>-Initiating and supervising portfolio work individually or in groups (formative approach)</li> <li>-Providing support in the process of self-assessment against qualification criteria (summative approach)</li> <li>-Guidance and advice on individual planning</li> <li>-Guidance on how to present/demonstrate one's competences and prepare for assessment</li> </ul>
ASSESSMENT of competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Assisting the individual in understanding qualification criteria and assessment procedure</li> <li>-Guidance and support on how to present/demonstrate one's competences</li> <li>-Promoting fair results</li> <li>-Advising on further learning</li> </ul>
CERTIFICATION of the results and FOLLOW-UP based on the results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reviewing results of the VPL</li> <li>-Informing and guiding the individual towards continuing learning/career development (school, job, training)</li> <li>-Guidance on decision making</li> </ul>



# Main challenges



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- ◆ **A need for a clearer and a more homogeneous definition of guidance activities in the VPL process supported by national guidelines**
  - ◆ There is a need for defining the aims and content of guidance activities and producing guidelines on a national level with a focus on roles and responsibilities of the guidance personnel
  - ◆ There is a need for national guidelines on the specific Career Management Skills (CMS) which can be developed through participation in VPL processes.
  - ◆ There is a need to increase access to guidance in general (legal rights) to support VPL practices







# Main challenges



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- ◆ **A need for financing guidance services linked to VPL**
  - ◆ There is a need for allocating financing specifically linked to validation activities.
  - ◆ There is a need for developing additional financing for the VPL system. Lack of financing effects access to VPL and career development for many citizens.





# Main challenges



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- ◆ **Training of VPL staff / Specific knowledge of guidance personnel - efficiency and quality issues**
  - ◆ There is a need for specialized training for VPL guidance personnel
  - ◆ In some countries/areas there is a need for more professionals in the field of career guidance (in some countries and rural areas)
  - ◆ Competences related to the learning component of guidance (career education) need to be enhanced among guidance practitioners. CMS can support this development. National guidelines do not exist.





# Main challenges



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- ◆ **Training of VPL staff /.....**
  - ◆ The knowledge on VPL and related guidance processes, need to be provided in the initial training of adult education practitioners in general
  - ◆ There is a need for developing coherent practices in guidance methodology linked to VPL practices
  - ◆ VPL guidance activities provided to immigrants need attention for development





# Main challenges



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## ◆ The coordination of guidance in VPL

- ◆ There is a need for clarifying the organization and coordination of guidance activities in the different phases of VPL.
- ◆ There is need for coordination of guidance services related to VPL in different sectors (e.g. employment sector, educational sector, 3rd sector) and between various stakeholders.
- ◆ The impartiality of the deliverance of guidance in VPL needs focus.

## ◆ Information

- ◆ There is a need for increased dissemination of information to stakeholders at different levels about the possibilities and benefits of VPL.





# Concluding comments



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## The challenges identified reveal that:

- ◆ Guidance activities linked to validation practices are not transparent and there is a need for measures which increase understanding of the VPL concept and related processes among guidance practitioners.
- ◆ That could lead to more coherency in practices and support for more individuals in experiencing career learning and through that make more meaning of the validation process in regards to further career development based on their personal situation and context.
- ◆ It is also feasible to explore further what competences/qualifications are needed for that service delivery.
- ◆ This work calls upon action and cooperation on policy level, organizational level and practical level.





# Recommendations



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- The Nordic countries should develop a set of **common principles or guidelines for guidance** in validation related to the different phases in the process, aiming at increasing the quality of guidance services and the VPL process.
- The Nordic countries should examine whether and how Career Management Skills (CMS) can be used as a tool to increase the efficiency and transparency of career guidance in general and specifically linked to VPL practices. **National or common Nordic guidelines on CMS/Career Competences** could be based on the Nordic approach (Thomsen, 2014).
- More focus needs to be on **how guidance activities within VPL systems can be financed**.





# Recommendations



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- **Education and training** of those who are to deliver guidance in VPL processes needs to be established.
- VPL should be a **part of the initial education** of professionals in education and counselling/guidance to enhance increased use of VPL.
- **National guidelines on guidance services** and policy development in the area of guidance in general can support the identification of ways to organize and coordinate guidance towards increased coherency and impartiality in practices. The individual should always be in the centre.
- The knowledge on VPL needs to be strengthened in society at all levels. Organizations conducting VPL could play a part in **disseminating** their experiences to a more extent to various stakeholders.



# Thank you for your attention



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