

EAEA RESPONSE

TO THE PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION ON THE VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) welcomes the proposal on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. EAEA sees validation as a key tool in order to promote lifelong learning, to ensure more flexible learning pathways, to encourage learners and build their self-confidence as well as to create a more comprehensive understanding of competences.

EAEA especially welcomes the obligation to member states to implement national validation systems until 2015 and to ensure the inclusion of stakeholders, among them civil society and education and training providers, in the development and implementation of these national systems.

EAEA would like to draw the attention to two important points: EAEA sees validation of non- and informal learning as a necessary and important step in a person's lifelong learning career. One key intent of validation should be the encouragement to take up further learning in order to take further steps. We therefore believe that any national system for validation should include and ensure adequate learning opportunities for people to continue, i.e. adequate adult and continuing education offers.

EAEA is concerned about a statement in point 3: 'Access to validation is affordable for citizens who wish to undertake a validation procedure.' This seems to imply that people will have to pay for the validation procedure in any case. We strongly recommend that the financing of the validation system be carefully considered and to be available for free, at the minimum for those with low qualifications and for the unemployed.

EAEA, and especially its member organisations in the European member states, will work with the relevant institutions in order to help develop and implement the national systems. EAEA members in non-EU countries will support their national authorities to follow the best European practices in this field.