

---

# Recognition of prior learning: report

---

Micheline Scheys

Bologna-Seminar, Amsterdam, 11-12  
december 2008

---

# Political importance of RPL

- Ensuring the performances of the knowledge driven economy (new jobs and service jobs)
  - Coping with aging population and migration
  - Improving human capital development (starting with literacy!)
  - Providing opportunities for the disadvantaged (special provisions for individuals with special needs)
- ➔ RPL facilitates the processes of skills development and promotes LLL
-

---

# Increased awareness and acceptance of RPL

- A multitude of initiatives in different countries:
    - Improving access to formal education systems
    - Alternative routes for labour market participation: access to jobs and professions
    - Identifying individual skills
      - RPL: formative (career guidance; social participation and citizenship) and summative (formal recognition; certification)
  - Islands of RPL → lack of coordination and comparability
-

---

# Building confidence and trust in RPL

- Work at the transparency, comparability, compatibility of standards, criteria and procedures
  - Improve the credibility and legitimacy of RPL through inclusion of relevant stakeholders
-

---

# Quality Assurance of RPL = priority

- Guarantee the quality of the validation independent of the system that identifies or awards the learning outcomes
  - Realize international and national comparability, compatibility and transparency of RPL processes
  - One system of QA for RPL processes at different levels of qualification and in different contexts
  - Integrate QA of RPL in the QA of formal education (diploma=diploma)
  - Enhance communication about RPL between education, training, learning and work, but also culture, sports and voluntary organisations, ã
-

---

# Theme 1: Role of government

- Legal framework for RPL:
    - Introduce National Qualification Framework consistent with EQF
    - Formulate general principles for Quality Assurance in line with international guidelines but adapted to the national context and experience
  - In collaboration with all the stakeholders, define the respective roles and responsibilities at different stages of the process
  - Intensive communication of the benefits of RPL by means of the NQF
  - Facilitate RPL in different organisations
  - Financial incentives
-

---

## Theme 2: Quality assurance & role of stakeholders in HE

- Implement legal settings in their practice
  - Formulate qualifications in terms of learning outcomes and translate them in transparent and comparable standards for RPL
  - Invest in agreements on common standards and procedures for access to learning programmes in different HEIs → deliver standardised experience certificate for the same RPL-procedure
  - Importance of bottom up approach in working on QA
  - Partnerships with labour market actors
  - Building alternative, more flexible learning routes and short trajectories
  - Integrating work based learning routes
-

---

## Theme 3: Dealing with RPL and implementing effective procedures

- Necessity of going through the different implementation phases in order to learn from each other's experiences
  - Importance of communication about the benefits of RPL
  - Install cross border confidence through matching guidelines of different countries
-



---

# Theme 4: Quality codes for RPL

## procedures, including European context

- To install trust and confidence in RPL takes time and needs investments in procedures and guidelines
    - Standards:
      - Generic
      - Subject based
    - Guidelines for the candidates to make up portfolios:
      - Evidence-based, measurable results
      - Reflective
  - Use client oriented approach as starting point and mainstream afterwards
  - RPL demands collaboration with social partners
  - Cost of the procedure for the individual and the RPL-organisation
-

---

## Theme 5: RPL and costs and benefits for all stakeholders

- RPL and tailor made training programme = exception or rule?
  - Transparant and accessible procedures (importance of language used!)
  - Theme for the next conference: Who is responsible for the RPL and for the funding of RPL-processes?
-

---

# General conclusions

## How can we make RPL happen?

- Use a learning outcome approach → Importance of building NQF\$
  - Build an overarching QF including qualifications at all levels of education and qualifications used in employment (all sectors of economic activity) and voluntary organisations
  - Establish common principles and guidelines for RPL at national and international level
  - Build partnerships with all stakeholders through platforms
  - Stimulate knowledge centers and networks of RPL-providers
-

---

# Recommendations

---

---

## European principles for identifying and validating non-formal and informal learning (2004): amendment

- Stakeholders should establish *compatible* systems for validation
  - Systems should be underpinned by quality assurance *systems based on general guidelines*
  - *\*\*\*National Qualification frameworks must be developed in order to:*
    - *define the standards used in RPL*
    - *establish the equivalence of RPL with initial training programmes*
    - *guarantee RPL's civil effect*
-



---

B o

## closer cooperation for RPL

- Common tools for RPL → consolidate the respective approaches
  - Bordeaux communiqué (26.11.2008) = first step → develop links between the Copenhagen and the Bologna process in order to strengthen the strategic framework for European cooperation in the field of education and training
-