

European Policy Conference

Making all skills visible: the validation of transversal skills

Sweden May 24-25, 2023

TRANSVAL-EU project¹

The TRANSVAL-EU project addresses the complex issue of validation of transversal skills. On one hand, employers place an increasing importance on transversal skills. On the other hand, transversal skills are only an implicit part of the existing validation and guidance processes. The project aims to build capacity of practitioners and counsellors, as well as, when relevant, of other stakeholders on innovative VNFIL and transversal competences; and strengthen cross-sector cooperation between practitioners, policy-makers and other stakeholders in order to build coherent VNFIL systems and effective processes.

TRANSVAL-EU proposes to experiment innovative approaches for the validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL) of transversal skills in five pilot countries (Austria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Belgium). Taking stock of EU policies (2012 Council recommendation on VNFIL, Upskilling pathways, new Skills agenda), frameworks (ET2020, ESCO, Key competences) as well as various reports and studies have helped in identifying key challenges at EU and national levels (Cedefop 2018 EU Inventory on VNFIL, ET2020 Monitor).

TRANSVAL-EU aims to tackle those challenges by professionalising validation and guidance practitioners, bridging the various sectors and stakeholders of education and employment, and monitoring and evaluating the experimentation's outcomes and impact on practitioners and socio-economically disadvantaged adults.

TRANSVAL-EU is one of the largest European policy experiments on VNFIL with the objectives of sharing lessons learned and good practices using peer learning which may be adopted by diverse validation centres, in different regions and countries, hence ensuring a long-lasting policy impact. The expected outcomes of TRANSVAL-EU are common practices and policies on embedding transversal skills in validation and guidance processes for adults.

TRANSVAL-EU has a clear European-added value as it goes beyond the national and regional lessons learned. It looks into transferring results and lessons learned to other countries. These countries can be those of the partners not having field trials or other countries and regions not involved in the project and even in other sectors in other contexts.

European Policy Conference 2023

The policy results of the project will be disseminated in the final conference, held in Sweden in May 2023. The conference has been planned in Sweden given that the EU Council Presidency will be occupied by Sweden in 2023² (as well as Spain). In its strategic agenda Sweden calls for embracing technological evolution and globalisation while making sure that no-one is left behind. In this context recognition and validation of all types of competences plays an essential role.

¹ TRANSVAL-EU Project website <https://www.transvalproject.eu/about-transval-eu/>

² Swedish Presidency 2023 <https://www.government.se/government-policy/swedens-eu-presidency-2023/>

Organising the conference in Sweden, one of the Nordic countries, the project aims at creating synergies between the Nordic and European work on validation of competences, and thus support implementation of the Nordic agenda for the competences of the future³. The idea behind the agenda is to better prepare people of all ages for the society that lies ahead. The aim is that everybody in the Nordic Region has the knowledge and skills to cope with a more complex future, and can meet the world with open and critical minds and be equipped to work with other people.

The conference will:

1. **Offer a forum for discussing the European Policy measures**, highlighted by the European union. The participants will be invited to evaluate the replicability, transferability and upscaling of the suggested policies in the pilot countries and other countries and regions in the EU. Potential of transfer of TRANSVAL results from VET to other sectors is quite high because transversal skills are spread across different professions. Validation practitioners focus on the broader experience of participants in order to identify relevant skills, extracted from a variety of contexts and occupational sectors. The project partnership involves labour market representatives that will help ensure the transferability.
2. **Offer a possibility to learn from the evidence** gained during the field trials and the research carried out during the project. The analysis of the processes and steps used before, during and after the validation and/or guidance on transversal skills by practitioners will provide a set of models of how validation of transversal skills can systematically be part of validation and guidance pathways.
3. **Be a meeting place and a networking platform for stakeholders** from a broad range of countries, from partner countries, as well as experts and decision makers from outside the partnership, and contributing to the EU validation community (in complementarity with main events such as VPL Biennale, EC Validation Festival, EQF AG PLAs)

Target groups

The project has around 30 partners and associated partners including Ministries and public authorities, research institutions as well as national competence recognition bodies, adult education providers, validation and guidance experts, European level NGOs. The consortium would like to invite the following stakeholder groups to the TRANSVAL-EU policy conference:

- European Commission, EQF AG members (national ministry representatives), CEDEFOP;
- Validation and guidance and policy makers (at different levels);
- Validation and guidance planners and providers;
- Social partners and HR managers;
- National and European stakeholders (education and training organisations from formal, non-formal and informal sector and civil society).

Practical information

The Conference will be held in English and take place on-site. It will be organised in plenum and workshop sessions over two half days: afternoon (day 1) and morning (day 2).

The participation is free of charge. The participants are expected to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.

³ Nordic agenda for the competences of the future, Nordic Council of Ministers
<https://www.norden.org/en/information/competencies-future>

Background information - transversal skills addressed by the project

Transversal competences are learned and proven abilities, which are seen as necessary or valuable for effective action in virtually any kind of work, learning or life activity. They are “transversal” because they are not exclusively related to any particular context (job, academic discipline, civic engagement, occupational sector, etc.)

The core idea of the project is that using innovative VNFIL methods for transversal competences in VET for low-qualified adults will improve the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, and inclusiveness of VNFIL processes and policies in a lifelong and life-wide perspective. Additionally, a better integration of guidance into the individual learners’ pathways and into VNFIL policies is thought to improve the lifelong employability and personal development of VET learners and professionals.

The project deals with the following types of transversal competences with specific descriptions for each of the different EQF levels⁴:

- Managing and organising activities;
- Solving problems and reacting to the unforeseen
- Cooperating and fostering cooperation
- Using oral communication in one or several languages
- Resource Management
- Taking professional, social and cultural norms into account
- Using written communication in one or several languages
- Communicating using digital technologies
- Managing information and critical thinking
- Building one’s career path
- Developing one’s competences and profile
- Self-reflection

⁴ The Transversal Competence Framework (TCF), designed during the TRANSVAL-EU project
<https://www.transvalproject.eu/downloads/>