Tools and Guidelines for Adult Educators

DIGITAL CURRICULAR STORIES FOR ALL

Report and Comparative Studies
ABSTRACT

This report collects information from multiple sources, concerning the situation and perception of competences and skills acquired in formal, non-formal and informal environments. Our purpose is to provide data on which to reflect upon within the KVALUES project, and more specifically to reflect on the use of a particular methodology: Digital Storytelling (DST).

First, a European overview on the systems of validation, recognition and assessment of non-formal and informal learning is given. Then, the data that has been obtained using the research tools, both qualitative (interviews and focus groups) and quantitative (questionnaires), is used to present the perception of these topics and of digital storytelling across various categories of people. Lastly, personal reflections are given on the material analysed, and on the prospects for improvement of any problems that have been found.
The research combines the results of international references in the field of adult education with the existing practices in the countries involved, in order to understand whether digital storytelling (DST) could be a useful tool for self validation and hetero validation of competences.

Therefore, the work is not bound solely to the official procedures of certification to improve the employability. The research has included, in effect, the individual growth of the people involved in the activity of DST, to see if it can be useful to:

- raise awareness of its competences
- support the release of disadvantage and marginalization
- help the establishment of a connection between the person and the world of work (even at different levels of one’s career: from entrance into the workforce, to the betterment of one’s employment status within a company and/or sector).
Furthermore, the research has investigated the possibility that the social partners should take into account: the use of validation tools for the recognition of skills recognized as indispensable, but are still are not easy to identify, and even to solicit in training and guidance contexts.

The research was conducted using quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (non-standard interviews and focus groups) methods, and it involves very diverse groups and participants; ranging from people without work and/or at a disadvantage, to workers in the field of Human Resources. It also includes Privileged Participants (from Universities, Research Centres and Representative Categories), and the references and practices that already exist, are examined at the European level.

The prospect of investigation is directly linked to the social nature of the topic, which proves to be very important in the Third Sector. Here, we see those who are still unprepared to accept validation or to drive the validation of competences and their subsequent certification by approved methods, while remaining independent from individuals in the For-Profit Sector.
A MAP OF EUROPEAN PRACTICES

The documents taken into account to trace this overview on the state-of-the-art of European validation practices of competences, are part of the bibliography at the site of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), dating back to 2010. They are divided into country reports for each project partner country, and case studies for the other countries. The Bulgarian and Swedish sections have been integrated with the reports directly produced by the project partners.

First, a note on terminology, which appears to be a significant element in the process of standardization and unification of validation systems at the International level. In the documents examined, continual reference is made not only to the validation of Non-formal and Informal learning, but also to a number of other concepts/systems that belong to the same semantic field, but are not interchangeable. These include: Assessment of Prior Learning (APL), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and Validation of Prior Learning (VPL). For ease of writing, we have referred to each of them by their simple acronym.

In the case of country reports, we have tried to give a brief summary of what is present at the national level, in terms of the organization, and policy and legislation. Then, we have illustrated some predominant experiences presented as ‘practices’ or ‘good practices’. In the case studies, we started from the illustration of the project, and - if present - from its position in the political, legislative, and administrative framework. In both cases, special attention was paid to methods and systems of validation, recognition, and assessment of Non-formal and Informal learning.
Beyond the particularities of each country, the first general impression is, that validation of Non-formal and Informal learning as a system, requires first and foremost the presence of a National Framework of Reference; with respect to the qualifications and standards to be used and that this National Framework is most suited to the European one. Only in this way can we hope for a common understanding across the whole territory, as well as an easier portability of the practices across the various professional sectors. In countries where a National Framework is already present, it becomes a point of reference on which to design and structure the rest of the system, also at the local level and for a single professional sector. Specific actions (recognition, validation and assessment) can then be decentralized and assigned to local authorities and institutions; yet the element of centralization is hard to avoid.

With regard to the assessment methods, an interesting element for the purpose of the project is that in most of the examined cases, the portfolio could be considered a powerful tool, as it can describe - in an adequately detailed overview - the formal and informal levels of an individual's professional skills.
The following situations, which are shown to be very diverse, are present in each of the countries participating in the project.

They are: situations which are already structured and run towards the systematization and standardization of recognition, validation, and assessment (in Estonia), situations where there is a tendency towards an excessive fragmentation of rules and practices (in Italy and Germany), and situations which are still in the phase of design and construction (in Bulgaria).
In Bulgaria, in effect, one of the weaknesses of the education system is the lack of a workable (functioning) national strategy for the evaluation and validation of knowledge and skills acquired outside of school. To overcome these problems, the Ministry of Education and Science is developing systems for recognition of formal and informal knowledge, skills and competences.

Above all, many National and European projects have been launched in recent years, providing the function of a framework of the processes under consideration. The most interesting and relevant projects are: Promoting Adults’ Vocational Training and Employability in Bulgaria (based on the examples of Member States’ Best Practices, and tested in three professions: carpentry, tailoring, and social work), and Assessment and Recognition of Work Experiences and Non-formal Learning, focused on the recognition of acquired skills by young people during their work experiences; (among the results of the project there is a methodological and operational guide on the application of validation tools). The most recent project, from February 2013, is A New Opportunity for My Future, with the aim of improving the opportunities for vocational training in the workforce (which will increase its capability and competitiveness in the labour market, and facilitate labour mobility - both within the country and abroad).

A system of credits in the field of vocational education is developing as part of the LLL Strategy. It provides a modular structure for the acquisition of competences. Each module contains units of knowledge related to learning goals. Each learning goal is treated as a credit. The total number of credits will be based on existing professional standards.
Validation will be financed by the State and by the municipalities. The funding, however, will not be specifically allocated to validation, but more generally to education and training. The beneficiaries will have to pay a fee (not yet defined) for the validation/certification of their skills. In general, it is established that every institution of vocational education (both public and private) can assume the validation procedures, on the condition of accepting the criteria established in the ongoing system of validation of competences. Also other organizations could be involved in the validation process: research institutions, information centres, centres for vocational guidance, as well as labour market organizations.
On the contrary, in Estonia the situation is more closely in line with European directives, especially thanks to a centralization of vocational qualifications which offer a unique orientation to the various training needs. The National Qualifications Framework (EKR) is built on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF), having the same eight levels. The purpose of the EKR is to develop a framework encompassing all the qualifications of formal education, as well as vocational training.

The principles for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), both non-formal and informal, are nationally regulated by the law on Higher Education and Vocational Training. These principles are used for the acquisition of professional qualifications. Specifically, the RPL can be used for:

- the admission into Higher Education in order to meet the entry requirements (only for those who already have a certain level of education: diplomas or degrees of the first and second level)
- continuing their studies in Higher Education and vocational training
- changing the curriculum in Higher Education and vocational training
- acquiring a professional qualification

The University Act of 2003 allows the recognition of competences in formal paths through RPL, up to a maximum of 50%. In 2007, rules and purposes of the RPL were redefined by the Standards for Higher Education. Single universities have had the task of drawing up their own rules and procedures for the use of the RPL system, taking into account the Standards for Vocational Training, which lay down the general principles for the processes of validation, recognition and assessment.
Among the activities planned in three strategic documents related to vocational training (Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System, 2009-2013), Adult Education (Development Plan for Estonian Adult Education 2009-2013) and Higher Education (Estonian Higher Education Strategy, 2006-2015), the RPL plays a central, systemic role, and it will be the true point of reference for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in different educational contexts.

The development and improvement of the RPL system is guaranteed by the participation in projects funded by the European Social Fund, such as Primus (Higher Education) and Development of Vocational Education 2008-2013.

The critical points of this system only concern the involvement of the private sector and the third sector, both in terms of implementation and application. In both cases, however, there is a link with the RPL. In the private sector, typically work experience is valued more positively than a university degree, and therefore the validation of this experience is seen as one of the main objectives to be achieved and the standards of the RPL shall assist this need. In the third sector, the participation in European projects related to RPL is customary, such as in the Leonardo Da Vinci Project Flexi-Path, which facilitates the transparency and recognition of an adult educator’s qualifications throughout Europe, making them comparable in respect to the EQF.
Germany does not have a legal framework nor a standardized system for validation of non-formal and informal learning. Unlike other European countries, the majority of approaches are set below the political level. Still, the aim is to recognize non-formal and informal learning as a prerequisite for a possible later “additional” validation connected with the titles.

Thanks to the allocation of public funds, in recent years many different systems have been developed at regional and national levels, for different target groups with the result of describing the validation system in Germany as a multi-coloured mosaic of local, regional and national approaches. A Federal-Länder-Coordination-Group has begun to analyse specific curricula and other documents of exemplary German qualifications from general, higher and vocational education (in the metallurgical, electrical, commercial, health and IT fields), with the goal to classify all within the German Qualifications Framework (DQR).

Below are the following examples:

- at the political level there are certain laws in the field of education and vocational training:
  - the examination of external students, present in the Law on Vocational Training (BBIG), allows the achievement of a full title (equivalent to a title lawfully acquired) through a recognized apprenticeship. However, there are no specific standards for its implementation. Responsibility for all aspects of validation is on the local authority;
  - access to Higher Education for skilled workers, governed since 2009 by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German Länder, is through specific pathways. It is possible to recognize up to a maximum of 50% of the formal path if the content and the level of what has been learned in non-formal and informal contexts are comparable to equivalent formal qualifications. Responsibility for access to Higher Education is on the single providers (universities).
Examples of funded initiatives (at European, regional and local) are:

- **Kompetenznachweis Ehrenamt** (Certificate of competences for voluntary work): a tool used for the documentation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired through voluntary work;

- **Kompetenzbilanz für BerufsrückkehrerInnen** (Balance of competences for those who return to work): a tool used for the documentation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired during parental leave;

- **Kompetenznachweis Kultur** (Certificate of competences for culture): a tool used for the documentation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired during participation in cultural events led by qualified personnel;

- **Qualipass in Baden-Wurttemberg**: a tool used at the regional level to analyse the extracurricular activities of students supported by a coach;

- **ANKOM-initiative**: Unlike the other approaches, it is an initiative developed at the political level, funded by the government, with the aim of facilitating access to Higher Education for skilled workers, thanks to the tools for accreditation of prior work experience. The equivalence of work and university qualifications, with reference to the training objectives, is the basis for such comparisons. The particularity of this approach is that the institutions of Higher Education apply evaluation methods based on the competences rather than on the workload, giving priority to practices which are more qualitative than quantitative.

Two other initiatives are also relevant: the ProfilPASS-system, that includes quality standards concerning instruments and methods, guidance and documentation; and DECVET (Developing a German Credit System for Vocational Education and Training), still under development, which aims to implement at the national level, the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training. It includes ten projects that will serve as vehicles for the development and testing of procedures for the accreditation of transferable skills and learning outcomes.
Sweden does not have a fully developed system of validation for non-formal and informal learning, and indeed the responsibility for validation is highly decentralized to the regional and local levels and incorporated into the Adult Education system. Validation is based on the Common European Principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning (2004) and European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning (2009).

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, which supports the national framework and is responsible for coordinating the system of validation, has formulated national criteria and guidelines for the validation of a real competence/prior learning experience. In order to coordinate with other authorities who are concerned with developing the model guidelines to support the industries and the education system in their validation work, and to provide guidance to providers of validation, the Agency has set up a number of networks: National Forum for Validation, Business Sector Network, Researcher Network, Information Group, and Nordic Cooperation. As observed in the Swedish report, there is no legal right for an individual to have his/her competence validated, and validation of informal and non-formal learning is predominantly summative, concerning assessment of specific competences against criteria related to a particular occupation.
Only a few examples of formative validation focused on general competences/ key competences have been found:

- **Särskild prövning**: a validation process by which an actual individual competence is examined in order to receive credits and qualifications to be used in the first two levels of the educational system. It is a type of validation used mainly for general or specific entrance requirements for Higher Education.

- **Folk High Schools**: offer non-formal education and set their own entrance requirements. They use validation to determine an individual’s skills that serve to complete their education.

- **The 25:4 Rule**: stating that adults aged 25 or older, with at least 4 years of work experience, and who know Swedish and English as it corresponds to what is acquired in upper secondary school education, will have access to Higher Education. Specifically, universities can decide to reserve up to one third of their seats for people who have these requirements. This rule has been replaced in 2007 by the Decree on Higher Education (see below).

- **Högskoleförordningen (Decree on Higher Education)**: All Higher Education institutions are obliged to evaluate prior and experiential learning of those who need assessment and who do not have formal qualifications. In this decree, the terms ‘professional or academic recognition’ are used, more than ‘validation of non-formal and informal learning’.

- **Swedish for Immigrants (SFI)**: is a language course reserved for immigrants and paid for by each municipality. It is conducted in collaboration with the Public Employment Service, which offers relevant activities for the students.
Despite these few examples, there is increasing interest in the validation of informal learning. There are several existing initiatives based on projects which provide a good level towards the systematization of the process, thanks to the collaboration of higher education institutions, municipalities, social partners, and training organizations. In 2009, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was established, which is responsible for developing a national structure for validation, and adapting the National Qualifications Framework to the European one.

Regarding the KVALUES project, the method used to recognize learning acquired by young people through volunteer work is of interest. It is called the ELD (Experience, Learning, Development) Method, based on portfolio, self-assessment and feedback, and carried out by facilitators specially trained from the Centre for International Youth Exchange (CIU). Participants must describe situations that occur during a project and record their experiences using photos, a journal, a blog, or in any other way possible. The practice directly reported by the partner, concerns the Liberal Adult Education and more specifically, the Medlefors Folk High School, whose validation model identifies seven competences (civic, social, intercultural, cultural, learning, communication, organizational-leadership) in four dimensions (knowledge and skills, competence to practice and act, ability to analyse, relate and valuate, initiative and result) at different levels. The purpose of the model is not to validate in opposition to certain professional criteria, but to raise validated people’s awareness about their current skills: this “consciousness-raising” hopes to strengthen self-esteem and make it easier to describe real competences when applying for study or job opportunities. The validation process is conducted in group setting to draw advantages from the dialogue and support amongst the members of the group. The process is guided by two counsellors (one Folk High School teacher used to identify and assess knowledge and skills, and one study circle leader, who is used to working with group processes).
Among the different countries in the UK, there are substantial differences with regard to the educational system, particularly in Scotland. The system of governance for Lifelong Learning, dating back to at least 1997, was immediately set in a decentralized way. In general, however, there is not a national approach to validation of non-formal and informal learning.

There are methods and guidelines related to the National Qualifications Framework which have been developed in specific areas of learning (continuing education, higher education, etc.), but each administration has a separate qualifications framework, and the application of validation is transferred to the providers of learning, or to the departments in which they are composed.

**England, Wales, Northern Ireland**

There have been significant changes in recent years, especially in 2010 with the change of government. The responsibilities and powers of the Learning and Skills Council were transferred to the Young People’s Learning Agency, the Skills Funding Agency and the local education authorities. Even the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Authority (QCDA) has been closed. At the end of 2011, in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) was established, a fundamental element for the sharing of validation of non-formal and informal learning and where there is explicit mention of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), through which an individual can demonstrate some knowledge, skills and understanding without the need to undertake a specific formal course.
Beyond this recent introduction and the National Qualifications Framework, there is also a specific tool used for vocational training, the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) which was introduced in the 1980s and is able to provide over 1,300 qualifications based on a person’s skills. Divided into 8 levels set on the QCF, qualifications are not based on defined learning programs, but on the expected outcomes, being therefore designed to demonstrate whether or not the learner has the skills and knowledge needed for a certain job. The NVQs can be managed both in the workplace of the learner in a specific setting, or tailored to the individual needs of the learner. They are designed to let the acquisition of credits of the qualification independent of the way, the duration and the place of learning. In addition, they can be managed in units, based on the expected outcomes, competences-oriented, and evaluated using practical exercises and a portfolio of evidences. The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is identified as one of the means to provide evidence, together with the direct observation of the candidate, the recording (audio, video, photos) of his activities, and the presentation of artefacts produced by him/her. Candidates are eventually categorized as “competent” or “not competent”. The Sector Skills Council, together with other industrial organizations, create, establish and maintain up-to-date, the occupational standards used.

As evidence of decentralization in the system of validation and recognition, there is also the fact that the terms used (and their acronyms) are not shared by the different areas of learning, thus creating further confusion.
Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Accreditation and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (ARPEL): they are used in Higher Education, in which each institution is responsible for the admission and assessment, as well as for the quality and standards for the acquisition of credits. There are a few guidelines of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education that aim to help institutions in the development of their systems and in the accreditation of prior learning.

Recognizing and Recording Progress and Achievement in Non-Accredited Learning (RARPA): launched by the Learning and Skills Council, RARPA is a system of informal recognition of the learning outcomes of non-accredited courses; generally perceived as a method of quality to ensure the provision of learning within the sector, and to support learners while moving from non-formal to formal learning. An interesting practice, at its core, is the Personal Development Planning (PDP), which is a structured and supported process through which the individual can reflect on his/her own learning and performance, as well as plan his/her future personal development, both educational and professional.

Interesting examples are seen particularly in the third sector, with European and National projects:

The South West Opportunities for Older People Initiative (SWOOP) supports older workers who face discrimination in the labour market due to their age. SWOOP’s aim is to develop an e-Portfolio for these workers in order to highlight their experiences, skills, attitudes and proclivities, and ultimately help them gain access to employment. Portfolio creation and mentoring are designed to support older learners and guide them to start reflecting on their previous non-formal or informal learning. Using their portfolios, learners can record, track, and illustrate these types of learning.

The SOUL (Soft Outcomes, Universal Learning) Record aims at the development of an online toolkit supported by training courses for users and for trainers. It can be used to measure progress of ‘soft results’ and informal learning; such as an increase in confidence, self-esteem or motivation.
Validating Mentoring2 is a transnational project (funded by the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme) focused on disabled and on disadvantaged groups. Each participant receives a certificate of successful completion, based on the Code of Practice in Mentoring, which provides the framework for the recognition of knowledge and skills gained through the mentoring process.

Some other interesting examples come from the private sector, in which the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are engaged in the development of occupational standards used for labour skills, especially with regard to the identification of the market’s needs, concerning: the demand for labour, the identification of priority groups and employees for the RPL, and the strategy design needed to build RPL capacity within organizations:

- **e-skills Passport**: developed for IT workers, it can also be used by non-employees. It is an online tool used to: assess current IT skills, identify gaps and set learning objectives. Individuals can use it as a training tool for their own learning and to help them manage their career. Whereas organizations can use it to identify the skills that are available within their workforce. It begins with a self-assessment, followed by the setting of objectives to be achieved. It is based on a framework of skills defined by employees and is closely related to the National Occupational Standards used for the majority of IT qualifications.

- **Construction Skills**: developed by the building sector it offers two methods of summative evaluation to qualify experienced workers and help them to convert their skills in a NVQ:
  - **On-Site Assessment and Training (OSAT)**, is the most widely used method, offered in most occupations and businesses. The worker is supported by an evaluator who helps him/her build a portfolio of evidence testifying to his skills. It is a process that generally lasts for 6 months and consisting of 4 or 5 worker-evaluator meetings.
  - **Experienced Worker Practical Assessment (EWPA)**, is less used, and is open to those workers with extensive experience, that do not need additional training. The worker must undergo an assessment of practical skills, followed by a discussion with an assessor. All this happens in a day at a NVQ assessment centre, producing a set of tests as a result.
SCOTLAND

APL and APEL are not new concepts in Scotland, used in the past especially in Higher Education. Today, the focus is more towards the RPL as a way to facilitate the recognition and transferability of skills, linking the RPL to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), recognized at the political level as a central element in the Scottish education system; fundamental for individuals and for economic growth.

This process was attended by the sectors of education (especially Higher Education) and of the labour market (especially the social services sector). In the Skills Strategy for Scotland in 2007, the role of the SCFQ was accentuated in the development of tools, the support to organizations, and in the sharing of best practices that could help the recognition of learning. The SCQF has 12 levels and takes into account all types of learning (formal, non-formal, informal) in all sectors (public, private, third sector). The learning providers (including but not limited to schools, colleges, and universities) use it as a basis for the development and description of their own offer.
Since 2005 there has been a SCQF Handbook which can be applied in all sectors of education and training, even in Higher Education. However, it is a set of guidelines and not actual rules or formal requirements, and therefore the implementation of the RPL varies from case to case. The Handbook describes two types of possible recognitions through RPL: the formal (a training organization or a single individual can compare their learning to the SCQF level descriptors, but without obtaining credits), and the summative (a formal evaluation of prior or experiential learning, which rewards credits). There are three key principles of the present RPL Handbook:

1. Recognition is given for learning, not for the simple experience;
2. The learning that is recognized must be transferable;
3. The credits achieved as a result of RPL, are equivalent to those gained in the formal system.
In Scotland there are also Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), based on the same English standards. Each standard is divided into units, and each unit into elements describing the required tasks to be considered, capable of carrying out the planned activities. Everyone can have a certificate for each unit completed without getting a whole SVQ. Even in this case, the standards have been identified by each industry’s Sector Skills Council, together with the employees, professional organizations and unions. The evaluation is done through the production of evidence collected by the candidate. There are three types of tests: Performance Evidence, Knowledge Evidence, and Evidence of Prior Learning (which includes work, previous training, and hobbies relevant to the standard).

The first reports done on the application of SVQs show that many employees have increased their self-esteem through recognition of their experiences and expertise, in turn, providing them with a sense of empowerment in taking on new responsibilities. The general perception of SVQs is very positive.

In the third sector, another interesting project was developed between 2005 and 2006 on the recognition of prior learning, called: RPL in Community Learning and Development. The goal of the project was to create an online profiling tool for young workers within Community Learning and Development (CLD). This tool helped users to reflect on their own learning through experience, and to identify current strengths and development areas. The target audience consisted of young workers who were already active in the field. The project has now been closed and the tool is no longer available online, but the Mentor Handbook and the Learner Handbook are still available by request.
A very important case study to mention, which represents the implementation of the SCQF (by the Scottish Social Services Council), was a project conducted between 2006 and 2008. Workers lacking confidence in their ability to learn, and workers reluctant to undertake formal learning courses were the target for this project. The purpose was not the actual acquisition of qualifications, but the preparation before the acquisition, through building self-confidence and developing reflective abilities. All activities were lead by a mentor who supported the learning process of the students, both individually and in groups. In this study, peer group work was considered to be extremely important.

The 6 steps to prepare a student for the assessment of an SVQ were:

1. Preparatory support (provided by the mentor in group or individual sessions)
2. The use of RPL profiling by the participants (in order to identify their existing skills and their learning needs)
3. Discussion of the profile with the mentor
4. The production of reflecting evidences and updating of the profile
5. Work to implement the requirements of the SVQ unit
6. The SVQ assessment
PRACTICES IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: CASE STUDIES

In the other European countries analysed, the general situation was shown to be similar to those described above; with some more advanced cases from a systemic point of view (especially in Finland, Denmark and Norway), and others in which the process is still in progress, or in the early stages of development. However, the general considerations reflect those already discussed, both with regard to the need for a policy that gives rules and regulations (at least at national level), and concerning the assessment tools that are the most interesting and relevant for the KVALUES project; the most important being the portfolio, in its traditional and online version.
The Academy of Continuing Education (Weiterbildungsakademie, WBA), founded in 2007 for the professionalization of adult education, has quite a different approach regarding the assessment, validation and recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning of adult educators.

It consists of a two-level qualification structure, based on the offer of a certificate (Certified Adult Educator) and/or a diploma (Graduate Adult Educator), which can facilitate entry into higher education courses. During the project by which the Academy was developed, many stakeholders and institutions have been involved in identifying the set of competences necessary for the acquisition of the two levels. Today, the WBA is managed by the Federal Institute for Adult Education (Federal Institute for Erwachsenenbildung, bifeb), supported by all 10 major organizations of adult education, and closely connected by practical experiences within a network of adult education centres. Usually, candidates are required to attend seminars, in addition to their prior learning, as well as participate in a workshop to achieve their final certification. The certification system is based on ECTS.

In the future, WBA certificates and diplomas will be included in the Austrian National Qualifications Framework or NQF (which is currently under development). To this end, the WBA curriculum will be reformulated in terms of learning outcomes. The main target of the WBA is made up of school leaders, trainers/teachers, guidance counsellors and librarians.

During the initial assessment, the candidate develops an online portfolio in which non-formal and informal learning experiences are listed. Accreditation of non-formal learning refers to courses attended, and seminars, meetings, conferences.
and/or lectures followed. The accreditations for informal learning can take place in various ways, such as writing a paper about a certain topic, presenting papers on relevant issues, declaring stays abroad of at least three months (in the case of intercultural competences), or by taking responsibility for a funded project (for competences in project management). Once the portfolio is completed and delivered to the offices of the WBA, an assessment is made by a staff member in order to quantify the number of recognizable ECTS, thanks to quantitative criteria provided by the guidelines. A maximum of 80% of ECTS acquired through informal learning can be recognized. However, for the second level (to receive a diploma), formal and non-formal learning are generally more applicable. Experience has shown that social and personal skills are credited predominantly to informal learning. The competences regarding educational theories, however, are not creditable.
Since the early 90’s there has been a system of qualifications based on skills, and the validation of prior experiences is considered to be the core of this new of vocational training system. One of the more complex aspects of this system is the validation process, considered as a learning process from the point of view of the adult professional. It consists of three stages:

1. Identification of prior know-how
2. Presentation of verified skills or expertise acquired in training courses
3. Validation of skills through reliable documentation or displays

Since 1995, there has been a Specialist Qualification funded by the State, which addresses adult educators who want to strengthen their teaching skills. The training period for this qualification lasts about 6 to 10 months, utilizing various methods of personalized learning. The methods used to validate the learning modules are: the portfolio, practical tests and a formal evaluation.

The Specialist Qualification is a good practice that provides three relevant indications that move in the direction of a system of validation for non-formal and informal learning:

1. The importance of national legislation and financing;
2. The need for the development of marketing efforts by independent teacher training institutes, and cooperation with education officials;
3. The importance of supporting the independent learning of validation processes through substantial materials (on paper and in electronic -web- form).
LITHUANIA

The project analysed was “Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning at University Studies”, conducted between 2006 and 2008. The goal was to develop a system of validation of non-formal and informal learning for the acquisition of academic credits to spend on university studies. The project is interesting because it shows how non-formal and informal learning can be integrated in studies of Higher Education, suggesting the way in which the tools and methods of the traditional assessment can be adapted to the new context.

The method of validation has been an e-portfolio, presented and illustrated through a series of residential workshops. In it, the candidate could include work experience, interviews, examinations, case studies, observations, preparation of business plans, practical tasks, simulations, and tests (both for practical and knowledge skills). The evaluation process consisted of 7 stages, from initial registration (application and information) to the implementation of concrete recommendations on the skills and knowledge still necessary to be able to acquire a diploma.

Phases 2, 3 and 4 concern the analysis of the candidates, both with regard to their application of formal recognition, and prior knowledge. The analysis is done through interviews and the development a plan of study, along with a detailed reflection on their own learning. During phase 5, an expert identified by the faculty, assesses the documentation submitted by the applicant and decides on accreditation. If the result is negative, he provides guidance on what to do in order to resubmit the application with the hope of success. Phase 6 is a prerogative of the Commission responsible for the composition of the expert group, and it entails reviewing the results of the evaluation.
PRACTICES IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES:
CASE STUDIES

NORWAY

As a premise, it should be pointed out that in Norway all adults have the right to an assessment of their formal, non-formal and informal learning, achieved through the educational system, work experience or other activities.

There is also a National Framework for APL which acts as a reference point for initiatives when validating non-formal and informal learning, and validation procedures are also well established at the local level.

The project taken into account is “Validation of prior learning in prison education”, conducted between 2007 and 2009, which involved the inmates of six prisons without secondary education qualifications or work. The aim was to use the Assessment of Prior Learning to offer them an education which was customized to their background and their needs, and to encourage them to continue their education and develop their ability to work in order to be rehabilitated into society. Validation of detainees’ prior learning has been seen as a key element, considering that most of them had not had any formal qualifications, but were still able to carry out certain work activities (construction, painting, etc.) learned in contexts of undeclared work.
The practical dimension of the APL was able to motivate these subjects, and moreover, part of the teachings could be recognized simply because of the validation obtained. Validation was carried out with reference to the National Qualifications Framework, and by using a method based on dialogue (with interviews on educational and work backgrounds, and on the language skills of the inmate). Then they were integrated by written documentation and photos to create a portfolio. In some cases, the inmate had been tested and assessed by a skilled professional, showing practical proof of their skills and expertise. An exemplary story is that of Peter, who has managed to rebuild a career as a carpenter by obtaining, in just a short time, a certificate of qualification, by demonstrating through photos, how he had been able to build his own house.
Another case of interest is represented by a private sector initiative in The Netherlands. This is the Vocational Qualifications Programme (VQP), carried out by Philips Electronic Nederland and four trade unions, targeted at skilled employees who have no formal qualifications.

It was established in 2004, first funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), and is now financed by the company, in order to increase the knowledge and the skills of employees in a context of organizational and productive restructuring. The foundations for the VQP programme were set in the early 1990s, when the Philips Employment Scheme (werkgelegenheidsplan, WGP) for the long-term unemployed was introduced. Against the need of reducing staff and, therefore, dismissal, VQP looks like a preventive approach, because instead of addressing the problem solely from the economic point of view (with compensation for dismissal, redundancy payment, etc.), its purpose was the requalification of redundant staff in order to facilitate their employment in other areas of the company or outside the company.

Besides the attention placed on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, this initiative is attention-grabbing in several respects:

- it uses a training model (called Combi) for which the employee receives personal training during working hours, without the company losing any production capacity, since the trainees will be temporarily replaced by WGP participants who have the opportunity to acquire and certify new skills and abilities;
- it shows that both employees and the company can acquire benefits;
- it shows that the validation of non-formal and informal learning can be used by the employer in a preventive approach to avoid dismissal, and to improve the potential of their already existing employees.
Since 2004, about 1500 participants in the VQP have acquired formal certificates. Currently, the focus is on people with low qualifications, low literacy, and those that have left the formal education system early, with the aim of having them reach, at least, the basic levels of professional qualification (WEB2 and WEB3); considered in the Netherlands as the minimum requirement to operate effectively in a rapidly changing labour market.

Participants are involved in training workshops called Learning Works, in which they are encouraged to reflect on themselves and their future, as well as on the fact that training can help them to improve their position in the labour market. Interviews are conducted, and special attention is devoted to questions such as “Who am I?”, “What am I good at?” and “What do I want to achieve?”. During the workshops, practical information is also provided, giving information about training opportunities in the local labour market. At the end of the workshops, the participants are helped to draw up a personal action plan, by identifying concrete steps that have already been made, and steps yet to be accomplished.

The VQP is very well known and very popular in the Netherlands, so as to be used by other companies in addition to Philips.
The project in question is “Towards a Qualified Construction Workforce for Poland”, implemented by a trade union (the Budowlani) in collaboration with national and international partners, between 2008 and 2010, within the LLL Programme. It has been developed as an answer to the crisis of the labour market in the construction industry in 2008, but also because of Poland’s focus on the development of occupational standards, the revision of the Vocational Education and Training system, and the impact of the Bologna Process in Higher Education. The overall aim of the project was to identify and adopt best practices available in the recognition and certification of knowledge and skills acquired by construction workers through work experiences, in Poland or abroad.

Examples of good practices already existed before this project, and APL and RPL systems were already available at the European level in order to develop and implement a validation procedure that could serve as a pilot project. The results have been used for future projects, and used to design a national system for validation of non-formal and informal learning in the construction industry. Furthermore, the results have been used to develop approaches which are more easily transferable in other employment sectors.
The specific aims of the project were:

- to transfer good European practices and experiences related to APL in the construction sector in Poland
- to promote a skilled and internationally recognized work force in Polish construction industry
- to improve the health, safety and efficiency of the construction industry
- to improve the supply of skilled labour in the construction industry

The goal was to develop practical mechanisms for the certification of low-skilled construction workers’ competences, acquired by work experience (but not formally certified), or acquired in foreign countries (both for Polish and foreign workers).

Significant items of interest of the project:

- the system of recruitment of participants, thanks to a series of steps (from the classification of professions to the development of the necessary documentation) that can serve as an example;
- APL has been set to a theoretical and practical standard, using tests and displays;
- the qualifications of the construction sector present in foreign countries have been mapped in order to identify any obstacles;
- evaluation processes were compared with those of other European countries, showing that a comparison is possible, beyond the particularities of each country and the difficulties encountered in finding information in the different national systems of validation/evaluation.
PRACTICES IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: CASE STUDIES

PORTUGAL

The Unit for the Development, Recognition and Validation of Competences (Unidade de Desenvolvimento, reconhecimento and Validação de Competencias, UDRVC) of the Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal is an organizational infrastructure for validation, created in 2007 in order to coordinate the design and implementation of policies and activities for the RPL.

Despite being regarded as a key element in the innovation of the educational system and the growth of the skill level of the population, it is the only Portuguese example of validation of non-formal and informal learning in the context of Higher Education. The UDRVC can be considered a good practice because it sets the tone to a process of innovation in the Portuguese national system of Higher Education, and also because throughout the years of its existence, it has already reached important goals: the creation of a team, the establishment of a process to recognize rules and guidelines, and the development of tools and their practical use.

Regarding the validation of non-formal and informal learning in the strict sense, the work and practical tests in this case are taken into account in order to highlight the possession of certain skills and competences. An important role is also given to the presentation of a portfolio that candidates must build, under their own responsibility, with the help of non-mandatory workshops conducted by external counsellors.
The case study analyses the project “L@EGAL2 - European investment in the future of ROMA in Romania,” the continuation of “L@EGAL1” which in 2007, developed, validated and introduced a new employment standard known as the “local expert in Roma affairs”, which has become officially recognized in the Romanian Code of Occupations.

The project promoted the professionalization and qualification of people with Roma origin who are currently employed in local public authorities, through a process of validation of non-formal and informal learning. At the same time, it had the aim of improving the social inclusion of disadvantaged minority groups in Romania.

Regarding the validation method, the tools used in the initial phase were: an interview, the presentation of a portfolio including learning experiences, both formal and non-formal, and a self-evaluation form. In the evaluation phase itself, an interview and a written test were used, but the methods to be used for each candidate are seven in total. In addition to the written test and the portfolio, the following aspects were taken into consideration: an oral test, direct observation, a simulation (or structured observation), feedback from the beneficiaries, and feedback from third parties. At the end of the evaluation process, the candidate also has the opportunity to provide feedback on the quality of the validation session and to appeal against the final decision of the evaluator. In this case, the whole process would start again using a different assessor.
An example of a practice already established at the European level and considered to be an international tool, is the Youthpass. It is a tool used to visualise and validate learning outcomes acquired by Youth in Action projects, a part of the strategy of the European Commission to encourage the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning. Used from 2005 to 2007, it is now a third sector initiative funded by the European Commission, and is recognized as a major political initiative within the ‘Europe 2020 Strategy’. In particular, this project demonstrates how important the involvement of stakeholders are in the development of a new validation process.

Young people and youth workers can benefit from this tool in several ways:

- by creating a Youthpass Certificate with the help of another person (mentor/teacher/trainer), allowing them to describe what they have done in the project and what competences they have acquired

- by documenting the added value of a “Youth in Action” project, with is actively supported by European citizenship

- it helps to strengthening the social recognition of youth work as being accepted throughout Europe

- by making the key competences visible and validating them through an accredited certificate, demonstrating that the employability of young people is supported throughout Europe
At the moment Youthpass contains two main elements:

1) the Youthpass Process, which implies planning one’s learning from the preparation phase of the project onwards, and reflecting on one’s personal and professional development throughout the implementation and evaluation phase.

2) the Youthpass Certificate, which: acts as the result of the reflection process, and confirms (on behalf of the organizers) specific participation in a specific activity, a detailed description of the activity, as well as a description of the activities and individualized learning outcomes. This reflection and description of the learning outcome respectively follows the eight Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, and is facilitated by a learning “supporter” (a mentor, a young worker, a coach, or another participant, depending on the activity among those listed below.)

Assessment of the activities in which it’s currently possible to participate in (Youth Exchanges, European Voluntary Service, Youth Initiatives, Training Courses), is based on a portfolio-based approach which uses the EU Key competences as a framework to define learning outcomes. It can be described as a dialogue process between a participant and a co-worker (youth worker/leader, trainer, social worker). There is no standard for the assessment process, as the “assessors” are the participants themselves, as well as their co-workers.
VALIDATION OF PRIOR LEARNING IN PRISON EDUCATION

- SCOTTISH VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (SVQS)
- SCQF HANDBOOK
- SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL (SSSC)

A MAP OF THE BEST PRACTICES

- NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NVQS)
- SOUTH WEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE (SWOOP)
- SOUL (SOFT OUTCOMES UNIVERSAL LEARNING) RECORD
- ON-SITE ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING (OSAT)

VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS PROGRAMME (VQP)
FOCUS ON PRACTICES IN ITALY
GENERAL FRAMEWORK

For Italy, two basic pieces of data must be considered:

- different participants use the same words, but with different meanings;
- the population involved in training activities is lower than the European quota.

This framework includes procedures, systems, and models of validation of competences from experience, and it has evolved into paths which are not always structured, causing spatial diversity. Lifelong Learning is considered a fundamental human right. In line with the developments of the European Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process, in relation to scenarios that recognize continuing education as an individual right of the subject; to take advantage of opportunities that will enable his/her growth and development. However, the overall picture appears extremely fragmented.

The instrument used throughout the national territory is the Libretto Formativo del Cittadino (Citizen’s Training Book), an institutional document established in 2005 to enhance and facilitate the “marketability” of the competences acquired in learning and professional development processes.
The purpose of the Libretto Formativo is to collect, rebuild, organize, and support the:

- different learning experiences made in education, in training activities, at work and in everyday life;
- results of these learning experiences in terms of acquired competences.

Until now, the formalization and implementation of institutional systems and instruments for validation of non-formal and informal learning in Italy was accomplished only at the regional level. The single regional situations, however, are different and are classified as:

- regions with complete and working systems of validation and certification (Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Piedmont, Lombardia, and Aosta Valley);
- regions with formalized and regulated, but not yet fully implemented strategies (Lazio, Liguria, Marche, Veneto, and Umbria);
- regions that have had significantly interesting experiences and experimentations, but to different degrees of progress (all others regions of Italy).

The most recent legislation regarding “the Identification and Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning” and “Minimum Service Standards of the National System of Certification of Competences” dates back to the beginning of this year (Legislative Decree no. 13, 16 January 2013; set in action on 2 March 2013). It outlines a national system of certification in order to enhance an individual’s personal competence, from a Lifelong Learning perspective, according to national minimum standards which ensure the validity of what is actually certified, and thus its marketability.

The Decree is linked to the Reform of the labour market, and defines Lifelong Learning as an “Individual Right”. Some issues for the practical implementation, however, still need to be resolved.
For companies in Italy, the situation is inconsistent. In the cases where a validation process takes place within the enterprise, the real issue is the portability of the competences and of the validation model.

In companies that have a more “social” vision of the assessment/validation system of skills, the central aspects are:

- the social value of the competence, understood in the enterprise system as a function of the plurality of processes that oversee the management of the staff, and more generally, the development and enhancement of human resources;
- the ability of validation, assessment and certification instruments to effectively influence the enterprise system and the life cycle of the worker-citizen;
- the (successful) experiential factors that can generate, and re-generate individual and collective learning in work contexts.

The benefits obtained from this “social” approach to validation are:

- the design of individual training plans;
- the connection with the employment centres where the same method is used;
- the finalization of the action to a concrete development of employability of workers.
On the other hand, the problems concern:

- the resistance to publish relevant information related to the organization and to the business plans
- the times and costs of management, in lack of specific non-corporate funds
- the presence of skills not easily transferable to other corporate contexts

Regarding the Italian third sector, from 2004 to 2010, a survey of on-going trials was conducted, consistent with the methodological framework of the validation process indicated by Cedefop. The survey can be summarized as follows:

- A reconstruction of an individual’s experience
- The use of a stock of professional standards, for reference
- The assessment phase
- The final act of certification.
SUCCESS AND HINDERING FACTORS

The experiences that can be defined as successful were able to:

• Clearly demonstrate and utilize the design and purpose of validation, and of the recipient’s needs.

• Think carefully about the value to be attributed to the results of validation, with regards to the institutional system in which the experience was acquired. It is extremely important to note that it must be clear from the very beginning, if at the end there will be a certification, a credit, or a signed certificate awarded, adding possible further value, or limited to the labour market.

• Establish a partnership for the process management formed by multiple participants, public and / or private, whose roles are clearly defined in relation to their competences.

• Create, in an explicit and clear manner, a reference for standards or stocks of skills to be validated. This reference can be made to existing catalogues or constructed ‘ad hoc’, but it is nonetheless, an essential element to be declared.

• Pay attention to the economic sustainability of the validation process; in other words the design of the process mustn’t be too expensive so that it can be operated even with limited resources.

• To build a methodological path broadly characterized by a pattern in four phases (analysis, setting standards, assessment, and certification), each of which require operators or individuals who are skilled for management.
Common obstacles to the promotion of validation activities were:

- the legal value of qualifications obtained through formal education and training;
- the traditional weakness of continuing and adult education, which in Italy is not widespread and established as well as in other European countries;
- the lack of a unified national system of qualification and competences, although there are systems at a regional level;
- the plurality of the institutions involved in this matter at both the national and regional level.
Empirical research was carried out by Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy and Sweden. It was conducted with quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (focus groups, in-depth interviews) methods. The United Kingdom produced some of the interviews, as well as a report on the concepts of the ‘Digital Story’. In Germany, video interviews were conducted on the research topics.

In all stages of research, the respondents were representative of the following categories; making them potentially of interest to the KVALUES project:

- **CATEGORY 1:** Adults, Young Adults in disadvantaged conditions, Unemployed, Inactive people

- **CATEGORY 2:** Managers in the Education and Training sector, Experts in Validation (who work in local governments), Assessment Centres, Vocational Schools, Universities, Specialist Recognition Centres

- **CATEGORY 3:** Business Managers, Human Resource Managers, Trade Union Representatives, People responsible for recruitment in the cultural/third sector
THE RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
For the focus group panel, 11 stakeholders were selected from various sectors:

- Education and Training sector: Local Government, Universities
- Business Sector: Business managers, Human Resource Managers
- Voluntary Sector: Communities, NGOs, Associations
- A Moderator from HuMan Institute for Humanistic Management Bulgaria

Discussion Outputs

On validation of informal competences

1. The focus group panel agreed that the validation of informal competences has become an important issue for the vision and strategy of lifelong learning. The discussion talked about how different settings outside of formal learning and training situations could benefit the development of new competences. The non-formal elements of such educational situations (especially in terms of learning time and objectives) were noted as key points that have to be taken into account, both from an individual’s (the learner’s) and from an institution’s (the provider’s) point of view.

2. The mapping of the full range of competences and capabilities held by an individual has been pointed out as one of the key aspects of the validation process. One member noted that only through the process of a conscious competence analysis, can one be aware of their own abilities, and thus gain recognition on multiple levels (both personal and professional).

3. A major point that emerged from the discussion, was that it is, after all, up to the individual to assess his/her own experiences and acquired competences, and thus be aware of any shortcomings that can be overcome through non-formal learning practices.

4. Some members of the focus group pointed out that the competence analysis – whether done by the individual or on an institutional level – has to be closely linked to the requirements of the labour market.
5. In the discussion, it has been pointed out that competences acquired through informal learning practices cannot substitute formal education; they can, however, greatly improve the professional and personal recognition of an individual.

6. The group agreed that, in Bulgaria, the visibility of such programs is a major challenge. In Bulgaria, one member noted, the view of education is a very traditional one and the benefits of what people can learn outside of formal education and vocational training should be more clearly communicated. According to some members, there ought to be better communication between the authorities and the institutions on one side, and between the private sector and the public sector on the other.

7. A member of the focus group who is professionally involved with the application of educational practices noted that very limited experience has been accumulated in Bulgaria regarding non-formal and informal education; therefore, introducing such programs would be a challenge, but also an advantage because of the pioneer effect.

8. Another challenge in Bulgaria, which has also been recognized as a global problem, is the validation of informal competences among disadvantaged groups. The members agreed that such groups should be supported on an institutional level (top-down) in contrast to other individuals where the process could be designed as a two way street (bottom-up and top-down).

9. Some participants expressed the view that Bulgaria delayed the introduction of a comprehensive national strategy, and institutionalized forms of recognition of skills and knowledge acquired outside of formal education.

On the DST Methodology...
While valuing its benefits, the focus group agreed that the digital storytelling methodology is a generally unknown tool in Bulgaria. According to one member of the focus group, the methodology has limited practical applications in the country among its targeted audience. The majority of the group, however, agreed that digital storytelling tools are a valuable addition to people’s competences and that they can be applied in a variety of professional fields.
ESTONIA

In Estonia six interviews were conducted, as well as a focus group.

Focus group
During a round table session with Estonian creative hubs and managers of cultural centres, an introduction to the project and an open discussion on the concept of digital storytelling was carried out.

Topics discussed:
- Introduction to the KVALUES project
- Concept of digital storytelling
- Use of an online survey

Feedback:
- They understood the meaning of digital storytelling created by the use of a digital portfolio.
- They recognized the need for digital output, but only for artists who are required to use that tool to show their work, not as a separate production about themselves personally.
- They agreed to send the survey to their contacts by e-mail.

One to One Interviews
Six interviews with different stakeholders were conducted on the following topics:
- Knowledge about digital storytelling
- Have they themselves used digital storytelling in the past?
- Would they be receptive to this kind of interaction when receiving job applications or applying for jobs
- Will they be interested in learning how to use this tool in the future?
Some feedback from the different categories is described below:

**Human Resource Manager from a Banking sector.**
Digital storytelling will not be an expectable tool because it would not fit into the formal use of recruitment. But, personally it can play on the will to help to do more for a participant.

**Festival Personal Manager** (dealing with volunteers and jobless people activation.)
It would be very nice to have more video presentations of candidates. At festivals, there are a lot of positions where human communication is very important; to already have a view of one person’s communication abilities would be great tool.

**Film Director & Music Producer** (from a Production Company)
In both industries most of the work is digitalized. They are familiar with the use of digital portfolios. They did not see an application to add a storytelling video to the digital portfolio.

**Two unemployed young adults:**
Learning the skills to be able to make a digital story would be a great asset in the case of applying for a job in the creative sector.
In this sector, there is a fear of not responding to the overall expectation of company’s personal managers or recruiters.
1. When you learn to do something new for yourself, at work or in the community, volunteering or with your own family, what benefits are there to certifying your own learning?

It is a matter of keeping the quality of one’s own work in mind, because the certification of learning reminds a person of what they are doing and how he/she is doing it, by helping him/her to understand what has been learnt and how to improve it. There is also another matter concerning the contract between generations: fathers learn from children, and vice versa. The communication between generations is already something of importance to be taken into account.

2. How could an interactive CV containing reflective digital stories help you progress in the world of work?

An interactive CV could give a person a better overview of their own learning progress; from past experiences (what I have done), to future experiences (what I could do). Others (professional partners, organizations, etc.) could better understand what a person is able to do, and could see what he/she has already done. Different media (video, audio, stories) are an added value (for people and organizations) showing what someone can effectively do: you can actually talk about your skills and demonstrate what you are capable of doing. DST is an easy-to-handle tool for (self) certification of learning processes. Concerning the use of DST as certification tool, the professional world is more conservative in respect to the world of volunteering.
3. If there was a self-evaluation tool available how much use might you make of it?

A periodic use is estimated (once a month for example), in order to understand what learning progresses must be followed. It could also stimulate people to indeed reflect on themselves, in terms of (the) quality of one's skills and capabilities; especially when people are used to working in routines, for quantities, for abbreviations.

4. What is your perception of whether or not employers or educational establishments would recognize such a tool?

It really depends on the level of conservatism of the institutions. In universities, or local administrations, where formality is very important, this tool could meet skepticism and a lot of difficulties to be recognized. In less formal types of learning, but also in contexts more open to innovation, it will have some chances. Also, the ease of use is quite important: the easier a tool is to use, the easier it is to be handed.

5. We are looking at developing the digital storytelling methodology to get adults from a range of backgrounds to self-evaluate their own competences. From your own experience how useful could this tool be for people?

From the responses, emerged the conclusion that it’s very difficult to reflect on one’s deeper self, because (the) storytelling leads to an exploration of self. It could be useful for people to understand their own skills, learning something about them self not known before, and to communicate this understanding to other people. This methodology could help people to develop confidence in themselves. To be most useful, this tool should be accessible, quick and free.

Here is the link to the interview: http://www.KVALUES.eu/2013/07/23/how-useful-could-an-interactive-cv-be/
ITALY

In Italy a focus group was conducted and non-standard interviews were carried out on the following points of interest:

- Identifying competences to be validated (mapping)
- Identifying areas of validation for the selected competences (using self-assessment tools)
- Using DST as a means of validation
- Analysis of the questionnaires.

Overall, the research confirms that the data, with regard to the terminology, was complex and often “ambiguous”. It demonstrates the existence of a non-systematic method for actions and procedures, highlighting the differences in approach between the for-profit and non-profit worlds.
The competences explicitly identified as indispensable, were:

- participation (both being involved, and knowing how to involve others)
- working in groups
- being builders of social relations
- ability to network, both online and offline
- working with new media
- knowing how to act in a relationship and in a group
- knowing how to stand in front of a screen to perform a job, even repetitive if necessary
- respect for the hierarchy
- knowing how to live and work within complex contexts
- problem solving
- communication skills
- language skills
- ability to draw attention to a topic and its activities
- learning to learn (The basic principle of all other skills. Methods and learning strategies are essential to adult life, both in a professional and non-professional sense);
- ability to invest in yourself
- dimension of values (even if it may lead to problems of assessment or validation, it is an important aspect closely related to motivation)
- copying (meaning the ability to respond proactively to different situations, determinant in complex professional contexts)
It should be emphasized that the competences’ object of interest depends on the subject; for example, the labour market is very much inclined to require competences that are useful and expendable, even if they are not internal to a larger vision of citizenship. On the contrary, the institutional and non-profit sectors look closely at social needs. From this, it can be concluded that the private sector is more interested in certification, while the latter is oriented towards validation.

However, DST is still an object of interest for all involved, hailed as a promising tool (although not well known) both for the identification of competences, and for their validation, in principle compatible with the certification procedures.

The elements of DST that are identified as interesting are: the narrative of one’s own history, and the “digital” nature of the methodology used. These elements define DTS as very a well coded and extensive method (in the sense that it makes good use of multimedia and digital language).

This topic is embedded within a broader issue: How the narrative of a person can be a very useful method to discover aspects of someone’s personal experiences that can be used to enhance non-formal and informal competences, and then bring them to certification. This methodology seems to be particularly effective for soft skills, but it could also be good for other skills. Indeed, DST has self-reflective, expressive and transformative features that make it useful to work on the motivations and the values of the person who is telling the story. It allows a more sophisticated approach that can generate both personal and social transformation.
DST has, therefore, an added value that can produce the following potential capabilities:

- transformation
- evaluation (e.g., you can execute a ladder or a series of actions for self or hetero evaluation)
- narration
- self-reflection

The stories have an expressive function because they bring out both subjective, and emotional/passionate aspects. With other methods, it is harder to capture these qualitative dimensions. There is a respect for the historical, motivational, and value-driven meanings, concluding that a story reveals much more than a method based solely on rational elements. This is true for both the person who tells the story (self-reflexive function), and for the person to whom the narration is told (expressive function).

The motivational aspect (also linked to the values) is important for individuals and for workplaces, yet it is underestimated in the public sector. Even the current crisis in Italy leads us to think that doing a job for which there is an intrinsic motivation is simply a luxury, when in fact, it would be a benefit for both the worker and the business world. Therein lies a huge potential for DST where the transformative element changes from an individual's characteristics, to social characteristics.

The problems identified for the execution of the Digital Curricular Story are related to a low level of media literacy, and to the digital divide; as well as to many other variables (e.g.; age) concerning people who must create a balance between their competences, and the recognition of those competences (through validation and/or certification).
An interview, and a focus group with the National Validation Coordinator have been conducted. The focus group included representatives from the Public Employment Service, the National Council of Adult Education, the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company (TRR), and the Multicultural Center in Botkyrka.

General observations

- There is no legal right for an individual to have his/her competence validated.
- Validation of informal and non-formal learning is predominantly summative, and concerns assessment of specific competences against criteria related to a certain occupations.
- Only examples of formative validation that are focused on general competences/key competences have been found.
- There is an increasing interest in the validation of informal learning.
- Observed shortcomings in the validation system are: a) the need for a sustainable system to finance validation, b) there is no recognized framework for quality assurance, c) there is a lack of relevant training courses for validation practitioners.
- Two interrelated problems of particular relevance to the validation of general competences/key competences at the present stage: a) legitimacy (moving forward, development must involve all relevant stakeholders in order to reach a common understanding and standard), b) common definitions and the structuring of competences (different models use different ways to define general competences, creating a risk of incompatible models).
- The Importance of seeing the validation process as a learning experience in itself exists, especially when validating key competences.
A decentralised structure with many different actors

The validation of real competences and prior learning can be used within the education system against certain course criteria/expected learning outcomes to either give a person access to education or to shorten one’s education (usually after the upper secondary level). Validation can also be used against specific criteria connected to a certain job or profession. These criteria are set up by the organisations within a specific sector. A third form of validation, which is not addressed in this report, is the validation of formal foreign education. This is done by the Council for Higher Education.

Learning contexts involved in validation of informal and non-formal learning are: adult education at the municipal level, higher vocational training, higher (academic) education, the Public Employment Service, specific sector organisations, and liberal adult education ("folkbildning").
UK partners have contributed to the qualitative part of the research with some interviews conducted with young people and professionals about the concept and the meaning of a “story”. There are some definitions and notes to be mentioned:

1. A narrative or story, in its broadest sense, is anything told or recounted; the telling of a happening or connected series of happenings, whether true or fictitious.

2. Narrative meaning is created by establishing that something is a part of a whole and usually that something is the cause of something else. It is usually combined with human actions or events that affect human beings. The meaning of each event is produced by the part it plays in the whole episode.

3. Groups, communities, societies and cultures also preserve collections of typical narrative meanings in their myths, fairy tales, legends, histories and stories. Participating in a group, community, society or culture, requires general knowledge of these accumulated narrative meanings.

4. Stories fill our lives in the way that water fills the lives of fish. Stories are so all-pervasive, that we practically cease to be aware of them.
For other questions, here are the most noteworthy responses:

**How might Digital Storytelling practices be applied, as a tool for self assessment?**

- “I would like to see Digital Storytelling workshops run as both formative and summative assessments on a project”
- “I think most people would mark fairly and say, ‘I wasn’t happy with XYZ and if I did it again I would do ABC’.”
- “We end each workshop by sharing the stories. The storyteller gets a few minutes beforehand to talk about his process and outcome. This becomes part of our assessment.”

**What kind of skills and experiences might be very well suited to this medium?**

- “I would say get the people in the positions of power and get their buy-in first...everyone benefits from it.”
- “It gives a chance for those who don’t necessarily perform well in exams to shine.”
- “It would be really interesting to try it with people who feel alienated; there’s something about those who feel their work is not valued. They would be rich soil.”

**If we were to condense the Digital Storytelling process (to save time), what would you lose and what would you keep?**

- “For us the really important bit is thinking about preparing the script, finding the meaning in your story and recording the voiceover.”
- “You can whizz through a lot more of the technical things.”
- “I would keep in the reflection, I would keep in the story circle and I would keep in the time spent on the script.”
What drawbacks or trade-offs can you envisage with Digital Storytelling being adapted for use in this way?

- “I think you might lose that aesthetic. There’s something about a Digital Story that takes you for a very short time into somebody else’s world.”

- “When people only spend a day with us, I feel they get far less out of the experience, the stories are not usually as good and it all ends up feeling like a rush.”

- “Scalability: people want it faster, they want it cheaper, they want it bigger. It’s easy to scale up the technology, but you lose what really matters: that it’s a story.”

In conclusion, it has been shown that the name ‘Digital Story’ can be quite confusing, but it can, however, be used as a tool within the self-evaluation process, and by a broad section of society. The process is more effective when stories are made with facilitation. Undoubtedly, technology can speed it up, but only slightly. One last remark to note: overbearing curricular expectations can adversely affect the Digital Story.
Only Bulgaria, Estonia and Italy have submitted questionnaires. Each country has had the opportunity to revise the questionnaires, so in some cases, there have been a different number of questions, and in other cases, the questions themselves were slightly different. However, overall, in 90% of the questionnaires from each of the three countries, not all the participants answered all the questions.
On the whole, the responses directly related to the Digital Storytelling show that although it is an unknown method, there is a genuine openness to the possibility of increasing knowledge and experience related to it. The category that displays much “prudence” in its efficacy, is in general, the third one.

Shown below are the most significant questions and responses, subdivided by category.
62 people responded: 24 in Bulgaria (58% more men than women), 27 in Italy (74% more women than men), and only 11 in Estonia (60% women, 40% men). This factor must be taken into account, especially when only 4 or 5 answers were given. In Bulgaria and Italy, the age group with the most participation, is 26-35 year-old group, whereas in Estonia, it is the 56-64 year-olds. It is interesting to note that in Italy, the second largest age group is 36-45 year-olds, while in Bulgaria and Estonia the second largest groups were those aged 15 to 25. This may be sign of a labour force that consists of different employability. With regard to the territorial origin, in Bulgaria and Estonia the overwhelming majority comes from cities (80%), but in Italy, from towns (74%). Even the work situation presents significant differences: in Bulgaria the majority of respondents are students, followed by full-time employees and the unemployed people; in Italy, the percentage of unemployed people grows slightly, from 33% to 37%, while full-time employees decrease from 42% to 22%, and students decrease from 54% to 4%. On the other hand, the presence of retired people rise from 0 to 33%. In Estonia, 70% of people are employed full-time.

In the section on competences and their validation, the first question of interest concerns the perception of the success factors while searching for a job: Professional skills prevail, while the second most important factor shows a difference (Attributes and Qualities for Bulgarians and Estonians, Other Skills and Specific Knowledge for Italians). On the contrary, the findings about the acquisition of attributes and skills are quite similar: the highest percentage (average of 89%) is for the on-the-job experiences, followed by Formal Learning in Bulgaria and Italy and by Informal learning in Estonia. Here, even if only 5 answers were given, it is still interesting to notice that none of the respondents gave importance to Formal Learning. When it comes to validation, however, the differences return to be substantial: while in Italy and Estonia, more than 75% have responded saying that they know what ‘validation of competences’ means, while in Bulgaria, only 52% answered yes. A high percentage of respondents say to have found a job without having to certify non-formal competences (average 75%).
This is almost as high as the desire to certify new competences (80% on average; with 100% in Italy), demonstrating a contradiction regarding the role of certification. In Estonia, only one person out of 4 answered yes to this question.

The last section of the questionnaire is focused on Digital Storytelling. The average among the three countries shows that it is not a well-known method (about 47% are aware of it). However, the situation is contrary when you look at each country individually: in Bulgaria, 77% answered that they did not know what it was, 60% in Italy, and 100% in Estonia. With the last question, the situation is realigned, stating, in all cases, almost everyone is interested in deepening their understanding of this method, and more than half would like to try.

**CATEGORY 2**

It should be said immediately that in this case only 4 people responded both in Bulgaria and Estonia, yet there were 22 responses in Italy. For this reason, a comparison between the three countries would be unreliable. Regarding the gender of respondents, there were more males in Bulgaria and Estonia (75%), and more females in Italy (54%); and here the overall average was fifty-fifty. As expected, the average age rises: the two highest ranges being 36-45 year-olds (50%), and 56-64 year-olds (30%). Regarding the education of the participants, the majority area of origin is the same: 66% Humanistic. The level reveals a certain prevalence of Post-graduates: 68%; mainly due to 75% in Italy. Regarding the area of an organization where a respondent works, 2 out of 3 were in the field of Education, with about half who have had the same position/job for more than 20 years.

Concerning the acquisition of competences, and specifically the perception of more effective learning environments, the responses indicate very high levels for formal learning (79%), for non-formal/informal learning (83%), and for On-the-job learning (69%). The importance given to hobbies and interests, confirms the prevalence of an informal dimension (86%, albeit with very different values for the three countries).
The questions about validation of competences lead to the merit of the objectives of the research: the answers are clearly aligned with the data obtained from the other survey instruments, with regard to the potential for the critical issues. The weaknesses of validation of non-formal and informal learning, are in fact, mainly identified in the ‘lack of a legal framework for validation’ processes (57%) and in the ‘poor access to information about validation’ procedures (50%); while the most suitable methods turn out to be: Observation, the Digital Portfolio (53%) and the Self-evaluation (50%). Beyond some differences between the three countries, the other answers give considerable importance to the non-formal / informal aspect, with regard to the job search (93%), as well as to the need of making the process of self-evaluation as independent as possible (86%).

The part related to DST is quite comparable with the data of the first category. Only half of the respondents, in fact, claim to have heard of or experienced the digital storytelling methodology, and 2/3 of them said to have found it useful. On the whole, there is still interest in experimenting with it (56%).

**CATEGORY 3**

The total respondents were 41. Consisting of 1 respondent in Estonia, 13 in Bulgaria, and 27 in Italy. Here, only Bulgarian and Italian answers have been compared. The data in general, is in line with those of category 2: there is a substantial equality in gender (55% males, 45% females) with a male predominance in Bulgaria (61%); 36-45 is the prevalent age group (48%); the area of education is especially Humanistic (40%); the main area of an organization where respondents work is in the field of Education (although the percentage drops to 50%), and generally, for more than 10 or 20 years. On the contrary, the percentage of Post-graduates decreases slightly ( at about 44%).
The answers concerning the acquisition of competences reveal similarities to categories 1 and 2. Similar to category 1, the On-the-job experiences are considered to be the most important (82%), followed by Formal and Non-formal/Informal learning (both at 68%). As for the second category, a great emphasis is given to hobbies and interests (87% on average, 100% in Italy). Uncertain answers are given to the specific question regarding the ability of potential employees to effectively utilize the informal/non-formal experiences they have had, in order to demonstrate their capabilities. It shows that 44% have a positive view and 47% have a negative view. This clearly shows that there is a request for unique and shared validation systems. Turning to the concept of validation of competences, the lack of a digital portfolio as an effective method, is the first interesting piece of data, with more confidence given to Observation (74%) and Simulation (68%). This is perhaps due to the fact that a portfolio had and still has a more widespread use in the contexts related to education. The last responses about validation were again aligned with the second category: Non-formal learning / Informal learning is a definite decisive factor for the job search (97% on average, with 100% in Bulgaria), and Self-evaluation is also considered to be an essential element (87%).

The knowledge of the Digital Story still appears to be very low: 74% say they do not to know it at all, and among them, more than half (52%) do not know if it could be useful. Even in the remaining 26%, skepticism about its usefulness is high, at 47%, compared to 53% with a positive perception. This data, however, holds a very different value if it decreases in the two national contexts. It is especially in Bulgaria, in fact, that there is a lack of references on the DST methodology: 83% claim to not know what it is, and among those who have actually experienced it, none of them know if it would be a useful tool.
FINAL
CONSIDERATIONS
There are several various elements that have contributed to build this report, yet the overall picture that has emerged is rather homogeneous and consistent. Both the literature which is already available, and the various forms of investigative research carried out, result in a European scene which is still highly fragmented and at different speeds, starting at the early stages of the glossary/terms used.

The impression is that not everyone has the same thing in mind when it comes to validation, recognition and assessment, and the guidelines that have been distributed and reformulated by Cedefop in the last 5-6 years, do not seem to have a sufficiently large presence in shared imagination.

This is the first aspect that should most likely be faced or re-examined in a collaborative way, involving more diverse people in different countries, making them work through shared tools and methodologies.

Beyond this, the key issue regarding the process of the systematization of validation, recognition and assessment practices can be described in a double movement. On one hand, there is the need to centralize or to define standards, regulations, qualifications, best practices, common definitions and the structuring of competences able to act as a point of reference, at least at the national level, while maintaining a close relationship with what the EU already has available (see the European Qualifications Framework). On the other hand, this centralization should give way to a delocalization of the actors responsible for these practices. In other words, the authorities and the institutions that can ensure the quality and safety of processes, must be identified within a territory in order to create a closer relationship, as well as an increased recognition of those individuals who are potentially more interested than others in shaping and emphasizing their skills.

Another important aspect concerns the involvement of all stakeholders, from the public to the private to the third sector. Here, it is a question of legitimacy and how it can achieve a common understanding and standard. In countries where this has been done from the beginning (that is, from the design of regulations, documents, training activities, and projects), the results are generally better, both from the point of view of efficiency of the process, and above all the perception of the people involved in respect to any concepts which are still not particularly well known, namely the concepts of Non-formal and Informal learning.
They are not as widespread as they should be, at least in national or local contexts, and the first step useful in these cases, is precisely what leads an individual to self-recognize his own potential and give real value to the skills that he already possesses.

In this framework, the methodology of DST for validation and certification of competences acquired in Non-formal and Informal contexts, even if not very well known, does receive attention. Especially for elements that bind it to the possibility of individual and social growth. This makes it a more interesting tool for the third sector, but in no case was the possibility that it can also be used for certification excluded.

Undoubtedly, this methodology is accepted with openness, thanks to its evaluative and transformative potential, both at individual and social levels.

From the individual point of view, one of the most significant features of DST is to foster awareness on the part of the person involved on his own competences and skills, and to make him feel that his work and his life are a constant learning environment. The approach, in short, is holistic and intends for learning to be an empowerment of the subject in its entirety; with the individual - being a man or a woman - as well as being a worker. By reading the literature on these matters, but more generally, looking at the European guidelines for training, the feeling is that the viewpoint focuses too much on productivity, namely on a criterion that is not always winning or significant from the educational perspective. If the starting point and the viewing angle are primarily, if not exclusively, in the labour market, and if we ask the labour market what are the necessary skills and competences, the risk may be twofold. On one hand, everything is calibrated according to the utilitarian logic of cost-benefit and return on investment, a logic that - if not combined to something else suitably strong from the cultural point of view - leads to inequality and social issues; paradoxically hindering access to employment. On the other hand, and specifically for the KVALUES project, the benefits and prerogatives of the methodology used may be affected, as a person might end up putting in evidence, telling of himself, only those competences and skills that are marketable at a certain moment in his life.

That is why DST, and storytelling in general, should absolutely be considered; not only as an operational tool, but as an instrument of change.
**Overall Studies**

Action Plan on Adult learning. It is always a good time to learn, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 27/9/2007

Adults in Formal Education: Policies and Practice in Europe, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), 2011

European guidelines for validating non formal and informal learning, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009

Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, European Reference Framework, European Communities, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007

New Skills for New Jobs. Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs, Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions”, Brussels, 16/12/2008


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European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010. Thematic Report: Validation for Specific Target Groups, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010. Thematic Report: Validation in the Higher Education Sector, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)
Case Studies
European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: Recognition for Professionalisation in the adult learning sector – Academy of Continuing Education (wba), Austria, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: From Mass Adult VET towards Tailor-Made VET – the Specialist Qualification in Competence-based Qualifications, Finland. By Esa Jokinen, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania). Recognising non-formal and informal learning within university studies. By Rasa Juciute, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: The Philips Vocational qualifications programme, The Netherlands. By Rasa Juciute, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: Validation of prior learning: a stepping stone for the reintegration of inmates into society (Norway). By Claire Duchemin, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: Validation of prior learning in the construction sector. Towards a Qualified Construction Workforce for Poland. By Rasa Juciute, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: Recognition of prior experiential learning in Higher Education in Portugal. By Ana Luisa Oliveira Pires, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: L@ EGAL 2 – European Investment in the future of Roma people in Romania. By Carmen Juravle, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. SSSC Case Study: RPL as a stepping-stone to qualifications. By Jennifer Rasell, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

European Inventory on Validation of Non formal and Informal Learning 2010. Case Study: Youthpass – Recognising the non-formal learning of young people in Europe. By Rasa Juciute, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)
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Campisi F., Perulli E., Santanicchia M., Il Libretto Formativo del Cittadino: il percorso finora compiuto e le prospettive, Luglio 2009


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Country Reports


European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010. Country Report: Germany. By Silvia Annen and Markus Bretschneider

European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010. Country Report: Italy. By Elisabetta Perulli and Gabriella di Francesco


European Inventory on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning 2010. Country Report: UK (Scotland). By Jo Hawley
GLOSSARY
GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

A glossary of key terms used in the validation of non-formal and informal learning
Source: Cedefop, Terminology of vocational training policy – A multilingual Glossary for an enlarged Europe, Tissot, P., 2004

A
Assessment (of competences)
The sum of methods and processes used to evaluate the attainments (knowledge, know-how and/or competences) of an individual, and typically leading to certification. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Awarding body
A body issuing qualifications (certificates or diplomas) formally recognising the achievements of an individual, following a standard assessment procedure.
Source: Cedefop, 2003 adapted from OECD.

C
Certificate/diploma
An official document, issued by an awarding body, which records the achievements of an individual following a standard assessment procedure.
Source: Cedefop, 2002.

Certification (of competences)
The process of formally validating knowledge, know-how and/or competences acquired by an individual, following a standard assessment procedure. Certificates or diplomas are issued by accredited awarding bodies.
Comment: certification validates the outcome of either formal learning (training actions) or informal/non-formal learning.
Source: Cedefop, 2002
Civil society
A ‘third sector’ of society beside the State and the market, embracing institutions, groups and associations (either structured or informal), which may act as mediator between citizens and public authorities.

Comparability (of qualifications)
The extent to which it is possible to establish equivalence between the level and content of formal qualifications (certificates or diplomas) at sectoral, regional, national or international levels.
Source: Cedefop, 2000

Competence
Ability to apply knowledge, know-how and skills in an habitual and/or changing work situation. Source: Cedefop, 2002

Continuing vocational education and training
Education or training after initial education or entry into working life, aimed at helping individuals to:
• improve or update their knowledge and/or competences;
• acquire new competences for a career move or retraining;
• continue their personal or professional development.
Source: Cedefop, 2002
Dropout
Withdrawal from attending education or training resulting in a failure to meet the course objectives.

Comment:
1. this term designates both the process (early school leaving) and the persons (early school leavers) who fail to complete a course;
2. besides early school leavers, dropouts may also include learners who have completed education or training but failed the examinations.

Source: adapted from The international encyclopaedia of education

Employability
The degree of adaptability an individual demonstrates in finding and keeping a job, and updating occupational competences. Source: Cedefop, 2000

Formal learning
Learning that occurs in an organised and structured context (in a school/training centre or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically leads to certification. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Guidance and counselling
A range of activities designed to help individuals take (educational, vocational, personal) decisions and to carry them out before and after they enter the labour market. Source: Cedefop, 2003
Informal learning
Learning resulting from daily work-related, family or leisure activities. It is not organised or structured (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner’s perspective. It typically does not lead to certification. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Initial vocational education and training
Either general or vocational education carried out in the initial education system, in principle before entering working life. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Learning
A cumulative process whereby individuals gradually assimilate increasingly complex and abstract entities (concepts, categories, and patterns of behaviour or models) and/or acquire skills and competences. Source: adapted from Lave, 1997.

Learning outcome(s)/learning attainments
The set of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Lifelong learning
All learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills/competences and/or qualifications for personal, social and/or professional reasons. Source: Cedefop, 2003
Non-formal learning
Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.
Source: Cedefop, 2003

Prior learning
The knowledge, know-how and/or competences acquired through previously unrecognised training or experience. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Qualification
1. An official record (certificate, diploma) of achievement which recognises successful completion of education or training, or satisfactory performance in a test or examination; and/or
2. the requirements for an individual to enter, or progress within an occupation.

Source: Cedefop, 2003

Recognition (of competences)
1. Formal recognition: the process of granting official status to competences, either
   • through the award of certificates or
   • through the grant of equivalence, credit units, validation of gained competences;
   and/or
2. Social recognition: through acknowledgment of the value of competences by economic and social stakeholders. Source: Cedefop, 2003
Social dialogue
A process of exchange between social partners to promote consultation, dialogue and collective bargaining.

Comment:
1. Social dialogue can be bipartite (involving representatives of workers and employers) or tripartite (also associating public authorities and/or representatives of civil society, NGOs, etc.);
2. Social dialogue can take place at various levels (company, sectoral/cross-sectoral and local/regional/national/transnational);
3. At international level, social dialogue can be bilateral, trilateral or multilateral, according to the number of countries involved.

Source: Cedefop, 2003

Social inclusion
Integration of individuals—or groups of individuals—into the social spheres of society, as citizens or members of different ‘public’ social networks. Social inclusion is fundamentally rooted in labour market or economic inclusion. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Transparency (of qualifications)
The degree of intelligibility of qualifications allowing their value to be identified and compared on the (sectoral, regional, national or international) labour and training markets. Source: Cedefop, 2003

Validation of informal / non-formal learning
The process of assessing and recognising a wide range of knowledge, know-how, skills and competences which people develop throughout their lives in different contexts, for example through education, work and leisure activities.
Source: adapted from The international encyclopaedia of education.
**Valuing learning**
The process of promoting participation in and outcomes of (formal or non-formal) learning, to raise awareness of its intrinsic worth and to reward learning.  

**Vocational education and training (VET)**
Education and training which aims to equip people with skills and competences that can be used on the labour market. Source: adapted from ETF, 1997.
What is a digital curricular story?

The Digital Storytelling process explained

How to organise a Digital Storytelling Workshop

DS workshop notes

Eight key competencies

Workshop agenda template

Script template

Storyboard template

Consent form
What is a digital curricular story?

Story created around a professional’s live and put into a digital form. A creative and personal tool to show skills and attitudes that complement our professional profile creating a communication (maybe digital) product to highlight a personal attitude.

An evidence based tool to raise the self-awareness of your own professional skills and competences focusing on a professional achievement describing your uniqueness. It’s an additional tool to complete a traditional CV.
A Video that expresses something more about your competences and skills, that you can’t show in a traditional CV. It’s a process of continuing development.

A story I want to share with others. Something that shows what I am about, something that I can’t show on paper, something that shows me from a better light and makes people curious about me.
THE DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROCESS EXPLAINED

The Digital Storytelling has gathered some momentum in Europe since 2003, when the BBC organised the first international conference on DS, in Cardiff, Wales. The blended nature of the DS, combining narrative skills with technologies potentiality, makes it a powerful didactic tool that lately found application in several fields and it has led to some interesting developments worldwide. There are several methods by which to conduct DS activities but generally speaking the DS process follows the path illustrated below:

The content has been adapted from the “DS guide training manual on EU-enlargement topics” for the final publication of the European funded “DeTales” project (http://www.detales.net/wp/).
1 BRIEFING

3 RECORDING
DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROCESS

2
WRITING

4
EDITING

5
SHARING
Often known as the gathering, where potential storytellers are introduced to the concepts, processes and some examples of DS. This is a chance for storytellers to mix with each other and with their trainers.

The atmosphere should be collaborative and informal, efforts must be made to allay any storyteller’s fears about what lies ahead, and they should have the space to ask any questions about what is required of them.

In this session it is important to demystify any issues surrounding DS, like the fear that their ideas for stories aren’t very good, or that their skills/confidence are lacking. Important areas to cover in the briefing:

- Exploring the elements of a DS
- Clear explanation of the process and timescale involved
- Advanced notification of requirements for the coming sessions i.e. when to write a script, bring in photos etc.
- Basic but essential legal/copyright advice
- Introduce the signing-off process
Normally the writing process starts with a ‘storytelling circle’. This session is designed to bond storytellers as a group and to tease out of them their innate powers of storytelling. The storytelling circle can be tailored to suit variable time slots between 2 and 4 hours. The ultimate goal is to get scripts drafted and finalised ready for voice recording. The three underlying principles of the story circle are:

- everybody gets involved (including trainers, technicians, observers etc.)
- nobody is allowed to apologise for their lack of understanding, ability or confidence
- what is said in the storytelling circle, stays within the room i.e. confidential

There are a number of activities involved in the storytelling circle and they are covered in the next section. These activities can be time-consuming, so trainers tend to pick a selection, depending on the time allowed. Here there are some important tips by Gilly Adams (from BBC online – December 2009) on how to get the most out of the story.
• Running some kind of story circle with word games and memory sharing is a way of helping people to relax and stop being self-conscious. If necessary, use some kind of stimulus: a picture or an object can provide a good starting point.

• Remember that grammar and spelling are not important. This is a spoken story and not a homework exercise. The crucial thing is to speak normally and sound like yourself.

• If you are stuck for a topic think of something about which you feel passionate or focus on an event in your life which provoked a strong emotion - happiness or anger or sadness.

• You don’t have to change the world with your story but it is a special opportunity so use it so tell a story that is important to you: this needn’t mean having to bear your soul or be too serious. Some of the most successful stories are funny.

• Remember that, ideally, this story will only last two minutes and be no more than 250 or 300 words long so if you have the material for a three-hour television documentary (e.g. the complete history of the place where you live), or a long novel (e.g. complicated ins and outs of your family history), it will not be suitable for this medium.
• Don’t be put off by having to be brief. It seems daunting at first but your story will benefit by being boiled down to its essence.

• Digital storytelling works best a group activity. Of course, it’s absolutely possible to make a digital story by yourself, but working together as a group enhances the experience.

• In the story circle participants bear witness to each other’s stories and offer support and advice.

• The more computer literate are able to help those who are less so.

• Having company maximises the opportunities for having fun.

• The sense of achievement at having made a story can be celebrated fully when everyone gathers to watch the final films together and share comments and congratulations.
At the end of the story circle, every storyteller should know the subject of their story and ideally a first draft should be typed up ready to read. In the case of any storyteller who has difficulty reading, there are alternative options to consider, like producing an interview-generated narrative. Once again, by the end of the story circle, these storytellers should be content with the method they will use and the focus of the interview.

The final aspect of this phase is the creation of a storyboard for the piece. As an approximate rule, one image per sentence is recommended. This organises the storyteller and highlights any areas in the script where there may be missing images.

Often storytellers find that in their mind’s eye they have all the pictures they need to tell a story, but the storyboard quickly tells them they may have several images to cover one sentence, and nothing to cover the rest of the film!
This is the point at which the technical aspects of DS begin. Both the technical quality and the ‘feel’ of the voice recording are vital to the success of a DS. Some skill and judgment is required by the trainer to pick the right room and to settle the storyteller ready for the recording.

Included in the ‘recording’ phase is the capturing of images and the gathering of any music track or sound effects.

Many of the pictures used in a DS may only be available as photos, so they will need to be scanned, or photographed using a digital camera. It is becoming regular practice to download photos from the internet, from social networking sites and the like.

There are two important considerations here:

1. the image sizes and resolutions (JPEG or TIFF 300dpi 1280x720 pixels)
2. copyright
There are several forms of editing required to produce a DS:

- the recorded voiceover track needs to be gapped and mistakes removed
- photographs need to be edited, especially if they have been scanned
- the edited soundtrack, edited photos and titles are combined to create an edit of the DS.

It is easy to underestimate the amount of work that goes into an edit. It’s predominantly a technical process but the creative aspects are crucial to the production of a successful story. There are some magnificent moments during a DS edit, when the elements start to come together and tiny changes make massive improvements. Once the edit is finished, the DS is exported as a completed movie file, for sharing.
Storytelling is a multidirectional process, so every story should be shared. Some DS are too personal to be put out to a wider audience but the rest, which accounts for the absolute majority should be made available for people to see. Three ways to share stories are:

• Burn a DVD and show family and friends

• Put them on a website, like Vimeo or YouTube

• Hold a screening event for a batch of stories and invite guests to marvel at your work
CHOOSING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR THE WORKSHOP

Less than a decade ago, to organise a DS workshop meant using a centre with specialist IT equipment, sound recording facilities, technical support personnel and quite possibly an in-house photographer or TV professional to ensure everything ran smoothly. Due to the digital revolution, the situation is a little less specialised these days, but in order to work effectively and efficiently, some of the skills employed by our predecessors are still vital elements of the DS process, like choosing the right environments to work in. These areas are:

1. Venue for the briefing
2. Venue for the storytelling circle
3. Sound recording space
4. Venue for the editing of stories
5. Venue for screening

They say that necessity is the mother of invention, so to a certain extent, the workshop environment is likely to be predetermined by external, institutional factors but there are a number of issues to consider carefully when planning a workshop. Always check out the rooms that will be used for the workshop in advance and try to change rooms that simply won’t work.
For the briefing, any space where the trainer can show stories to their true potential is acceptable. Always check that the sound is clear at the back of the room and the image on the screen can clearly be seen by all. Avoid bright rooms with sunlight blazing in and noisy spaces, because the aim of this session is to inspire new storytellers, not have them wondering what is going on.

The storytelling circle environment must be a closed space in order to work best, free from all interruptions besides emergencies. Participants should be able to sit comfortably around the right number of tables for the group size, in a way that everyone can see each other. It needn’t be a circle at all, a rectangle or square is fine. Avoid rooms with noisy corridors outside and external visual distractions. The last thing one wants in a story circle is half the participants watching a delivery to the building next door!
The recording space is so important and requires some experimentation for best results. Try to pick a room with plenty of soft furnishings, like curtains and carpets and without much visible wall space. This will reduce echoes. As a test, clap your hands and listen for the echo. In a perfect situation, you shouldn’t notice the echo at all. Also, listen for outside noises, like a nearby road, or pedestrians, or people talking. Anything you can hear, the microphone can hear and audible distractions on a DS soundtrack can ruin the story. One useful idea is to record the voiceover in a modern car. Providing it is parked in a quiet place and the doors are shut, the acoustic environment in a car can be excellent for DS. Always do a test recording and scrutinise it carefully for clarity and quality.

Nowadays, using laptops for DS editing means that they can be used effectively almost anywhere, a complete contrast to just a few years ago. However, for the purposes of giving software tutorials, choose an environment with a data projector, where all storytellers can see the screen and the trainer can see all the storytellers’ computer screens.

Quite often, the venue for the briefing would be acceptable for the screening of the stories, but if large numbers of family and friends are invited, then a room with the appropriate projection facilities will be required.
An important part of any workshop is ensuring all participants are happy to share stories with others. The Storytelling Circle introduces story games which help break the ice for any new group and allow people to get to know each other. Some people come to a workshop with no real idea of the story they may tell, or perhaps feel they have nothing of interest to say.

The storytelling circle and games are not only a fun way start to a workshop but also boost participants’ confidence and may provide them with an idea for their own story. For those participants that already have an idea for their own story, the storytelling circle gives them an opportunity to not only share their idea with the group but to also pick up ideas from other people’s methods of communication, thereby improving their own story.

The key focus of this session is to arrive at a place where all the participants are able to finalise their scripts, ready to record their voices, so the clock is ticking and the trainer must be aware of this throughout.
Setting up the environment
It is important that the room used is fairly quiet and private, so that the participants can feel isolated from interruption. The Trainer should arrange the seating in a circle in the room so that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate. The Trainer leads and takes part in the story games, helps boost individual confidence and provides feedback at the end of the session. Everyone should be made to feel at ease and the atmosphere should not be pressurised. There should be no technology visible around the table; no computers, mobile phones (switched off), or digital recording devices of any kind.

PROPS FOR THE STORYTELLING CIRCLE

The Trainer should provide
- Pens and paper
- A Flipchart (game 3)
- A bag containing household objects (game 4)
- A box of matches and a glass of water (game 9)

The Storyteller should provide
- An object of significance to them – this may be a photograph, which could possibly be used to tell a story.
- A draft of a script for their own story, printed out.
THE GAMES

The word ‘game’ should be used with caution at the start of the storytelling circle, as some participants can feel intimidated, threatened or just turned off by the idea of playing games. Once the confidence of the group has developed, then the word can be introduced more. The first three activities below are ice breakers and a way for the group to start to get to know one another. They help conquer nerves and make people aware that everyone has a story to tell. All the games should be fun and not competitive. There are far more games below than are needed for a single storytelling circle, so pick a collection and give it a go!

1. Interview the person next to you (ice breaker)

This is a useful way of getting to know people within the group and helps provide more information about them than would normally be gleaned if people introduced themselves. It is easier to share information about someone else than it is to talk about yourself. This interview is a good way for the group to relax and feel confident enough to tell their story.

Example: John says “your name is Mary and you like golfing, you’re Pete and play the drums, you’re Janet and you make fancy dress outfits and my name is John and I don’t like spiders”.

2. Remembering Names (ice Breaker)

This game is particularly well suited for a younger age range workshop. One member of the group introduces themselves and provides one fact of interest they wish to share, the person sitting next to them then repeats this information and adds their own introduction and shared item. By the time the last person is reached there will be a lot to remember – the Trainer may choose this role for themselves.

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   Example: John says “your name is Mary and you like golfing, you’re Pete and play the drums, you’re Janet and you make fancy dress outfits and my name is John and I don’t like spiders”.

3. Nonsense Word Game (ice breaker)
   This is a useful game for teaching people the art of creating a story out of a selection of non connected words. Each member of the group is asked to write a word onto a piece of paper – nouns or ‘naming’ words work very well. For those that struggle writing words, drawing a picture is equally effective. The Trainer then collects the paper and transfers all the words and pictures onto a flipchart. Each participant then creates a story using all the words on the chart which they then read out to the group. There will rarely be two the same. The quality of the stories is irrelevant, in fact, the more off the wall the better! This game is good for loosening up the participants and making them all feel that they can make a valued contribution.
   Example: Apple, glasses, clock, long, car, pink, wood, shoe.
   Mrs Wood glanced at the clock and was relieved to see that she only had another ten minutes before the school bell rang. She was eager to eat the pink lady apple that she had found rolling around in the back of her car along with the shoe she’d lost earlier in the week and her purse that unfortunately had no money in it. She looked at the apple and wondered how long it had been there for. She was starving and with no money had little choice but to eat it. “Perhaps the time has come for a trip to the opticians” she said to herself, “maybe I need glasses”.

3. Nonsense Word Game (ice breaker)
4. Mystery Objects

Each member of the group is asked to randomly choose an item from the memory bag provided by the Trainer. They are then asked to share the memories or feelings that the object conjures up. If a member of the group cannot think of anything to say, choosing something different may make things easier for them. The Trainer should provide help and encouragement when needed so that everyone is able to connect with the item. Objects may include: a toy car, a remote control, a watering can, a tin of soup, a train ticket, anything that may evoke memories. The Trainer should point out which parts of the story work well and asking questions may help to reveal themes of interest that the storyteller may wish to explore.

Example:
The storyteller chooses the train ticket from the bag.
“This reminds me of a trip I made to Edinburgh when I was little. I was excited about going because I’d never been to Scotland before. We spent a lovely day visiting the Castle and watching tartan cloth being made. My Dad ordered Haggis at lunchtime because it was a Scottish delicacy but he didn’t like it”.
The Trainer asks questions about the visit and how they got home. The storyteller is able to add: “We got the train home but were very delayed because the man in the seat opposite became ill and had to be taken to hospital. My Dad and I stayed with him on the journey because he was travelling alone. Our trip to Scotland lasted longer than we thought”.
Careful questioning by the Trainer reveals a more interesting aspect to the story.
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5. A childhood toy or game
This can reveal a lot about the storyteller. Allowing them to dwell on childhood helps expand the way their lives have become. It may show a rebellious streak, a passive nature, the adventurer, the leader of the pack or perhaps illustrate that for the older generation toys were not that easy to come by and so were very precious.
Example:
“My most precious possession as a child was my bike. It was my means of transport, my ability to escape and explore and it represented freedom for me. It wasn’t new when I first had it, my Mum and Dad bought it at an auction and it had been well used. It didn’t have gears and the chain was a bit loose but it didn’t matter I loved it because it was mine. I would spend hours fiddling with it, adjusting the brakes and pumping up the tyres, and it was cleaned very regularly. I remember spending the whole of one day repainting it dark blue, and it looked fantastic.
I was only eight when I had that bike but we had some brilliant adventures together. A bottle of water and a bag of crisps, my friend Clare and I regularly used to ride twenty miles to town. If my Mum had known she would have had a fit. But like Clare my bike was a good friend, it never shared my secrets”.

25
7. Make Your Mind Up
Participants are asked to write about a time in their lives when they made an important decision. They are free to describe it as they wish, but they are limited to exactly 50 words. This game fulfils two purposes. Primarily it looks at the theme of important decision making in life and the resulting feelings that were created. Secondly, it attempts to instil in them the value of tightly edited text.

8. The First Time
The storyteller spends 10 minutes writing about an occasion when they did something for the first time and how it made them feel and the impact it possibly caused for others. The story is then shared with the rest of the group.

9. The Match Game
The Trainer should ensure that the use of matches in the room will not trigger the fire alarms and that each storyteller holds a glass of water for the match to drop into before it burns fingers.
This game is good for focus, clarity of speech and the ability to say what matters within a very short period of time.
Give the storytellers 10 minutes to prepare a story about passion. This could be about a person, an issue, a place or anything that they feel passionate about. Each storyteller then takes it in turn to tell their story but they only have as long as it takes the match to burn to the end before they have to stop. The burning match helps concentrate the mind on getting to the heart of the story straight away.
10. Love/Hate

Each participant creates a list of 10 things they love and 10 things they hate, and they read these out to the others in the group. This is useful as the list may produce a topic for a potential story and allows the Trainer to explore the themes more fully. The Trainer then encourages them to re-read the list with emotion and feeling assisting with the range of tones and inflections in their speech which will be useful when it comes to recording their story.

11. Three Objects

The Trainer asks each participant to list three objects that sum up what is important to them.
Example: A car, a kite and a handbag (the storyteller is a car mad kiting enthusiast who collects designer handbags)
The storyteller is then asked to choose the object that means the most to them and write a story around that theme.
And Then:
With the assistance of the Trainer one of the themes explored as a result of playing about three of the above games could be expanded to become the basis of their own Personal Story.

Finally
The participants are invited to read out their first drafts to the rest of the group. Feedback is given by the trainer and supporting comments given by the other participants. The storytelling circle can catapult the quality of the final stories to a new level, emphasizing the need to incorporate a few simple tricks and techniques to produce a strong final script.
HELPING THE STORYTELLERS GET THROUGH THE DS PROCESS STEP BY STEP
1. Briefing

As a trainer, you will be busy delivering information about the forthcoming experience and sharing stories to inspire storytellers during the briefing. But what will your storytellers be thinking? It is vital to be sensitive to any concerns that storytellers may have at this stage and if this is overlooked, some of the group may not appear at the next session!

Some of the common issues to look out for are listed here:

- Fear of not being able to produce a story of a high enough quality
- Lack of confidence or ability to read and write, or not feeling ‘clever’ enough to complete the project.
- Fear of asking for help if they don’t understand.
- Confusion over what is being expected of them.
There are many methods to avoid these issues and to deal with them if they arise. Advanced written information sent to storytellers before the workshop can tell them what is to be expected and can include answers to frequently asked questions. A simple skills and confidence audit questionnaire can be also very useful to find out about your storytellers. Another useful method is to cover these areas in your briefing session, setting out clear ways to give and receive feedback and give examples of how others have overcome their own fears.
2. Writing
During the storytelling circle activity, it’s crucial to watch all the storytellers closely to see if they are struggling with anything. We rely on their openness to find out if they have any literacy or confidence issues, but it is always possible that a storyteller may have tried to hide the issue and the storytelling circle can be very revealing. These groups are usually highly supportive, so most issues can be easily resolved, but a calm, positive and supportive approach from the trainer will help keep storytellers at their ease.

The level and type of input required from the trainer during script writing varies from group to group. The role of the trainer is to collaborate with the storyteller for the good of the story itself. Here a balance must be struck between interference and neglect! The trainer should try and keep each story within the DS framework parameters, whilst guiding the storyteller in the content of their story.
3. Recording

For many storytellers, reading the voiceover is the most nerve-wracking experience of all. In order to overcome this, the trainer must inspire confidence in the storyteller and make them believe in themselves enough to deliver a ‘natural performance’. Practice makes perfect and storytellers should be encouraged to read through their scripts several times at home before the recording session. Simple guides, like large text and double line spacing are useful in making a script easily readable. Try and avoid common mistakes, like storytellers speaking too fast (or too slow), monotonously or as though they are ‘reading a story’. Rehearsals are invaluable and honest but carefully phrased feedback from the trainer should give rise to best results.
4. Editing

It is difficult to predict how confident a storyteller is in using word processing and media software. The aim with DS is to produce a story using software, rather than to learn how to use the software. Sometimes, storytellers don’t even know how to use the basic functions of a computer, so auditing of storytellers’ skills beforehand is vital to gauge the level of support needed for storytellers. Older learners tend to struggle far more than younger generations, but with the right tuition and support, stories can be effectively produced by anyone. It is always useful to have extra support on hand to help with editing, as one trainer and ten storytellers can be too demanding for the trainer and too frustrating for the storytellers, waiting for help. The beauty of DS is that they are relatively simple to edit, providing the correct steps are taken and the storyteller takes an organised approach. Always make sure the storyteller uses a storyboard and makes a rough cut edit, before adding any titles, music or special effects.
5. Sharing
This is truly a celebration of hard work done, by everyone! In order to pay due respect to the storytellers, it is worth putting on a show. Everyone should be able to clearly see the screen and hear the stories without distraction. The screening room could also be arranged to create a special ambiance i.e. tables dressed, room blacked out, drinks provided etc. Sometimes, family and friends are invited to share the spectacle with loved ones. Storytellers should be offered the chance to say something about their films before being screened, this can be discussed before the event or announced during the screening. Storytellers should be praised for their work and information should be given to them about what happens next. i.e. where and how the films will be shown, whether storytellers can enrol on follow on projects, when they will receive copies of the finished stories. Trainers can now breath a sigh of relief, the job is done!
HOW TO ORGANISE A DIGITAL STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

Before starting to organise a workshop there are some questions you may want to ask yourself:

1. Is there a certain topic you wish to pursue?
   Consider it in details and set the exact title of the workshop.

2. Is there a certain target group you need to address?
   Think about how you got into contact with your target group, do all your prospective participants have a comparable level of knowledge/skills?

3. Do you have a certain budget?
   According to the budget available, the location of the workshop may change. Are you hosting it in-house (due to limited means) or with the help of partners? Think about looking for sponsors or for partners’ help if needed.

4. Do you have a limited timeframe?
   Time constraints can significantly affect the accurate carrying out of the workshop: prepare yourself with some techniques to kindly urge them on or to make up for lost time (for instance using teamwork or the production of just one-minute clips).

5. Have you adequately prepared your trainers?
   Check that they are trained both on the content side as well as on all technical aspects:
   • They should be able to introduce the participants to the history and the current development of DS
   • they should know how to handle the storycircle
   • they should be able to lead the participants through the entire process of production
   • they should know a variety of different hardware and software
SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE

TECHNICAL REALIZATION OF THE WORKSHOP
First of all, make sure you have all the necessary equipment at hand.
For instance, if the stories will be produced on notebooks, arrange a sufficient number of them since not all of your participants could be able to bring their own devices.
Further on, check all the necessary software are installed, such as a writing programme as well as picture, audio and video editing programmes.

If the participants offer to bring their own notebooks, be approving because it is always easier for people to work on what they already know, but you should consider some additional time to install the necessary software on their devices.
Furthermore, verify to have enough audio recorders - to record people’s stories - and cameras. A large amount of pens and paper is needed too, since a substantial part of the workshop will be conducted following an old-school approach.

It is strongly suggested not to enable Wi-Fi connections because it could distract the participants, but it could be useful to have one notebook connected in case you need - for instance - to look for missing copyright-free images.
For transferring the files, the best is to provide the participants with pen drives.

This paper has been adapted from “Organise a Digital Storytelling Workshop” by Annette Schneider, presented on the occasion of the KVALUES training in Germany (December 2013).
LOOK FOR PARTICIPANTS
It is not that simple to find people willing to sacrifice 3 or 4
days of their time to learn new skills. In order to find people
already interested in the field you can use your partner
network or your partners’ partner network. Use newsletters,
your facebook account, your website. Emphasise the benefits
such as free accommodation and meals, underlining that the
workshop itself is for free, that it’s a good chance to learn a lot
and to have fun, to meet great people to bond with and to
have a result to be tremendously proud of.

HOW ORGANIZE THE MEETINGS
You need to set a timetable together with your trainers and a
schedule for your participants including information on the
working hours and the time off and breaks (at least one hour
for the lunch).
You can also foresee some evening activities, but nothing
exhausting.

SOME POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES
During the workshop you will be confronted with very different
work habits.
It’s important to motivate the participants to invest time and
care in order to make them satisfied with the result and to
avoid inaccurate work.
Participants with more experience or confidence with
technologies should be encouraged to help the others.
On the other hand, it could happen that some of them work
too slowly and risk not to finish in time. In this case, it’s
important to assist them – whether they need it - and it could
be useful also to have someone standing behind them to urge
them gently but firmly.
It could occur that someone become impatient while waiting
for trainers’ assistance, especially in the technical phase, not
being pressured by them is crucial and if they wish a constant
and exclusive assistance try to match them with some other
participant so they can help each other.

LAST STEPS AND PUBLISHING
The last two steps that need to be organised are the screening
of the digital stories and the publishing. The screening takes
place on the last day.
While the participants are out of the room, you can arrange
the furniture “cinema”-wise. That is assemble all chairs in rows
in front of the screen.
If you want to add a special little extra: buy popcorn. People
will smile when they see it.
Before you start the screening thank the trainers both for their
knowledge as well as their patience and dedication. Thank the
participants because they spent a great deal of time trying to
(and succeeding with) accomplish something they have never
done before.
Tell them to be proud of themselves, they will be anyway, and
quite happy too.
Before each story is shown ask the producer whether he or she
wants to say something about the story behind their story.
This moment will be very rewarding for everybody.
PREPARATION NOTES FOR A DIGITAL STORYTELLING TRAINING WORKSHOP

1

Keep a few notes about what makes you unique in your work. Here are some prompts to help you:

• What moments in your career define you as an individual?
• Who has earned your utmost respect and why?
• Which of life’s lessons have had the greatest impact on you?
• Where does your inner drive come from?
• Do you have a vision of the future?

2

Find a personal object, behind which lies a story that only you can tell. This object must connect you to your work or reflect your own values.

3

Write a first draft of a script for a Digital Curricular Story that you may wish to tell. This should be no more than 250 words and should be considered as a starting point only.
You must be able to access your own photos during the workshop, at a good quality. Therefore transfer your photos to a USB drive/stick to bring with you.

An appropriate number of photos would be about 10-25 for a 1.5-2.5 minutes video.

THINGS TO BRING

• Your notes about what makes you unique.
• Personal object
• First draft of a script
• Photos on a USB drive
• A USB stick (2 GB or larger)
• Headphones or ear buds to listen to your sound track whilst editing.
• A laptop (where appropriate)
• A mouse if you don’t like using track pads for long periods
COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Courage and encourage
- Simplicity
- Know how to involve people
- Active listing skills
- Listening with respect and understanding
- Make it possible for them to come with the best idea
- To inspire and to conduct
- Create a positive atmosphere
- Stimulate participation
- Empathy
- Creativity
- Honesty
- Motivate
- Positivity
- Timing
- Having a global vision
- Listening to the needs of the others
- Respect others’ opinion
- No leader but facilitator
- No judging
- Someone who knows to bring out the best from people
- Open minded ready for the unexpected and changes
- To know were you are strong and weak
- Psychological
- Making people at ease, make everybody talk, do not loose people
- Help the storytellers focus on the strength of their story

TECHNICAL ABILITY

- How to create a beautiful story
- Use of language skills
- To be able to master the process it’s important
- Confident
- Flexibility
- Problem solving
- Knowledge in storytelling techniques
- Need to know how to use the computer
- Keep timings
- Capture the audience
- Be prepared
- Understand what you want to communicate to the group
- It’s always possible to learn
- Being aware of who your audience is
- Choose the software and the equipment according the target group
- Confident at least in one software
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TEACHING EXPERTISE

• Not so important, teaching experience could help but is more of a facilitating process
• A traditional teaching approach could stop the group expressing
• It’s more a coach – a moderator
• Are essential but not the usual teaching approach, facilitate a group approach.
• Do not impose your presence
• Aesthetic vision
• Experience the process
• Read the difference needs of people
• Lead an inclusive process
• Generous
• Confident
• Be clear in explaining the process and the aim
• To make people interested
• Be able to adjust to the group
• How to lead a participatory process
• Make things simple
• Manage groups and individuals

WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?

This is what our KVALUES trainers told us

MEDIA EXPERTISE

• Know how to use the Software
• Important but not essential
• Good equipment
• Basics are a must; yet need to know where to turn for help for technical problems
• Need to know how a potential viewer may receive the video
• Make a video as an example
• Understand copyright laws
• Visual skills
• Understanding language of DS
• Awareness of power of images
• Knowledge about semiotic and visual narration could be helpful
EIGHT KEY COMPETENCES
This framework* defines eight key competences and describes the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to each of these. These key competences are:

• **COMMUNICATION IN THE MOTHER TONGUE**, which is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts;

• **COMMUNICATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**, which involves, in addition to the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue, mediation and intercultural understanding. The level of proficiency depends on several factors and the capacity for listening, speaking, reading and writing;

• **MATHEMATICAL COMPETENCE AND BASIC COMPETENCES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.** Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations, with the emphasis being placed on process, activity and knowledge. Basic competences in science and technology refer to the mastery, use and application of knowledge and methodologies that explain the natural world. These involve an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and the responsibility of each individual as a citizen;

• **DIGITAL COMPETENCE** involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT);

• **LEARNING TO LEARN** is related to learning, the ability to pursue and organise one’s own learning, either individually or in groups, in accordance with one’s own needs, and awareness of methods and opportunities;
• **SOCIAL AND CIVIC COMPETENCES.** Social competence refers to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life. It is linked to personal and social well-being. An understanding of codes of conduct and customs in the different environments in which individuals operate is essential. Civic competence, and particularly knowledge of social and political concepts and structures (democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and civil rights), equips individuals to engage in active and democratic participation;

• **SENSE OF INITIATIVE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP** is the ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. The individual is aware of the context of his/her work and is able to seize opportunities that arise. It is the foundation for acquiring more specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity. This should include awareness of ethical values and promote good governance;

• **CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EXPRESSION,** which involves appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media (music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts). These key competences are all interdependent, and the emphasis in each case is on critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking and constructive management of feelings.


More information can be found at http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm
Hereinafter there are some **USEFUL TOOLS** for writing the script and the storyboard and for planning your DS workshop.

More on the KVALUES website [WWW.KVALUES.EU](http://WWW.KVALUES.EU)
### MONDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15</td>
<td>Story Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>Walk and talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Time Slot Details:
- **4.00 - 4.30**: Participants arrive. Coffee
- **4.30 - 5.15**: Welcome + Introduction
- **5.00 - 6.15**: Briefing: Digital Stories for the work place

### TUESDAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Time Slot Details:
- **1.15 - 3.15**: Scripting and storyboarding techniques. Participants scripting time
- **3.15 - 3.30**: Break
- **3.30 - 5.00**: Participants scripting time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00-9.30</td>
<td>Introduction to voice recording</td>
<td>9.00-11.15 Producing a rough cut</td>
<td>9.00-9.45 Preparation for screening of film Break for participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30-11.15</td>
<td>Voice Recording</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.45-11.15 Final Screening of Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30-12.15</td>
<td>Voice Recording</td>
<td>11.30-12.15 Editing</td>
<td>11.30-12.30 Review and Evaluation Finish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.15-1.15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>12.15-1.15 Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.15-3.30</td>
<td>Setting up a Project and Voice Editing</td>
<td>1.15-3.15 Fine Cut and Adding Titles</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.15-3.30</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30-5.00</td>
<td>Exporting the film</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Type your script here, across the page, in a clear font, like Arial, 12 pt or larger, using double line spacing for easier reading.
Type a description of required images, or paste Jpegs into this space, opposite the spoken words in the box opposite

Type or paste spoken words for script in here, double-spaced.
I, __________________________________________________________consent
to the use of my story, entitled:  _______________________________________
as part of the project KVALUES.
I understand that I will have editorial control over my story but that copyright will
be held by the project KVALUES.
I agree to the addition of my story/stories to the library of the project KVALUES,
which may result in it being made publicly available via CD, DVD and the Internet.
I understand that the intention of the project KVALUES is to make stories available
as an educational and learning resource, as part of an initiative to improve the
validation of key competences of European citizens.
I have obtained all appropriate permissions for materials used in the story.
I also declare that I want to protect my story under the Creative Commons license
"Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)"
under the following terms:
Attribution - You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and
indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not
in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
NonCommercial - You may not use the material for commercial purposes.
NoDerivatives - If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not
distribute the modified material.

Signed _________________________________   Date ________________

Email: ____________________________________________

Tel: __________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________

I do not wish to be updated with news of the project KVALUES via email [ ]
TOOLS SIDE
Digital curricular stories for all

Tools and guidelines for adult educators