



RECOGNITION AND VALIDATION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS FOR REFUGEES

Selected practices from Europe

Input for the conference “Improving skills and labour
market integration for refugees and host communities”
20 and 21 September 2017 in Adana, Turkey

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We hope that this report contributes and inspires the debate in Turkey about improving skills and labour market integration of refugees and host communities.

ETF Qualifications team

Turin, September 2017

¹ On entry to Turkey, Syrian refugees are registered and granted the status "Under Temporary Protection". While strictly speaking not all those who have crossed into Turkey and Europe are legally refugees, we use this term for simplicity; moreover, experts and officials engaged in these issues in Turkey and the EU commonly use this word.

Introduction

This report explores procedures for recognition and validation of qualifications and skills for refugees in a number of European countries. Recognition and validation are important elements of qualification systems that can contribute to labour market integration of refugees, migrants and local citizens. Qualifications Frameworks can serve as a useful tool for the assessment of qualifications and skills in relation to qualification framework levels, learning outcomes and workload. Local authorities can develop procedures for recognition and validation as part of National Qualifications Frameworks tools and instruments.

This report does not provide an exhaustive overview of initiatives but presents a selection of practices in Europe that might inspire authorities and stakeholders in Turkey and contribute to their debate about improving skills and labour market integration of refugees and host communities. Specifically the report provides input for the conference “Improving skills and labour market integration for refugees and host communities” 20 and 21 September 2017 in Adana.

Background

Turkey hosts around three million registered Syrian refugees. This poses enormous challenges to the country, finding the economic resources to ensure refugees’ living conditions, as well as the social and cultural difficulties of their integration into the Turkish society. Early entry into the labour market helps refugees become self-sufficient and gives them the time, energy and resources to actively engage with their host community. The study “From refugees to workers” (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016) shows that employment is a key factor for general social integration; more important even than language acquisition and more important than VET². Many refugees in Turkey are working but almost all of them are employed in informal, low paid jobs. In areas where Syrian refugees are residing in big numbers, this informal employment pushes the wages down and causes an unfair competition for local people. To find a solution to this problem Turkey has issued the “Regulation on Work Permit of Refugees Under Temporary Protection”³. Refugees under Temporary Protection can be granted a work permit under certain conditions and restrictions. One of the conditions is that foreigners under temporary protection are paid at least the minimum wage.

People that flee from their home country seeking shelter in another country have a history; they have gone to school, many have worked, they have acquired qualifications and skills. If host countries could make use of the qualifications and skills of refugees this would contribute to economic and social inclusion of refugees, which would benefit both the host country, and the refugee. First, this is a matter of making qualifications and skills visible, but there are obstacles. Qualifications and skills of refugees are not one on one compatible with those required for the labour market of the host country. It takes time to master a new language. Refugees often lack formal documentation of their qualifications. And procedures

² See section Further reading at the end of this report

³ Official Journal No. 2016/8375, dated 15 January 2016; <http://turkishlaborlaw.com/news/legal-news/362-turkey-grants-work-permit-for-syrian-refugees>

for recognition and validation of qualifications and skills are often absent, insufficient or unknown.

Already in 1998, the Danish Refugee Council identified a number of recognition-related problems facing refugees in many countries in its report 'Assessment and Recognition of Refugees' Qualifications in the European Communities'. The Danish report stated that refugees who could be contributing to the European societies using their qualifications were often unemployed or obliged to restart education or training already completed in their home country. The researchers found evidence that systems for assessment and recognition of foreign certificates, skills and knowledge often fail to offer refugees appropriate routes into employment or further education and training. The Danish report provided suggestions for a different approach of assessment of refugees' qualifications than that normally used by credential evaluators. The report led to more attention and new approaches for recognition of refugees' qualifications.

In recent years, the large influx of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe has led to an increasing number of initiatives to make refugees' qualifications and skills visible and value them. There are initiatives at local, national and European level; many of them are well documented in reports and websites. However, available documentation⁴ suggests that initiatives towards labour market integration of refugees and migrants are often uncoordinated and unevenly distributed between and within countries. To be effective instruments for labour market integration, identification, recognition, and validation of qualifications and skills of refugees should be part of a broader system of labour market integration of refugees.

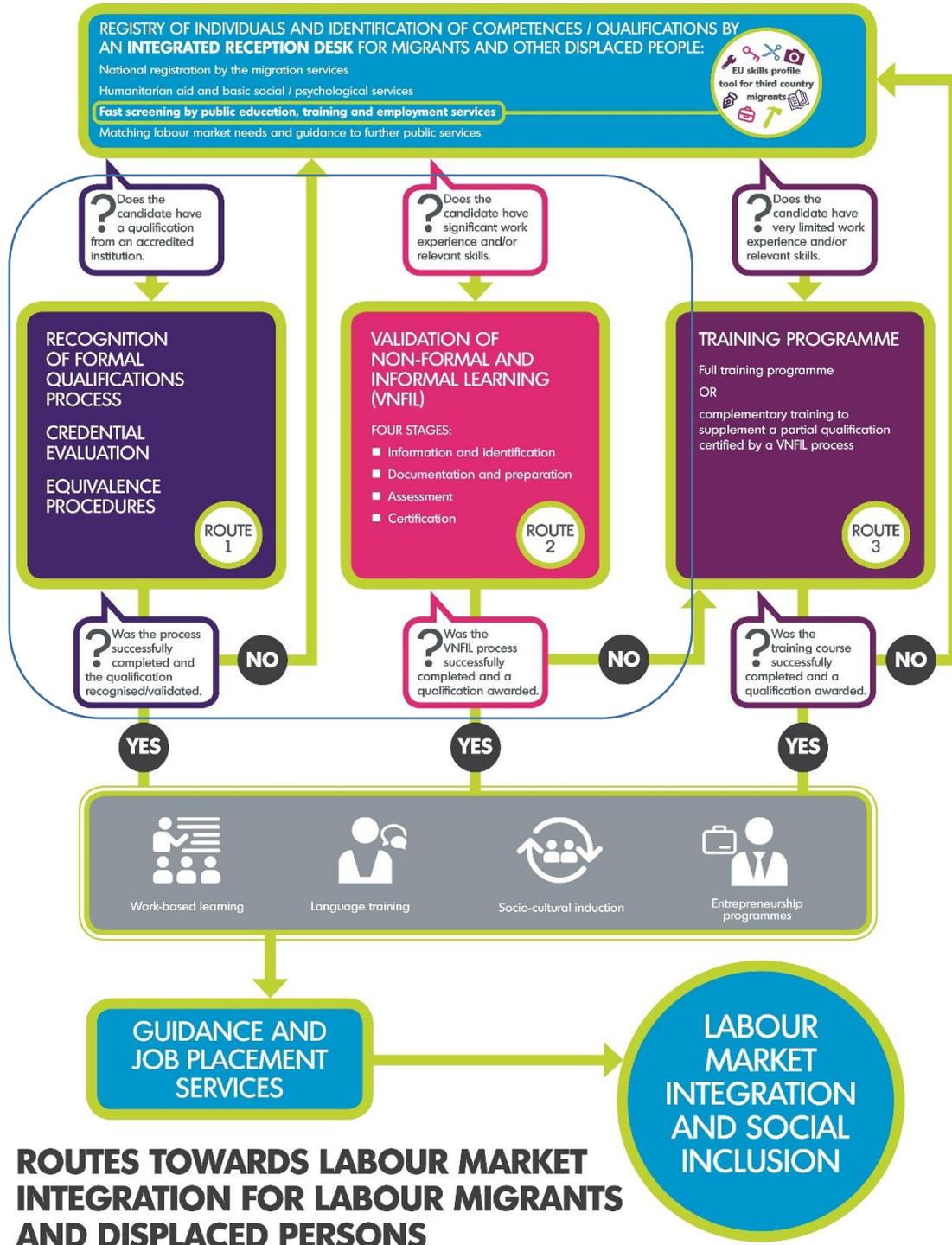
ETF developed a process chart as a schematic presentation of such a broader system. This process chart, figure 1 on the next page, shows routes towards labour market integration, not only for refugees but also for labour migrants and other displaced persons. Such a system should start with an early identification of qualifications and skills of refugees, preferably in the early stage when refugees are registered⁵. Such early identification could identify:

- refugees that have acquired a formal qualification from an accredited institute in their home country and are eligible for a recognition of foreign qualification procedure (route 1 of the process chart)
- refugees that have no formal qualifications but do have significant work experience and skills and are eligible for a validation of non-formal and informal learning procedure (route 2)
- refugees that have very limited work experience and relevant skills and should enter into a training programme (route 3).

After completion of a recognition or validation procedure, or an education and training program, the route to employment will not be automatic. Some refugees might benefit from work based learning or entrepreneurship programmes; most will need language training, socio-cultural induction and guidance and job placement services.

⁴ See section Further reading at the end of this report

⁵ The European Commission developed the EU Skills Profile Tool for the purpose of early identification of qualifications and skills of refugees, migrants and other third country nationals. See chapter 6.



ROUTES TOWARDS LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION FOR LABOUR MIGRANTS AND DISPLACED PERSONS

Figure 1. Process Chart - Routes towards labour market integration for labour migrants and displaced persons (ETF)

This report deals primarily with the routes 1 and 2 of the process chart above. Route 1 is for refugees who have a qualification (diploma or certificate) from an accredited institute in their home country. Route 2 is for refugees who have significant work experience and relevant skills, but no formal certificate.

Structure of the report

Part I of the report is about Recognition of qualifications. Chapter 1 describes the general context of recognition of qualifications from Higher Education as arranged in the Lisbon convention and institutionalised in the ENIC-NARIC centres. Chapter 2 shows that recognition of qualifications is not only for Higher Education. It gives examples of countries that also have procedures for recognition of vocational qualifications. Chapter 3 gives examples of special recognition procedures for refugees.

Part II of the report is about Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning. Chapter 4 describes the general context of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning as described in the EU VNFIL Recommendation of 2012. Chapter 5 gives examples of validation procedures for refugees. Both chapters includes references to the Turkish system of validation of non-formal and informal learning and boxes with further information.

Part III describes four European tools that support recognition and validation of qualifications and skills of refugees and migrants.

Part IV looks at how the European practices could fit in the Turkish context of labour market integration of refugees. Although a thorough exploration of the Turkish practices of recognition and validation for refugees is outside the scope of the report, we make use of available information, being aware that this information is limited and might be outdated. In this chapter we present an adapted version of the process chart "Routes towards labour market integration for refugees in Turkey". This part of the report and the adapted process chart intends to inspire discussion and further exploration of Turkish practices and use of European examples with Turkish stakeholders. A first opportunity for such discussion will be the conference "Improving skills and labour market integration for refugees and host communities" 20 and 21 September 2017 in Adana.

The section Further Reading contains a limited number of relevant reports. A list of abbreviations is included at the end of this report.

I: RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

According to a UNESCO definition, recognition of a qualification means that a competent authority in a host country accepts a foreign diploma or certificate as a valid credential. It also means that the holder of the recognised qualification gets the same rights as holders of the national diploma or certificate with which the foreign one is assessed as comparable. Recognition of qualifications is a route for candidates who have a qualification from an accredited institution in their home country, route 1 in the ETF process chart. Recognition of qualifications has two main purposes; access to further education and training (academic recognition) and / or access to the labour market (professional recognition).

There is no automatic international recognition of qualifications. Each country has its own procedures. For the area of Higher Education, there is the Lisbon Convention, ratified by 53 countries, that regulates recognition of higher education degrees and qualifications that give access to higher education, issued in another country. Chapter 1 provides the details. Such a convention does not exist for vocational qualifications and therefore there is no systemic approach for recognition of qualifications issued by institutes for vocational education and training in other countries. Nonetheless, some countries have operational procedures for recognition of vocational qualifications. Chapter 2 gives examples. A specific obstacle for recognition of qualifications of refugees is the lack of formal documentation required for recognition procedures. In recent years, several European forums and agencies have dealt with the question of recognition of refugees' qualifications. Chapter 3 describes the main tools and gives examples.

Chapter 1. Lisbon Convention for Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications

The [Lisbon Recognition Convention](#) is the key legal instrument for recognition of qualifications for the European region. The Council of Europe and UNESCO jointly drafted the Convention in 1997 in Lisbon. In 2014, 53 countries had ratified the Convention. The purpose of the Lisbon Recognition Convention is to facilitate greater academic mobility in Europe. All countries participating in the Convention have committed to satisfactory procedures for recognising formal higher education qualifications. The Convention stipulates that each country shall recognise higher education qualifications as similar to the corresponding qualifications in its own system. The recognition can only be refused if the qualification is substantially different from that of the host country. In that case, alternative recognition methods can be applied. The Lisbon Recognition Convention encourages a flexible approach to the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation, pointing out that the point of departure is the applicant. It also indicates the possible benefits of recognition of prior learning (RPL).

To implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention and, in general, to develop policy and practice for the recognition of qualifications, the Council of Europe and UNESCO have established the ENIC Network (European Network of National Information Centres on

academic recognition and mobility). Each country in the Lisbon Convention has an ENIC centre, a national information centre, set up by the national authorities. ENIC centres provide information on the recognition of foreign diploma's, degrees and other qualifications. They also provide information on opportunities for studying abroad and advice on practical questions related to mobility and equivalence. The Council of Europe and UNESCO jointly provide the Secretariat for the ENIC Network. The ENIC Network cooperates closely with the NARIC Network of the European Union that already existed before the Lisbon Convention. It was created in 1984 to improve academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study in the Member States of the European Union (EU) countries, the European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Turkey.

Tools for recognition of higher education qualifications

[Enic-naric.net](http://enic-naric.net)

The portal enic-naric.net is a joint initiative of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The portal provides information about procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications in the ENIC-NARIC countries, provided and maintained by the countries. Enic-naric.net also provides information on specific issues in recognition of foreign qualifications and international academic and professional mobility. For example, the portal has special sections on "Recognising qualifications held by refugees" and "Employing a refugee with or without documentation of qualification".

[e-Manual European Area of Recognition](#)

The [European Area of Recognition Manual](#), a result of a co-operation project, provides a wealth of information for everyone dealing with or interested in recognition of qualifications. The electronic format of the manual and the many practical flowcharts of procedures and processes make the often complex information very accessible. The primary target group are the credential evaluators of the ENIC/NARIC centres who will use the e-manual in their daily recognition work. But the e-manual is also a valuable source of information for other stakeholders; admission staff that deal with international credentials, higher education institutions who can learn more about how their qualifications might be recognised in other member states, students and employees who wish to study or work abroad and policy makers who require information on approved recognition practices. Chapter 12 of the e-manual is about refugees; it gives suggestions on how to assess qualifications in cases when some of the documentation is missing.

The e-Manual distinguishes seven steps in the recognition of qualifications:

Step 1 – Information and receipt
Step 2 – Verification of completeness of file
Step 3 – Verification of institution and / or programme
Step 4 – Verification of documents
Step 5 – Assessment of the qualification
Step 6 – Outcome of the assessment
Step 7 – Communication of the result of the procedure

For each step, the e-Manual shows the process in a flowchart. Figure 2 shows the flowcharts for steps 2 and 5, as example. Chapter 1 of the e-Manual has the complete flowchart: <http://ear.enic-naric.net/emanual/Chapter1/default.aspx>

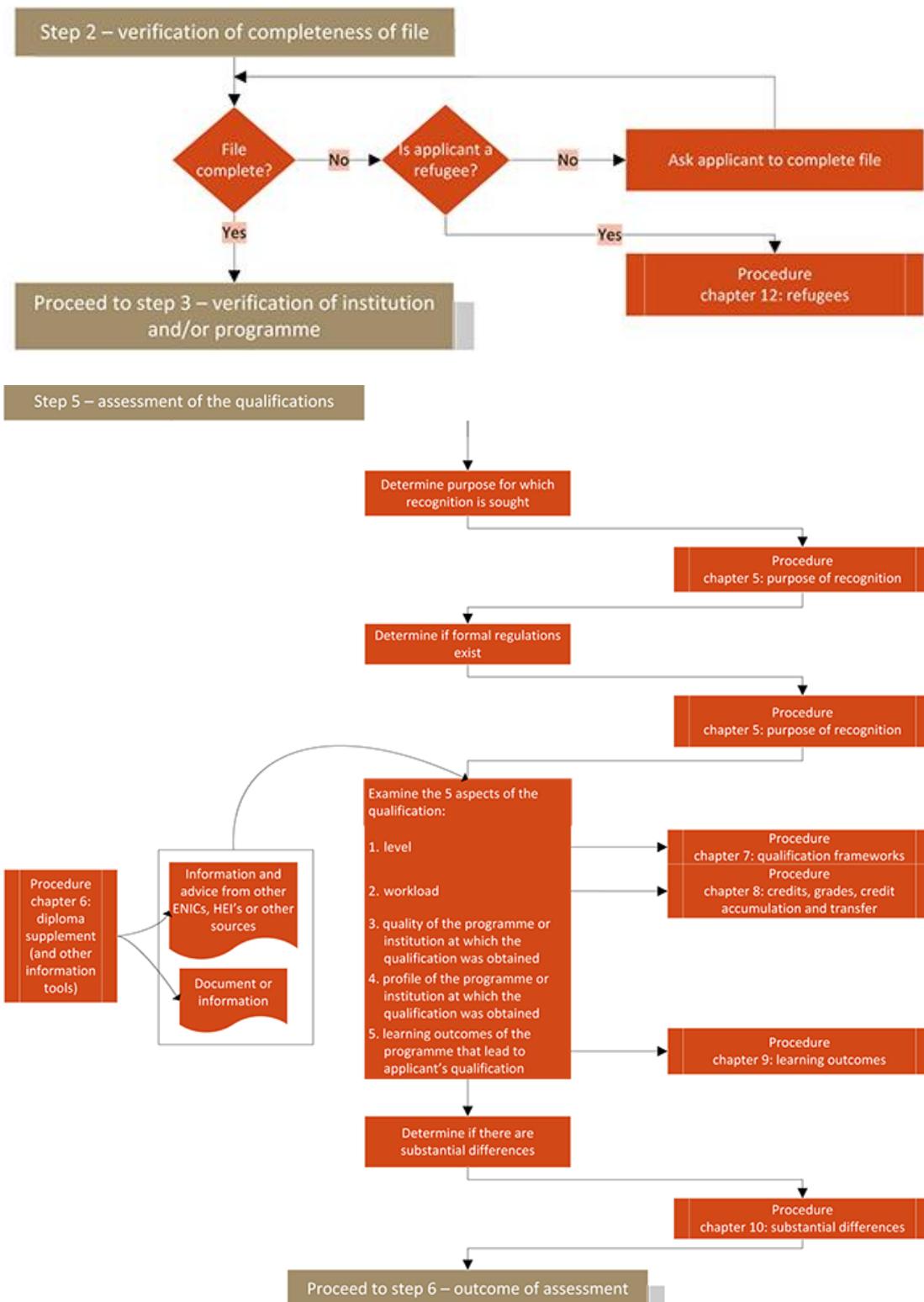


Figure 2. Flowchart recognition process (e-Manual European Area of Recognition)

Academic versus professional recognition

Recognition of foreign qualifications may have different purposes. The most common purposes are access to further education and training (academic recognition) and / or access to the labour market (professional recognition).

Academic recognition is for persons who wish to continue or begin an academic study or to use an academic title. Academic recognition focuses on recognition of periods of study or a qualification issued by an educational institute. Most of the recognition work of ENIC/NARIC centres is for academic recognition.

Professional recognition is for persons who wish to work in a profession related to their qualifications. A profession can be regulated or non-regulated. A profession is considered regulated when a specific qualification is required to be able to work in that profession. Professional recognition for a regulated profession is an official authorisation to practice that particular profession. The medical doctor and lawyer are regulated professions in all countries, but each country has its own list of regulated professions. Some countries have many regulated professions other countries have few. The system of recognition of professional qualifications in the EU is governed by [Directive 2005/36/EC](#). The directive provides for automatic recognition for seven professions, with minimum training requirements. All other professional qualifications for regulated professions (issued within and without the EU) must be recognised by a competent body. This involves an examination of the study programme.

Requirements for employment in non-regulated professions can vary from very specific to very general. For certain non-regulated professions registration and certification might be required as a condition for employment. If requirements for employment are not regulated by law, it is up to the employer to decide whether your qualifications and skills acquired outside the country are equivalent to the credentials required for the occupation. There is no common process in place for the recognition of qualifications for purposes of entry into non-regulated professions. Procedures and practices will vary from one hosting country to another.

Lisbon Convention	http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/165
Enic-naric portal	www.enic-naric.net
e-manual European Area of Recognition	http://ear.enic-naric.net/emanual/
Directive 2005/36/EC on recognition of professional qualifications for regulated professions	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32005L0036&from=EN

Chapter 2. Recognition of vocational qualifications

The Lisbon Convention regulates recognition of higher education degrees and qualifications that give access to higher education, issued in another country. Such a convention does not exist for vocational qualifications and therefore there is no systemic approach for recognition of qualifications issued by institutes for vocational education and training in other countries. A main reason for the lack of a recognition convention for vocational qualifications is the large diversity of vocational qualifications across countries. The Bologna process has led to a harmonisation of higher education degrees, which makes recognition procedures relatively straightforward. Vocational qualification systems are very different, because of cultural and historical reasons, which makes recognition processes much more complex. The EU has invested a lot in making vocational qualifications more transparent and comparable across countries. The European Qualifications Framework, learning outcomes, the ECVET credit system for vocational qualifications all contribute to transparency and comparability of vocational qualifications, but they do not lead to recognition. Still, recognition of vocational qualifications is as important as recognition of higher education degrees. Making use of vocational qualifications acquired by refugees will contribute to their economic and social inclusion and this would benefit both the host country, and the refugee. Because of a lack of recognition procedures for their vocational qualifications, refugees are sent to training programmes or enter a scheme for validation of non-formal and informal learning (see part II of this report).

Some countries have developed procedures for recognition of vocational qualifications. Here we give examples from Norway, the Netherlands and Germany.

Recognition of foreign craft and journeyman's certificates in Norway

In Norway, people who have completed vocational education and training in another country and can document it can have their vocational qualification evaluated as part of the recognition procedure. Currently this recognition procedure is limited to fifteen craft and journeyman certificates from two countries, Germany and Poland. Over time the recognition scheme will expand to include other countries and occupations. The procedure is executed by NOKUT, the Norwegian ENIC/NARIC centre that has many years of experience with recognition of higher education qualifications under the Lisbon Convention. Recognition of (non-tertiary) vocational qualifications is a relatively new area for NOKUT, who developed it based on requests from employers.

NOKUT accepts applications for recognition of craft and journeyman's certificates from Poland and Germany in the following qualifications:

Bricklayer	Hairdresser	Retail butcher
Butcher	Industrial concrete worker	Plumber
Cabinet maker	Industrial machinery	Sausage maker
Carpenter	mechanic	Upholsterer
Glazier	Meat cutter	Wood products carpenter
	Painter/decorator	

Applicants can have their vocational qualifications evaluated and compared to Norwegian vocational education and training if the qualification has the same level and scope as Norwegian vocational education and training. The applicant must have completed vocational education and training of at least three years. Of these three years, at least one year must be practical training. Figure 3 shows the NOKUT procedure for the recognition of foreign vocational education and training in brief.

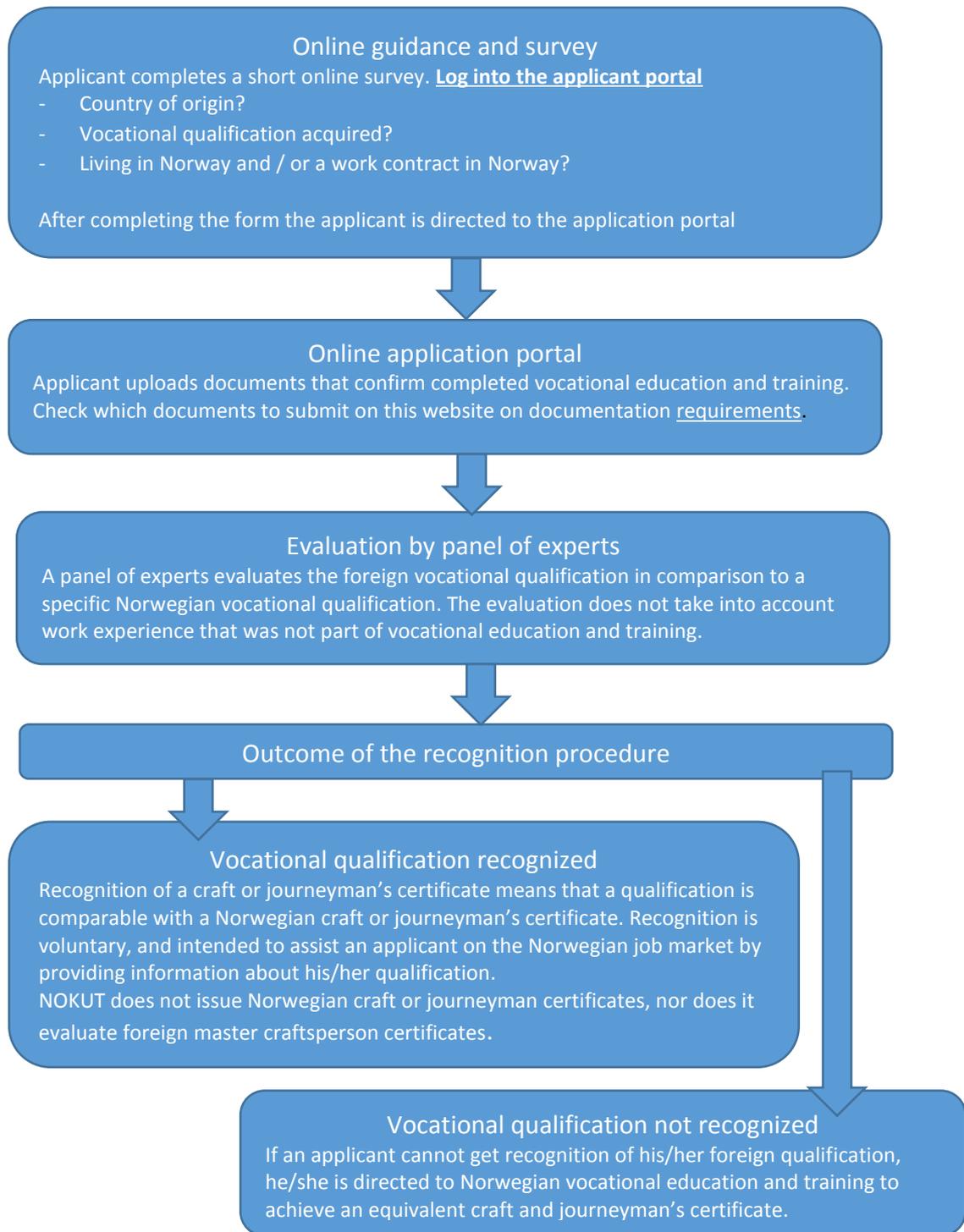
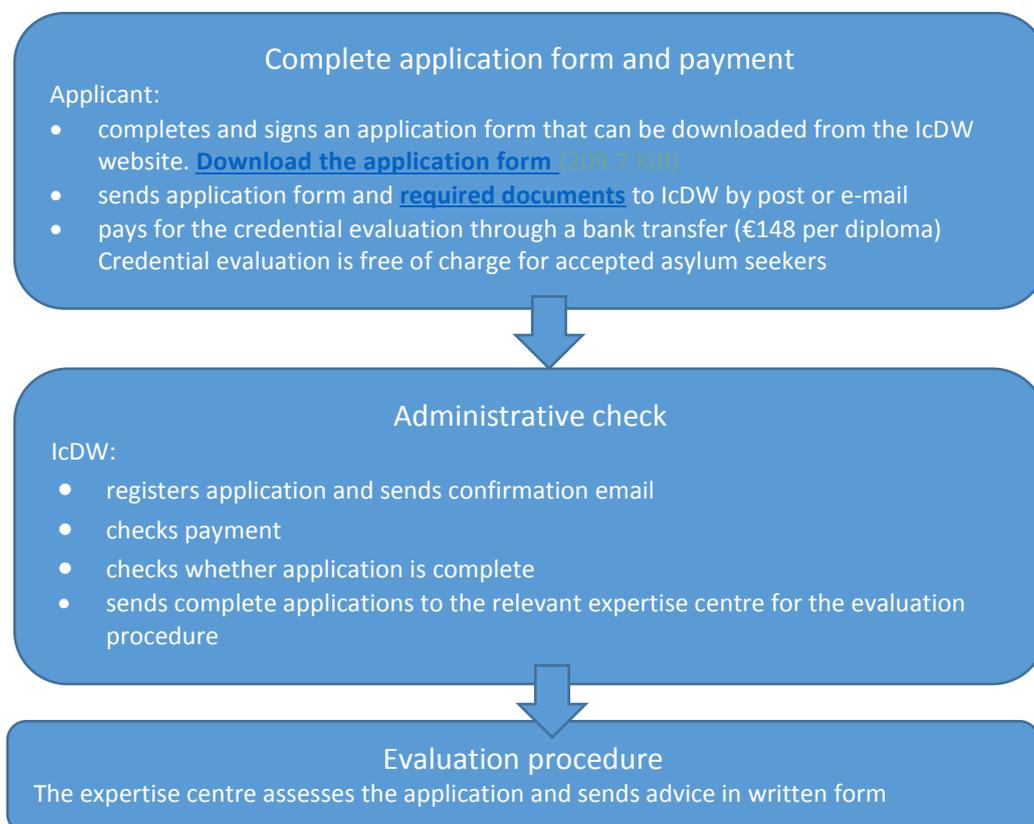


Figure 3. NOKUT procedure for the recognition of foreign vocational education and training (ETF based on NOKUT recognition website)

Norway: Recognition of foreign craft and journeyman’s certificates; NOKUT website
<http://www.nokut.no/Craft-journeymans-certificates/Documentation-requirements>

Credential Evaluation for vocational qualifications in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the centres of expertise of SBB and EP-Nuffic jointly compare foreign diplomas with the Dutch educational system. SBB is the Dutch organisation for vocational education and labour market. EP-NUFFIC is the Dutch ENIC/NARIC centre for recognition of higher education qualifications. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment have commissioned SBB and EP-Nuffic for this. The [Information Centre for Credential Evaluation](#) (IcDW) is a joint digital front office for credential evaluation of foreign diplomas and certificates, both from higher education and vocational education. Applicants can use the front office to find information about procedures and requirements, but application form and required documents are to be sent by post or email to the Information Centre for credential Evaluation. SBB and EP-NUFFIC process credential evaluations for foreign diploma’s and certificates that are issued by an institute accredited by the government and for which the education took longer than 1000 hours (one schoolyear). Applicants pay a fee for credential evaluation of €148 per diploma, except for accepted asylum seekers who have to go through the “inburgering procedure”, which includes examinations in Dutch language, knowledge of Dutch society and labour market orientation. For them credential evaluation is free of charge. Government-funded educational institutes can request a credential evaluation of foreign diplomas of aspiring students at SBB or Nuffic directly, free of charge. Figure 4 shows the IcDW procedure for credential evaluation in brief.



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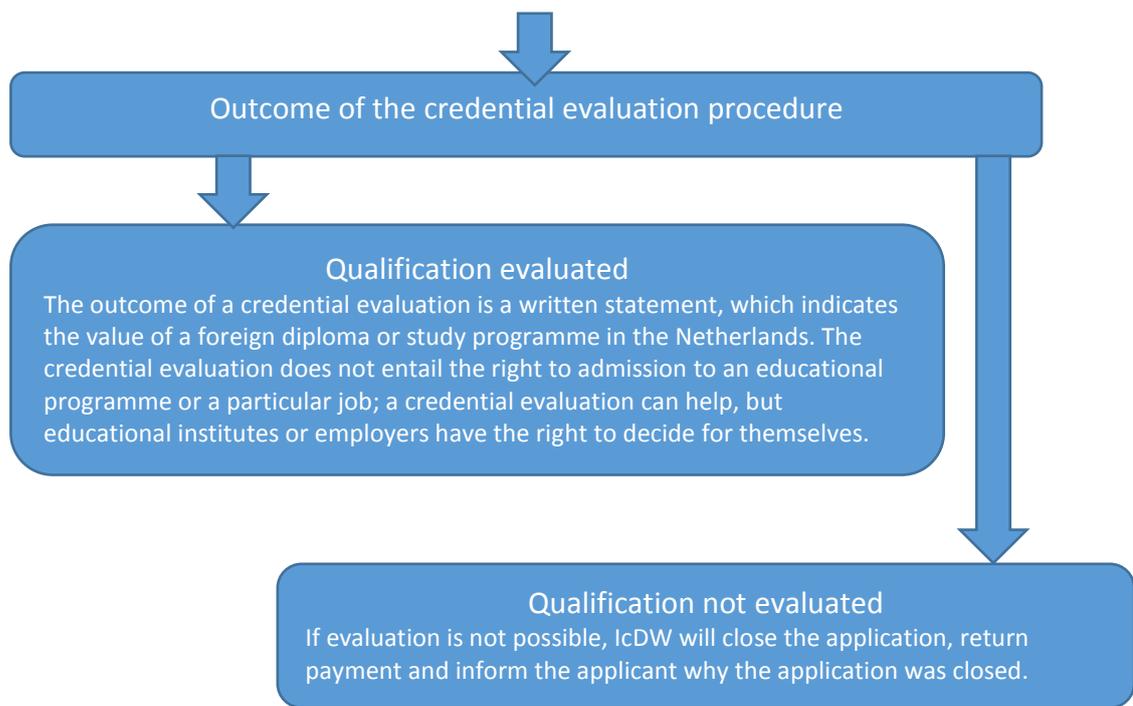


Figure 4. ICDW procedure for credential evaluation of foreign diploma's and certificates, Netherlands (ETF based on ICDW website)

Netherlands: Information Centre for Credential Evaluation - <https://www.idw.nl/en>

Recognition of foreign professional and vocational qualifications in Germany

Figure 5. Portal Recognition in Germany / Anerkennung in Deutschland (Recognition in Germany website)

Germany introduced the Recognition Act in 2012 to regulate recognition of foreign professional and vocational qualifications. Foreigners, who have acquired a professional or vocational qualification in their country and intend to work in Germany, can apply for recognition. The portal [Recognition in Germany / Anerkennung-in-Deutschland](#) provides the relevant information in nine languages. The portal has a “Recognition Finder” that navigates an applicant to the appropriate authority and gives information about the recognition procedure. Prior to initiating a recognition procedure applicants are required to clarify whether they are entitled to migrate to Germany and work there. The recognition portal provides information about starting work in Germany and an online Migration check service to verify your status. Figure 6 shows the German recognition procedure in brief.

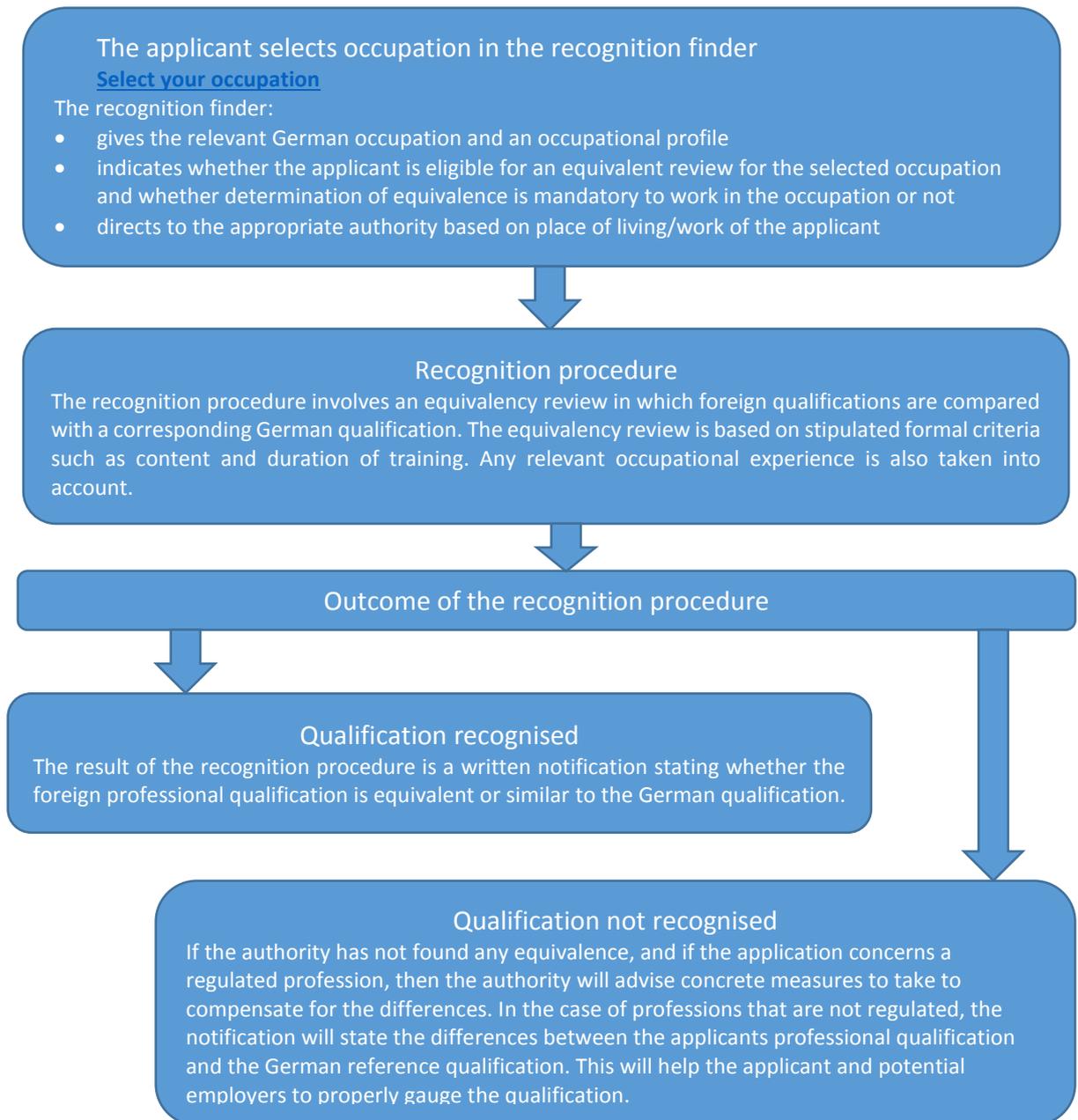


Figure 6. German procedure for recognition of foreign professional and vocational qualifications (ETF based on Recognition in Germany website)

Germany, portal *Recognition in Germany / Anerkennung-in-Deutschland*

<https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php>

Germany, Integration through Qualification Network with information on credential evaluation of professional and vocational qualifications

<http://www.netzwerk-iq.de/network-iq-start-page.html>

Chapter 3. Recognition procedures for refugees without documents

Already in 1998, the Danish Refugee Council published the report ‘Assessment and Recognition of Refugees’ Qualifications in the European Community’ that identified a number of recognition-related problems facing refugees. The main problems were: insufficient information and opaque procedures, lack of provisions for various areas of assessment or recognition, lack of procedures to deal with insufficient documentation, additional procedures or requirements for non-EU nationals and lack of financial support and bridging to mainstream education and training. In recent years, several European forums and agencies have dealt with the question of recognition of refugees’ qualifications. It is part of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the e-Manual European Area of Recognition addresses the issue in [chapter 12](#).

Recognition of the formal qualifications of people with insufficient documentation or without documentation is different from the traditional recognition of foreign qualifications. The traditional assessment is based on the educational credentials submitted by the applicant whereas the assessment of a refugee’s qualification is often based on incomplete – or completely absent – information about the individual qualification and/or the educational system in which it was obtained. The general approach for recognition of refugees’ qualifications, advocated by ENIC/NARIC is based on a background paper as assessment tool.

e-Manual European Area of Recognition – chapter 12 on refugees

<http://ear.enic-naric.net/emanual/Chapter12/default.aspx>

Background paper as assessment tool

The background paper is an authoritative description or reconstruction of the academic achievements. It is a document that describes the educational background of an applicant based on how similar qualifications with complete documentation would normally be assessed. A background paper is not the same as a recognition statement, for which also the authenticity of provided documentation is checked.

Three sources of information are used to compile a background paper:

- detailed information provided by the applicant, regarding the contents, extent and level of education; information regarding professional experience should also be included, especially when related to the applicant’s education;
- documents and supporting evidence provided by the applicant; this can be educational documents, testimonials of work experience or any other evidence which may help to confirm the information given in the application;
- general knowledge of the educational system in the country in question.

Syrian country profiles help with the evaluation of credentials of refugees from Syria. They give orientation on the education system in Syria in the light of recent political and economic developments in the country. A [Refugees Country Briefing Syria](#) was developed in the scope of the EU-funded project “Refugees and Recognition – Toolkit for recognition of higher education for refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation” by the ENIC-NARIC centres of France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. (See also chapter 6).

The Dutch ENIC-NARIC centre EP-NUFFIC made a [comparison](#) between the Syrian education system and the Dutch system.

Refugees Country Briefing Syria (from EU-funded project “Refugees and Recognition)	http://www.nokut.no/Documents/NOKUT/Artikkelbibliotek/Utenlandsk_utdanning/Prosjekt/Refugees%20and%20recognition/Country_briefing_Syria_2017.pdf
Comparison between Syrian and Dutch education systems (EP-NUFFIC)	https://www.nuffic.nl/en/publications/find-a-publication/education-system-syria.pdf

The background paper may be based on the model of the Diploma Supplement. The background paper is used to assess the qualification of the applicant and can be added with ordinary or specially arranged examinations, interviews with staff of higher education institutions and/or the competent recognition authority and sworn statements before a legally competent authority. Chapter 12 of the e-Manual European Area of Recognition provides a detailed model and process with examples of its application. Figure 2 gives the schematic overview. Check the e-Manual for the details.

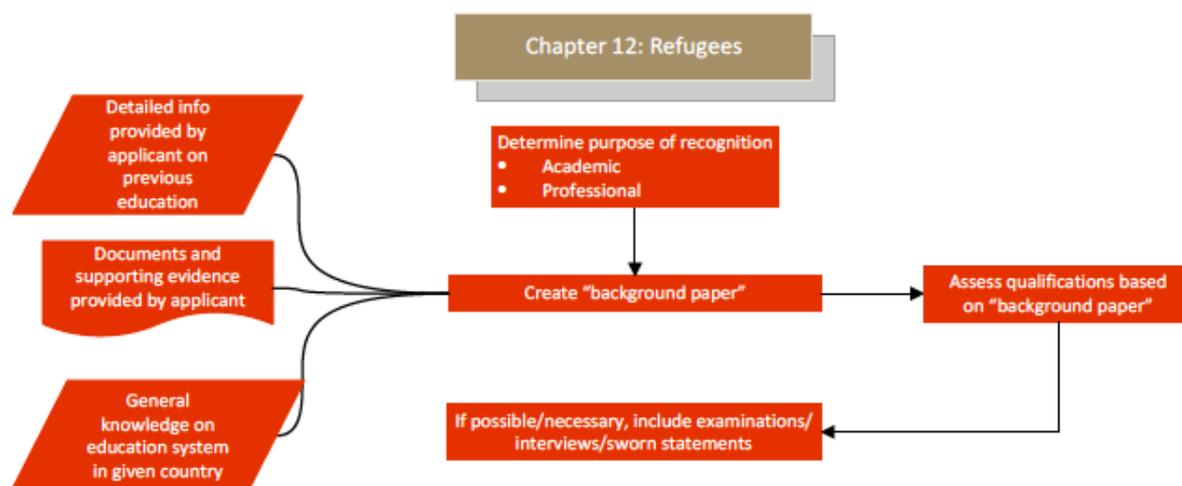


Figure 7. Recognition flow chart for refugees, migrants and other displaced persons (e-Manual European Area for Recognition)

An increasing number of ENIC-NARIC centres offer special procedures for recognition of qualifications for refugees and other displaced persons that are unable to provide sufficient documentation. Some use the background paper as a tool for assessment of undocumented qualifications but there are also other approaches. The country pages on enic-naric.net give information on procedures in each country. Here we give some examples.

Background report in Denmark

The Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education (Danish ENIC-NARIC Centre) provides background reports for persons that have studied or trained outside Denmark but are unable to provide sufficient documentation to have their foreign qualification assessed for recognition. The background report describes the educational background of the applicant and indicates how the Agency would normally assess a similar qualification when sufficient documentation is available. The background paper is compiled based on information provided by the applicant in the application form for the background report, supporting evidence and general information on the education system of the country of origin. The Danish Agency gives examples of supporting evidence that may be used for recognition without documentation:

- teachers' statements about the followed educational training
- a published list of registered students
- student Identification Documents
- students' index
- transcripts
- admittance to State Examinations
- professional status

Credential evaluators should also accept documents from supporting institutions, like The British Council and the Red Cross.

People can apply for a background paper online on the website of the Danish Agency of higher education by completing an application form:

Denmark, application form for background paper (from website Danish Agency of Higher Education)

<http://ear.enic-naric.net/emanual/Chapter12/default.aspx>

Background paper in Sweden

Sweden has a similar approach as Denmark. Applicants are advised to submit any documentation they have as evidence for the background paper. Evidence could include certificates from study and/or work experience, photographs, essays/project work, membership cards for student organisations. Further, to avoid confusion over terminology applicants are advised “If you do not know a particular term or expression, you can describe it in your own words”.

Sweden, info on recognition without documentation (from website Swedish Council of Higher Education)

<https://www.uhr.se/en/start/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/before-you-apply/i-want-to-apply/no-documentation/>

Indication of education level in the Netherlands

The Dutch credential evaluation offices SBB and EP-NUFFIC provide an ‘indication of education level’ (*Indicatie Onderwijsniveau*, or ION) service alongside their ordinary credential evaluation service since 2015. Both credential evaluation and indication of education level are free of charge for accepted asylum seekers who have to go through the “inburgering procedure”, which includes examinations in Dutch language, knowledge of Dutch society and labour market orientation.

The evaluation is based on the level and professional rights in the country of origin, such as the duration of the training programme, list of courses and subjects, compared with the Dutch VET-system. The refugee is tested in asylum centres, and the educational background of the refugee is reconstructed based on self-reported information. The refugees do not go through practical demonstration of their skills. Successful applicants receive a certificate with an indication of their level of competence, and a statement about the absence of official diplomas. To prevent fraud, experts in the respective countries of origin check the consistency of the provided information. SBB and EP-Nuffic have databases with background information on education systems in the countries of origin. For each application only one diploma is evaluated. Usually this is the highest diploma obtained. This means a credential evaluation does not describe all education followed, usually only the highest level is evaluated.

Netherlands, info on Indication education level (from website Information Centre Credential Evaluation) <https://www.idw.nl/en/inburgering-23.html>

Professional recognition via qualification analysis in Germany

The Recognition in Germany portal has a [separate section for refugees](#) with relevant information and services on professional recognition. The section provides quick links to services and information pages such as the Recognition in Germany-App available in German and English and the five most common languages spoken by refugees (Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Tigrinya and Paschtu) and flyers for recognition procedures for health care professionals and for recognition through a qualifications analysis.

The qualifications analysis is for foreigners who have a professional or vocational qualification but cannot submit the required documentation. A qualification analysis is a practical way to demonstrate professional knowledge, skills and competences for example via a work sample, an interview and/or a work test in a company. Practitioners commissioned by the responsible authority or chamber conduct the qualifications analysis. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research supports nationwide activities to help chambers in the implementation of the new procedures on a large scale with its "[Prototyping Transfer](#)" project, co-ordinated by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training BIBB.

Germany, Recognition portal section for refugees with quick links to recognition app and other services	https://www.erkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/1843.php
Germany, flyer Prototyping Transfer project; recognition via qualifications analysis in 15 languages	https://www.erkennung-in-deutschland.de/media/2016_05_18_BIBB_Prototyping_Flyer_mit_Merkblaettern.pdf

UVD procedure and Qualifications Passport for refugees in Norway

In 2013, a national recognition scheme for humanitarian migrants with little or no documentary proof of their higher-education credentials was rolled out in Norway. It is known as the Recognition Procedure for Persons without Verifiable Documentation (the UVD procedure) and was carried out by expert committees commissioned and appointed by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT). The procedure involves a combination of academic assessments, home assignments, and a mapping of work history. It results in a formal decision on whether to recognise foreign qualifications as equivalent to a Norwegian higher education degree. A survey of applicants suggests that more than half of the refugees who had their skills recognised in 2013 either found a related job or entered further education.

Requirements to take part in the UVD procedure are;

- The applicant must possess sufficient language proficiency in English, Norwegian or another Scandinavian language.
- The applicant must have permanent residency in Norway.

- The applicant must possess a completed qualification within higher education.

The UVD-procedure, which includes the use of expert evaluations and extensive testing, is very time- and resource demanding.

NOKUT saw that an expanding group of refugees was facing challenges in fulfilling the three requirements. In order to be prepared for a situation in which large groups of refugees are left without a possibility for recognition, NOKUT completed a pilot project in order to test a new methodology for evaluation of refugees' qualifications.

NOKUT's [Qualifications Passport for Refugees](#) which is based on structured interviews with candidates, held by executive officers. Based on the interview and available documentation, a standardised assessment of the applicant's formal qualifications is given. The number of years of higher education and the level of the education is assessed and compared to the Norwegian educational system. Supplementary information about work experience and language skills is also provided. In addition, the applicant receives individual advice on the way forward.

The Qualifications passport for refugees provides an example of practice which NOKUT has developed and built on its general recognition approaches, to develop specific streamlined approaches towards the recognition of qualifications for migrants and subsequently refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons. NOKUT works now with international partners to develop a European Qualifications Passport for Refugees. (See chapter 7)

Norway, Recognising qualifications of refugees; a Norwegian approach	https://www.eaie.org/blog/refugees-qualifications/
Norway, NOKUT's report and analysis about the Qualifications passport for refugees.	http://www.nokut.no/Documents/NOKUT/Artikkelbibliotek/Kunnskapsbasen/Rapporter/UA/2016/Malgina_Marina_Skierven_Stig_Arne_NOKUTs_Qualifications_Passport_for_Refugees_1-2016.pdf

National Coordination for the Evaluation of Refugee Qualifications in Italy

The Italian Enic-Naric centre CIMEA issues since 2016 free of charge Statements of comparability for refugees (115 in the years 2016 and 2017) with the principal aim of enrolling in Italian universities. To have access to this procedure refugees must have a complete set of required documents and the status of asylum or subsidiary protection.

In 2016 CIMEA also launched the Coordinamento Nazionale per la Valutazione delle Qualifiche dei Rifugiati (CNVQR), a national coordination group of experts in the field of academic recognition in Italy. All the Italian Higher Education Institutions have been invited to participate and the first meeting took place on the 7th of April 2017 in Rome at the Ministry of Education, University and Research that supports and sponsors the initiative. CIMEA, coordinator of CNVQR, has worked jointly with the 30 Italian Higher Education Institutes that have signed the protocol of the national coordination to develop a procedure

for the recognition of qualifications held by refugees with partial or absent documentation. This procedure has been tested in the period of June/July 2017 in six Italian Universities where refugees with partial or absent documentation asked to be admitted to academic courses. During the trial phase eleven cases were analysed and nine “Academic Passes of Refugee Qualifications” were issued. The Academic Pass of Refugee Qualifications allows refugees with partial or absent documentation to enrol in universities. The procedure consists of a questionnaire filled in by applicants to describe their study path and an interview carried out by experts in order to verify the information provided within the questionnaire. The aim of the CNVQR is compliance with the Legislative Decree 251/2007, which states that Italian administrations have to evaluate qualifications held by refugees even in case of missing or absent documentation. The development of this procedure gives Italian HEIs the tools to put this legislation in practice, thanks to the sharing of expertise and the good practises already established at European level (See also part II, chapter 6 of this report).

The Ministry of Interior Affairs and the CRUI (Conference of Italian University Rectors) have implemented an institutional initiative in Italy for the academic years 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 offering 100 scholarships for refugees enrolling in first and third cycle Higher Education courses.

Italy, Recognition of qualifications held by refugees	http://www.cimea.it/en/services/services-recognition-of-qualifications/recognition-of-qualifications-held-by-refugees.aspx
Italy, National Coordination for the Evaluation of Refugee Qualifications	http://cimea.it/valutazione-qualifiche-rifugiati/ (in Italian)
Italy, Ministry of Interior Affairs and CRUI	https://www.cruai.it/component/k2/item/3271-bando-per-100-borse-di-studio-per-studenti-con-protezione-internazionale-per-l-accesso-a-corsi-di-laurea-e-dottorati-di-ricerca-nll-a-a-2017-18.html (in Italian)

Support services to refugees and institutes working with refugees on recognition of qualifications

We conclude this chapter with three examples of support services to refugees and to higher education institutes working with refugees.

HEIs - Toolkit for Admission of Refugees without Documents in the Netherlands

In The Netherlands, many higher education institutions are unfamiliar with procedures regarding the admission of refugees without documents. The ‘toolkit for admission of refugees without documents’ helps these institutions to get started. The toolkit was developed by a consortium of four higher education institutions and EP-Nuffic.

The toolkit provides an explanation of the legal framework that regulates admission of refugees without documents in Europe and in The Netherlands, and also contains three instruments:

1. A flow chart describing the tasks and responsibilities within the institution
2. An interview format for the admissions office
3. An interview format for academic staff

The toolkit is for Dutch higher education institutions who are all responsible for their own admissions policy. The toolkit is intended as a guide for institutions that do not have a procedure for the admission of refugees without documents or that want to revise their existing procedure. The instruments in the toolkit can be adapted to the specific needs of the institution and the context in which admission is carried out.

<p>Netherlands, Toolkit for Admission of Refugees without Documents in the Netherlands; info and presentation</p>	<p>https://www.nuffic.nl/en/news/nuffic-news/toolkit-for-the-admission-of-refugees-without-documents</p> <p>https://www.uhr.se/globalassets/_uhr.se/om-uhr/konferenser/refugees-impact-on-bologna-reform/presentations/katrien_bardoel.pdf</p>
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Supporting Professionals in Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom

The Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit (RAGU) at London Metropolitan University in the United Kingdom supports refugees and asylum-seekers with higher level education and/or professional qualifications into education and employment. This includes work placements and employability programmes, short courses and accredited courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The main focus is now on working with refugee health professionals, including; doctors and dentists, nurses and midwives, pharmacists and biomedical scientists, allied health professionals e.g. physiotherapists and radiologists. Refugee professionals have a wide range of skills and experience. RAGUs aim is to identify an individual's strengths and abilities and provide support to achieve realistic and relevant educational and employment goals.

It offers the following services:

- individual appointments with a specialist careers adviser
- up-to-date information and guidance on routes to professional registration
- practical employability workshops focused on getting work in the health sector – includes CV writing, networking, job applications, interview skills, NHS familiarisation and cross-cultural communication
- work placements in the National Health Service
- funding for some professional exams and training
- extensive advocacy with professional bodies

Its careers programme supports clients to move forward into:

- paid work in the healthcare sector

- professional training in the healthcare sector
- professional registration
- alternative healthcare employment

United Kingdom, Refugee assessment and guidance unit (RAGU)

<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/services-and-facilities/refugee-assessment-and-guidance-unit/>

Supporting refugee Health Professionals in the United Kingdom

The Medical Profession Project is a Refugee Council programme funded by National Health Service (NHS) London which supports London-based refugee doctors to re-qualify to United Kingdom standards and secure employment appropriate to their professional qualifications. PLAB (Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board) tests are the main route by which international medical graduates demonstrate they have the necessary skills and knowledge to practice medicine in the UK. The project offers a range of services to assist refugee doctors in re-qualifying, including free six-week preparation courses for PLAB Part 1 and Part 2 tests and clinical attachments for doctors who pass PLAB Part 2 test. This project works with 50 refugee doctors each year.

There are also similar UK projects on teachers and nurses.

United Kingdom, Refugee Health Professionals Building Bridges Programme.

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what_we_do/refugee_services/refugees_into_jobs/refugee_health_professionals

II: VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

Chapter 4: EU Recommendation of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning

The EU Recommendation on Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL) of 2012 encourages EU member states to put in place national arrangements for validation by 2018. Validation arrangements will enable individuals to increase the visibility and value of their knowledge, skills and competences acquired outside formal education and training: at work, at home or in voluntary activities. Validation of non-formal and informal learning allows individuals to demonstrate what they have learned and to use this learning in their working career and for further education and training.

The Recommendation defines validation as ‘a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard’. The relevant standard, or reference standard, can be an occupational standard or learning outcomes of a formal qualification.

The Recommendation distinguishes four phases in the validation process:

Identification - Validation starts with the identification of knowledge, skills and competence acquired, through dialogue with the candidate. In the identification phase, it becomes clear what the reference standard is of the validation process.

Documentation – In the documentation phase, the candidate makes the identified knowledge, skills and competences visible. The candidate provides evidence of the acquired learning outcomes based on the reference standard.

Assessment – An authorised body assesses the evidence that the candidate has provided in the documentation phase and compares it with the reference standard. Assessment can take many different forms.

Certification – An authorised body certifies the results of the assessment. The certification includes a statement of achieved learning outcomes against the reference standard. This may lead to a partial or full qualification or an advice for further training to acquire a partial or full qualification.

EU Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2012	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:EN:PDF
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European Guidelines and Inventory on validation

In 2015, Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, published the European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning to assist individuals and institutions responsible for the initiation, development, implementation and operation of validation arrangements. The guidelines describe the essential features of validation and clarify the conditions for implementation, highlighting the critical choices to be made by stakeholders at different stages of the process.

Cedefop also monitors the progress of implementing validation systems in the EU member states. Therefore, it compiles the bi-annual European Inventory on Validation. The Inventory consists of country reports, a synthesis report and reports on specific themes such as funding validation, validation and Open Education Resources (OER) and validation in the care and youth work sectors. The latest update of the inventory is from 2016. All reports are available on the [Cedefop website](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu).

European Guidelines for non-formal and informal learning	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3073
European Inventory on Validation – 2016 Update	http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning/european-inventory

Chapter 5: Validation procedures for refugees

The country reports of the 2016 update of the European Inventory on Validation include a section on validation arrangements for migrants and refugees. Out of the 36 countries that participate in the inventory, ten countries report initiatives on validation specifically targeted to migrants and refugees although many of these are in the planning phase and some of the existing initiatives relate to recognition of formal qualifications. The inventory shows that migrants and refugees are still underrepresented as target groups for validation of non-formal and informal learning, although there is increasing attention for migrants and refugees.

However, while compiling information for this report we came across initiatives that relate to identification, documentation, assessment and certification of skills and competences of migrants and refugees. Although most of these initiatives are not (yet) integrated in existing VNFIL processes, they provide methods and tools that could be used in VNFIL processes for refugees. Looking at the aim of these initiatives, we can split them in two broad categories:

- Initiatives aimed at making skills and competences visible by identification and documentation
- Initiatives aimed at labour market integration

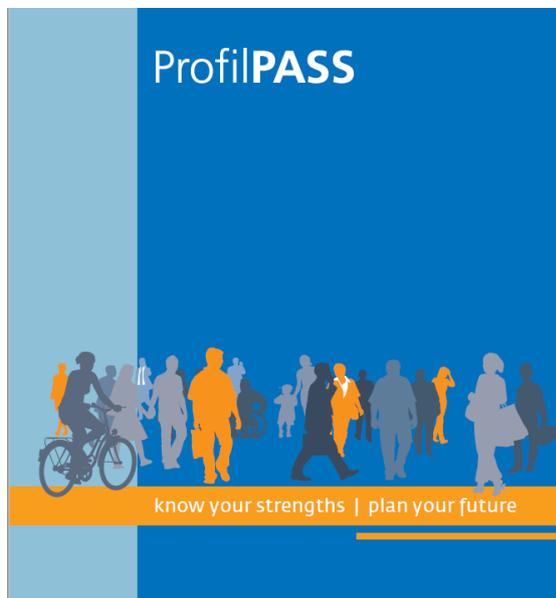
We present a selection of them in this chapter. The selected examples demonstrate concrete methods and tools and are well documented.

Making skills and competences visible through identification and documentation in Germany

Germany has developed various well-documented instruments to make skills and competences visible. We give three examples: ProfilPASS, Competence Cards for analysis of social abilities and skills of migrants and Skills identification through image and video-based tests.

ProfilPASS

[ProfilPASS](#) is a tool that makes individual strengths, skills and competences visible regardless



of where they have been acquired. ProfilPASS looks not only at professional skills and competences but is based on the fact that people learn mostly in informal environments like family, voluntary work and through coping with challenges of their lives.

The ProfilPASS was developed and scientifically tested by the German Institute of Adult Education (DIE) and the German Institute for Development Planning and Structural Research (IES). Currently the ProfilPASS is being expanded to other countries through an EU-Leonardo project. The ProfilPASS should assist individuals in discovering their own potential by means of a biographical process.

Figure 8. ProfilPASS (ProfilPASS website)

Although ProfilPASS was not developed specifically for refugees and migrants, it might be a useful instrument for identification and documentation of skills and competences for these groups.

ProfilPASS has five sections:

My life – an overview

This section reviews the personal biography. Where and which context has the individual worked and what is important with respect to the current/future situation?

My fields of activity – documentation

The focus here is on all personal skills and competences that can be derived from the activities in the following areas: Household and family, hobbies, school, training, professional life and volunteer work.

My skills – a balance sheet

In this section, a balance sheet of the determined skills is created and documented in a written certificate.

My goals

After determining the skills, the personal desires and goals this section is about what the individual likes to do professionally or in his/her free time. What interests does the individual want to pursue?

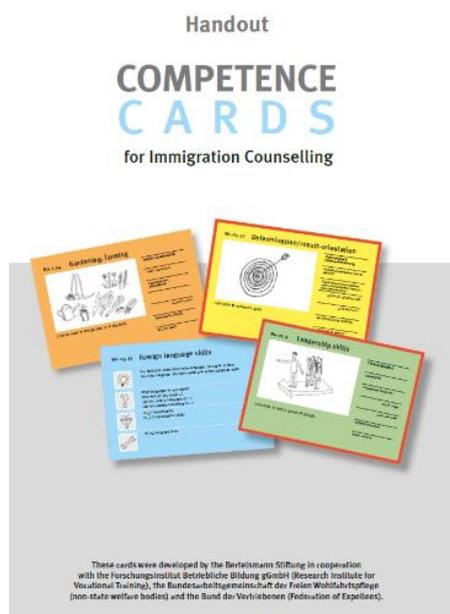
Next steps

In the last step, the individual compiles all available documents.

The [ProfilPASS website](http://www.profilpass-international.eu/index.php?clang=0) provides information in seven languages about the ProfilPASS concept and an explanation of the steps of the ProfilPASS document. There is a special section for ProfilPASS counsellors with train-the trainer materials and sets of method cards for counselling with the ProfilPASS. The ProfilPASS document can be downloaded from the website. There is a special version of ProfilPASS for young people.

ProfilPASS website <http://www.profilpass-international.eu/index.php?clang=0>

Competence Cards for analysis of social abilities and skills of migrants



A tool specially developed for identification and documentation of skills and competences of migrants are the Competence Cards for analysis of social abilities and skills of migrants. The Bertelsmann Stiftung developed Competence Cards for immigration counselling for adult immigrants (MBE Counselling) because MBE councillors noted that many of the existing procedures for identifying social abilities and skills are not entirely suitable for counselling migrants. They are often “language-heavy” and therefore difficult to understand for immigrants and cannot be applied on an intercultural basis. The newly developed competence cards use a combination of pictures and text in simple language, which should help overcome language barriers and make communication between councillor and client.

Figure 9. Competence Cards (Bertelsmann Stiftung website)

Immigration councillors can use the competence cards flexible based on their needs throughout the counselling process.

The competence cards have sections for social skills, personal skills, technical skills and individual interests. The competence definitions are translated in seven languages: German, French, Russian, Arabic, Farsi, Turkish and Tigrinya.

The Competence Cards are licensed under the open license CC BY SA. This way they can be easily adapted to the needs of the respective counselling context. The open license also sets the foundation for further user-driven dissemination and improvements.

The competence cards can be [downloaded](#) from the Bertelsmann Stiftung website free of charge. An [instruction video](#) is also available on the website.

Bertelsmann Stiftung website

<https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/our-projects/further-education-for-all/project-news/immigration-counseling-for-adult-immigrants/>

Skills identification through image and video based tests

The German Bundesagentur für Arbeit (PES) has launched a project to improve the visibility on non-formally and informally acquired vocational skills of refugees “Berufliche Kompetenzen Erkennen”. The project applies technology-based skills-identification procedures (“tests”) for job-related skills in order to provide improved counselling to low-skilled workers and to integrate them into the labour market.

82% of refugees arriving in Germany are without formal vocational qualification. The German labour market relies heavily on formal education and vocational certificates. Traditionally, the identification of skills has been limited to formal qualification pathways to facilitate integration into adequate jobs (see the German examples in chapters 2 and 3). As a result, refugees without formal vocational qualifications but with potential skills end up in positions not directly suited to their competences because their skills and competences are not made visible). To address this gap in skills identification the Bundesagentur für Arbeit is piloting skills identification based on image and video-based tests to make non-formally and informally acquired competences visible and usable. Figure 10 shows an example of a test for an auto mechanic. The test displays pictures of technical parts of a car combined with multiple test questions about whether the part is correctly fixed. The test takes about 2-3 hours.

Testbeispiel: Kompetenzerfassungstest Kfz-Mechatroniker/in

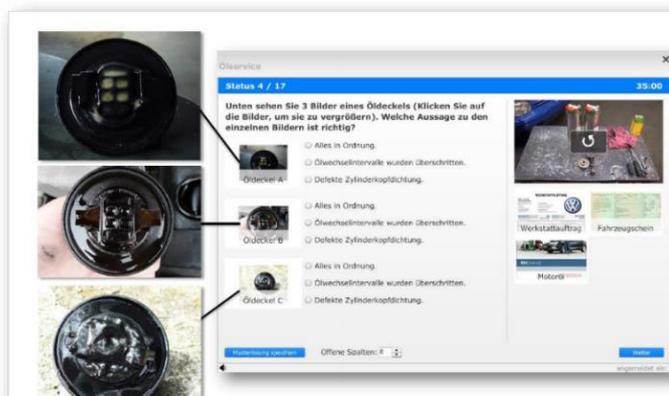


Figure 10. Example of part of a skills identification test for auto mechanic (Bundesagentur für Arbeit)

The tests are being developed for 30 occupations by sector experts who know the curriculum of a given qualification for an occupation. Tests are piloted and introduced in the job placement system in tranches. Usability of the test results is essential, therefore the tests are developed to ensure compatibility with the job placement process. The results of the tests are assembled on a common IT-platform, which can be accessed by all local job counsellors. Job counsellors can give feedback on test results, advice on further training and job placement. The employers' reception of the test instrument has been positive, and they are interested in hiring refugees who have demonstrated ability to do certain work tasks.

A presentation of the Bundesagentur für Arbeit gives detailed information about the background of the project and the test method (in German).

<http://docplayer.org/50606623-Berufliche-kompetenzen-erkennen-bayerischer-landesausschuss-fuer-berufsbildung-22-februar-2017.html>

Approaches towards labour market integration of refugees

Initiatives with an explicit focus on labour market integration of refugees combine identification, assessment and validation of qualifications and skills with labour market activities and job placement. We give one example from the Netherlands and two from Sweden.

Three step procedure towards labour market integration of refugees at local level in the Netherlands

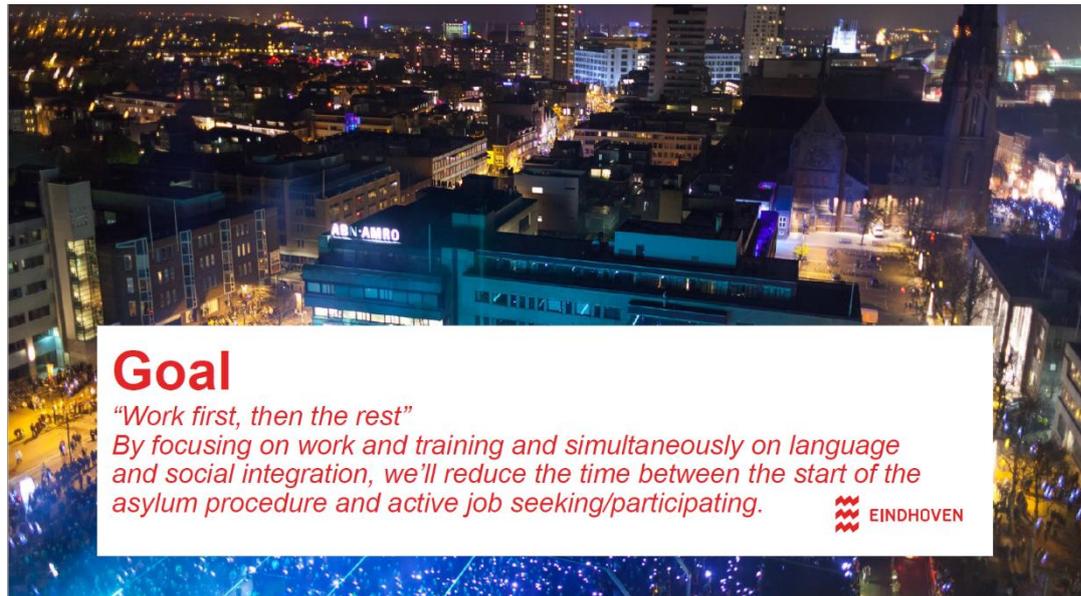


Figure 11. Talent4Work project municipality Eindhoven, the Netherlands (Municipality Eindhoven)

The Dutch city of Eindhoven has developed a three-step procedure to help refugees get integrated in the labour market as soon as possible.

Step 1

The first step starts when refugees are transferred to the municipality where they can start the asylum procedure. In Eindhoven, the first step focuses simultaneously on housing, language acquisition, training, and work. The rationale behind this parallel approach is that public authorities will minimise the amount of valuable time lost in integrating asylum migrants.

Step 2

The second step is identification, assessment and validation of competences and skills of the refugees against the standards of the Dutch labour market. The instruments for assessment and validation of competences are developed in close cooperation with businesses and other stakeholders. In this assessment process, the refugees are split into three categories according to their level of labour market match.

Group 1

Refugees with formal qualifications for example engineers who, if validated, can start working immediately.

Group 2

Refugees who can participate in the labour market but who need additional education and training to be qualified for specific occupations

Group 3

Refugees who have no formal qualifications and lack language skills.

Labour market specialists of City of Eindhoven analyse gaps between the Dutch labour market and the competences of the refugee. Tailor-made educational modules are developed in cooperation with three educational institutions: Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Summa College, and ROC Ter Aa.

Step 3

The third step of the procedure is matching the competences of refugees with vacancies and the regional / urban labour market perspectives.

Figure 12. Three step procedure towards labour market integration of refugees at local level in the Netherlands (ETF based on presentation Talent4work)

The 3-step procedure has been developed and is piloted in the project "Talent4work" under the programme Urban Innovative Actions of the European Structural Funds. The project was presented by Sala Besic, strategic advisor from City of Eindhoven, at the PLA 'How to make visible and value skills and competence of refugees: Exchanging national approaches and experiences'

Presentation of the Talent4work project:

<http://www.ecvet.nl/uploads/ECVET/Presentaties/1.1%20Sala%20Besic.pdf>

The introduction program, a systematic approach towards labour market integration of refugees in Sweden

In 2010, Sweden started an introduction program for refugees aimed at their integration in the labour market. The Swedish public employment service coordinates the program but the employment services of the municipalities execute it.

The introduction program starts when refugees in Sweden receive their residence permit and move to a municipality. PES starts the introduction process with an introduction interview that identifies the skills and the previous experience of the refugee. Based on this interview PES makes an assessment of the person's abilities and what the person needs to integrate into the labour market and, together with the individual a personalised introduction plan. The introduction plan normally has a duration of two years of fulltime activities. The introduction stops when the individual has found a job or has entered a university program. The individual receives a financial benefit of 33 euro per day, five days per week for the time of the introduction program. The introduction plan has three mandatory parts, Swedish language classes, civic orientation and labour market preparation activities that include validation of non-formal and informal learning, recognition of qualifications, additional training and internships. Figure 13 gives a schematic overview of the approach.

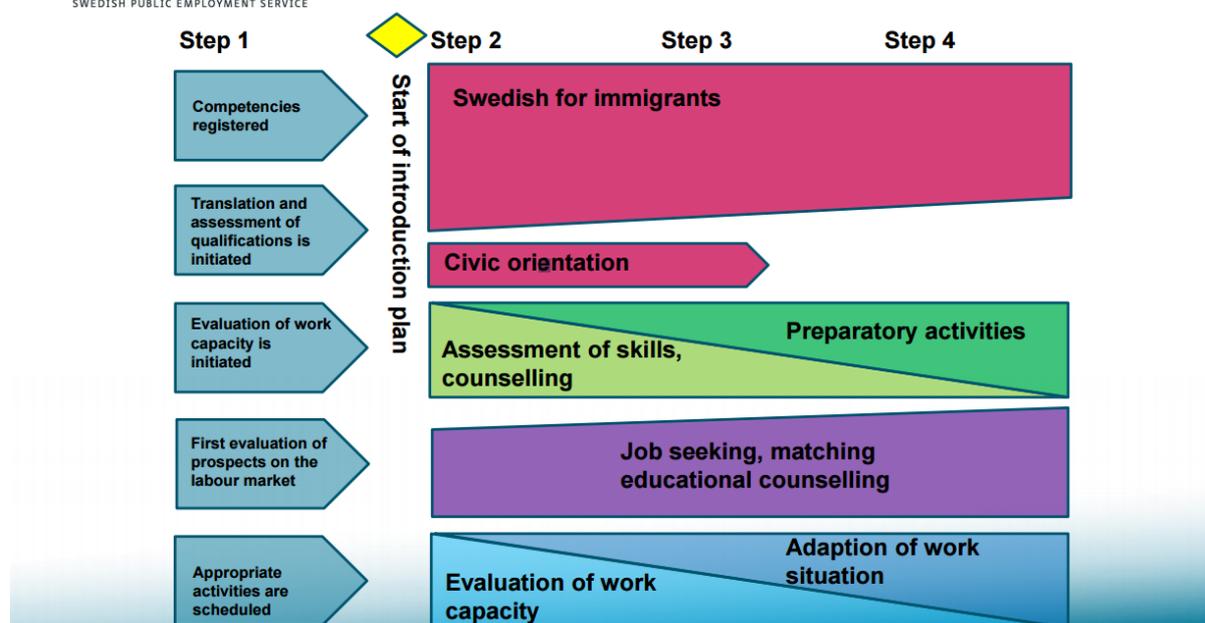


Figure 13. Schematic approach towards labour market integration of refugees in Sweden (presentation by Mathias Wahlsten, Arbetsförmedlingen, Sweden)

From 2010 until 2016, 56.000 persons participated in the introduction programme and PES expects that this number will double over the coming years. Syrian refugees are now the largest group of participants, in 2016 almost 60%. Most participants have primary and lower secondary education level although the number of people with post-secondary level education is rising to 30% in 2016. After 90 days in the program 39% of men and 21% of women have entered a job or a university program, while around 50% is then still in labour market programs.

More information about the introduction program, the obstacles and challenges and how the Swedish PES addresses them can be found in the presentation of Mr. Mathias Wahlsten, Arbetsförmedlingen, Sweden
<http://wapes.org/en/system/files/whalsten.pdf>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEHdZR2A9ms&list=PLxKQ8HzwmHxlaAzpe3oMSgOn_gAE0jKHme&index=2

Fast tracks for quicker integration of refugees in the labour market.

Besides the regular introduction programme for refugees, PES also has a fast track for refugees with occupations for which there is a needed in the Swedish labour market. Aim of the fast track is to get people at work more quickly. An important part of the fast track is to evaluate the foreign qualifications quicker, so that people can have a job on the level they were educated for in sectors where Sweden needs them. In a normal scheme it would take 4 – 4,5 years for a doctor or a painter to achieve a license to work. With the fast track this can be shortened to 1 – 1,5 years. There are fast tracks for the occupations pharmacist, doctor, nurse and assistant nurse, construction engineer, chef, butcher, teacher, painter,

social worker, social scientist, economist and lawyer and truck driver. Fast tracks for more occupations will be developed, based on labour market needs. A main feature of the fast track program is that it offers the required preparatory supplementary training in Arabic and combines it with internship and Swedish professional language classes. Figure 14 shows the steps in a fast track program for teachers.



Teacher



Figure 14. Example of fast track for teacher in Sweden (presentation by Ms Soledad Grafeuille, Arbetsförmedlingen, Sweden)

Persons that have no formal qualifications to evaluate can do an on the job assessment followed by complementary training combined with work and profession specific language courses.

More information about the fast track program and how social partners are involved, can be found in the presentation of Ms Soledad Grafeuille, Arbetsförmedlingen, Sweden
<http://wapes.org/en/system/files/grafeuille.pdf>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqtb9edfVX0&feature=youtu.be&list=PLxKQ8HzwmHxIaAzpe3oMSgOngAE0jKHme>

Key messages of the PLA 'How to make visible and value skills and competence of refugees', April 2016

In April 2016, the topic of validation for refugees was addressed in a peer learning activity (PLA) in the context of the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong learning (EQF) and the EU Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The title of the PLA was *"How to make visible and value skills and competence of refugees: Exchanging national approaches and experiences"*. This peer learning activity addressed the challenge that existing national validation and guidance systems face because of the arrival of large numbers of refugees and migrants in Europe. Validation and guidance systems have not been designed specifically to deal with skills and

competences of refugees and migrants. There are many initiatives but often uncoordinated and unevenly distributed between and within countries. The PLA shared views and experiences, discussed cases and formulated key messages. We end this chapter with the key messages made during the PLA.

The validation of skills and competences is a process in steps, with different methods and purposes at each step

The first step, identification of skills and competences, could be based on self-reporting where refugees are asked to describe their educational background and work experience. The municipality or a public employment service (PES) would be the relevant authority for early identification of skills and competences.

The second step is to assess skills and competences by tests. Professionals with good insight into the curricula and qualifications needed should do the development of the tests. The third step is the validation of skills, which may be done by the Ministry of Education or bodies such as chambers of commerce.

Early identification and documentation of skills and competences

It is very important to initiate recognition and validation processes at the earliest possible stage. Experience shows that the risk of unemployment increases the longer refugees are inactive during the asylum seeking process. The early identification and documentation of skills of refugees should be simple, low-cost and based on self-reporting. Identification of skills can be based on self-reporting where a refugee is asked to describe his / her educational background and work experiences. The municipality or a public employment service (PES) would be the relevant authority for early identification of skills. Part of the procedure may be done online.

Supporting refugees with their language needs is important in the early identification phase, as refugees do not have the language of the host community necessary to translate their skills and experience.

Methods and tools for identification and documentation

The identification of refugees' skills and competences requires a consideration of language needs, cultural background and a lack of formal documentation. Therefore, methods for identification should be flexible enough to deal with the "unexpected". The challenges may require identification methods that balance initial self-reporting with guidance and counselling. The initial identification should not only focus on the refugees' skills and past experiences, but also their aspirations as to what job or profession they would like to have in the labour market.

Tools for identification and documentation should address both the needs of government administrations and the needs of the refugees. Self-assessment of skills may be important in the first phase of identification where there is little information or formal documents on the refugees. Self-assessment could be combined with group assessment. Group assessment can be a viable method in the early phase of identification of skills as some refugees with language skills then can help to provide information on other refugees. Documentation can help the refugees by providing a portable skills portfolio, which they can use for labour market and education purposes. At the same time, the documentation needs to be structured and consistent for administrative use and exchange of information.

Fair and valid assessment and validation of skills and competences

Assessment and validation of skills and competences are more complex than early identification and documentation. Assessment and validation processes require expertise and test methods that are more advanced, and more resources. A key challenge in the assessment and validation process is to define the frame of reference and to develop neutral assessment instruments that are not cultural biased and measure adequately what should be assessed. Skills and competences of refugees cannot only be assessed against the qualification standards of the host country. For example, a machine operator in advanced European manufacturing has to be experienced in ICT application in work tasks, while this may not be the case for a machine operator from a very different business environment and education system. Therefore, the validation procedure is an incremental approach, which systematically explores and assesses people's skills and competences in relation to work tasks of specific qualifications and occupations. This is important for transparency, validity and quality of the validation and recognition process. Test for assessment of skills and competences should be developed by professionals with good insight into the curricula and qualifications. The validation of skills and competences can be done by the Ministry of Education or bodies such as chambers of commerce.

The full report of the PLA:

<http://www.ecvet.nl/uploads/ECVET/bijeenkomsten/PLA%20Den%20Haag%2028-29%20April%202016%20-%20Report.pdf>

III: European Tools

Chapter 6: Four European tools that support recognition and validation of qualifications and skills for refugees and migrants

The EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals

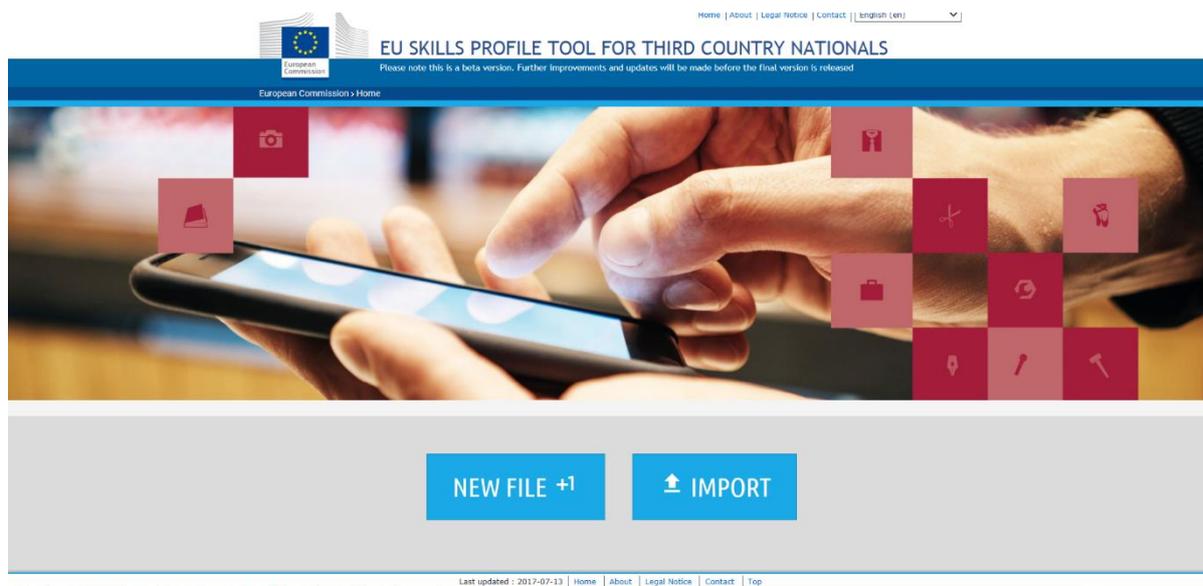


Figure 15. EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country nationals (beta version for testing)

The European Commission has developed the EU Skills Profile Tool to support early profiling of the skills of refugees, migrants and other third country nationals. This initiative is part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe.

The tool is an electronic portfolio that collects information and documentation in a consistent and portable way. The Skills Profile Tool is designed as a flexible tool that can be used in different national circumstances. Countries can apply the tool to their needs and combine it with existing procedures. The tool can be used by any services that offer assistance to third country nationals and should be used in an interview situation to get to know the individual, their skills, qualifications and experiences. The tool could be especially useful for early identification of skills and competences at reception desks or by public employment services. The focus of the tool is to help individuals produce a profile of their skills and to help an adviser identify any recommendations or next steps. The collected information can be used to:

- support further assessment,
- form a basis for offering guidance,
- identify up-skilling needs,
- support job-searching and job-matching.

The tool cannot be used for authentication or verification of documents.

The EU Skills profile Tool for Third Country Nationals has five sections:

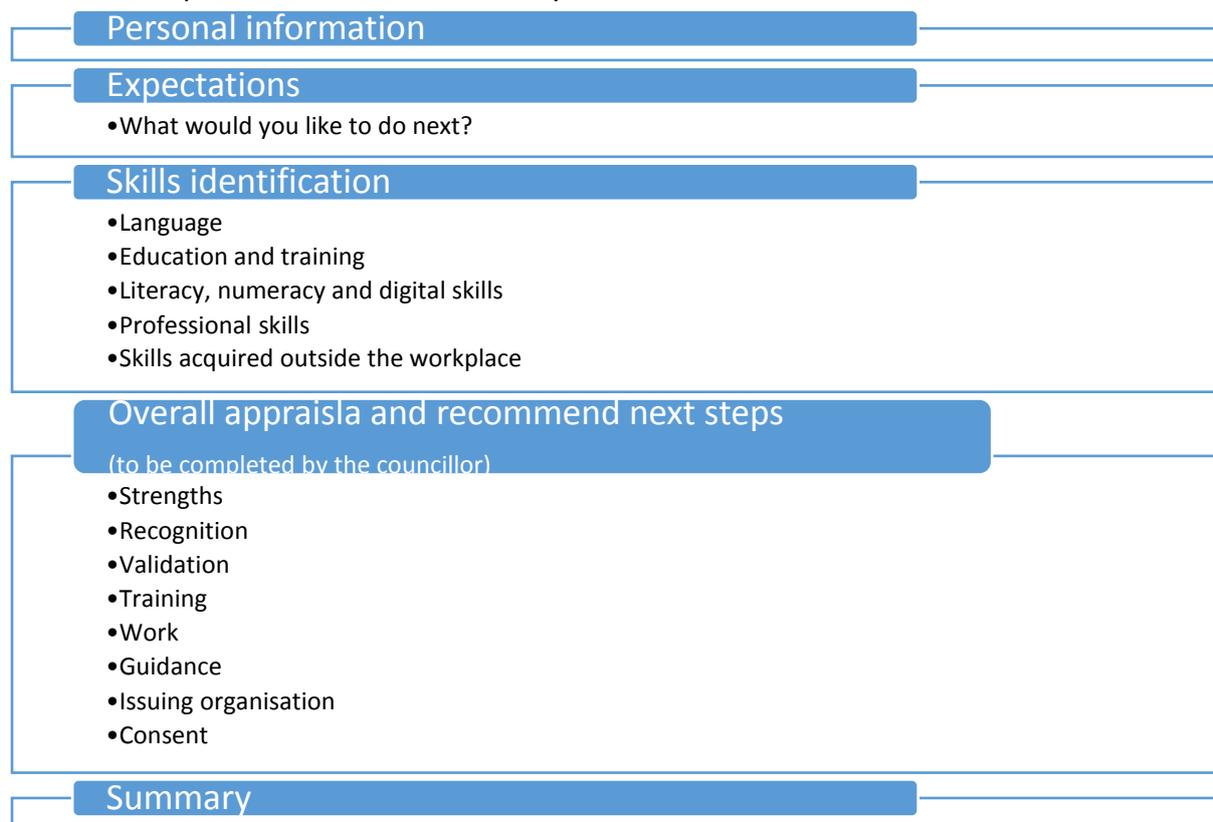


Figure 16. Structure of EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country nationals (ETF based on beta version for testing)

The tool will be available in all EU and EEA languages and in Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Sorani, Somali and Tigrinya. It will be possible to see two languages at the same time on one screen, reducing language barriers between councillors and the third country national. When information is not available in one of the chosen languages it is presented in English. The tool shall be available as a web-tool for PC and Mobile devices, and possibly in a mobile app. It will be possible to complete the tool offline and online. Instructions on how to complete the fields are integrated in the tool. Completed profiles will be exportable as PDF, Word or XML files.

The tool is now available in a beta version for testing. Further improvement and updates will be made before release of the final version.

Link: **BETA - EU Skills Profile Tool for third country nationals**

European Qualifications Passport for Refugees

The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees is a document that provides an assessment of the higher education qualifications of a refugee, based on available documentation and a structured interview. It also presents information on the applicant's work experience and language proficiency. The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees is a product of a European project of the Council of Europe, the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and the Enic-Naric centres of Greece, Italy, Norway and the UK. Figure 17 gives a sample of the European Qualifications passport.

The image shows a sample of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, Assessment Part. The document is issued by the Hellenic Republic (Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs) and the Council of Europe. It is for a Syrian refugee named Ahmed, born 16/04/1993. The passport lists his highest achieved qualification as a Bachelor of Science in Physics from Damascus University, Syria, and other qualifications including a High School diploma. It also notes his work experience as a volunteer student tutor and his membership in professional organizations. The document is signed by the Evaluation Coordinator and includes a URL for more information: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/education/recognition-of-refugees-qualifications>. The document is dated 03/10/2017 and valid through 03/10/2022. Logos for NOKUT, UKENARIC, and CIMEA are visible at the bottom.

HELENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Education,
Research and Religious Affairs

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

European Qualifications Passport for Refugees No 0123¹
Assessment Part

Issued: 03/10/2017
Valid through: 03/10/2022

Personal information
Last name: **NASRY**
First and middle names: **Ahmed**
Date of birth: **16/04/1993**
Place of birth: **Damascus, Syria**
Nationality: **Syrian**

Assessed qualifications
Highest achieved qualification: **Bachelor of Science, Physics, Damascus University, Syria²**
Other achieved qualifications: **Diploma, High School, Damascus, Syria³**

Additional relevant information from the applicant
Languages: **Arabic (native speaker), Arabic (language of instruction), English (language course), French (other)**
Work experience: **2014-2015 Volunteer Student Tutor, Damascus University, Syria⁴**
Membership in professional organizations: **N/A⁵**
Interview and documentation assessment is conducted by credential evaluators from DOATAP, CIMEA, NOKUT and UK ENARIC.

On behalf of the project: Evaluation Coordinator

For more information about the status of this document:
<http://www.coe.int/en/web/education/recognition-of-refugees-qualifications>

¹ European Qualifications Passport for Refugees is neither a legal document nor replacement for the national recognition schemes, but a statement intended to be of help in connection with applications for employment/internships and studies. The evaluation is based on available documentation and a structured interview with a professional credential evaluator. This document is only valid together with the explanatory part.
² Available documentation: 07/2015
³ Available documentation: 07/2015
⁴ Available documentation: 06/2006
⁵ No available documentation

NOKUT **UKENARIC** **DOATAP** **CIMEA**

Figure 17. Sample of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (Leaflet European Qualifications passport for refugees)

The procedure exists of a self-assessment by the candidate by completing a questionnaire and an evaluation interview by credential evaluators.



Figure 18. Procedure for the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (ETF based on Leaflet European Qualifications passport for refugees)

The evaluation method for the passport was tested in the spring of 2017 in Athens. The project brought together credentials evaluators from Greece, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom to facilitate and accelerate the recognition of refugees' qualifications in Greece, their first host country. 50 refugees went through the assessment and received the passport. Two additional sessions will be held in June and September 2017.

The European Passport for refugees intends to help refugees to progress in their studies or employment – to continue with their lives. The document provides credible information that is relevant for employment, internships, enrollment in qualification courses and admission to studies. The European Passport for refugees is not a substitute for identification or educational documentation. It does not guarantee admission to studies or employment. Neither is it a formal recognition document.

Norway and the UK have started to introduce this methodology. The first findings are positive; the method works and is cost-efficient. The National Information Centre in Italy, CIMEA, stores information about the issued European Qualifications Passport for refugees electronically. CIMEA is also coordinator of the enic-naric.net, the network of qualifications recognition centres in Europe. The idea is to establish a system that other countries can use in the future.

Leaflet European Qualifications passport for refugees: <https://rm.coe.int/168070016d>

The method for the European Qualifications Passport is further tested in an Erasmus+ project that aims to produce a toolkit for recognition of higher education for refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation. The aim of the project is

development of appropriate common recognition methods and tools to secure effective and streamlined recognition of qualifications for refugees and persons in a refugee-like situation in signatory countries of The Lisbon Recognition Convention, as stated in Article VII. Results are expected early 2018.

Info on toolkit for recognition of higher education for refugees, on NOKUT website
<http://www.nokut.no/en/About-NOKUT/What-does-NOKUT-do1/International-cooperation/Refugees-and-Recognition>

Visible Skills for Adults (VISKA)

VISKA is an ERASMUS+ funded policy experiment providing validation of skills and competences for people with low levels of qualifications and addressing transversal skills through skills audits, led by Skills Norway, in partnership with Iceland, Belgium and Ireland. The VISKA project provides a holistic system for validation, the development of tools to support validation and competence development of practitioners. The model has four stages:

- Mapping of Competences (including self-registration and self-assessment)
- Career Guidance
- Assessment
- Certification (leading to employment, education or training)

The model is being trialed with 500 asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, low-skilled adults across the four partner countries; Ireland, Iceland, Belgium and Norway.

VISKA project website <http://viskaproject.eu/>

inHERE Good Practice Catalogue

The inHERE Good Practice Catalogue (GPC) is the product of an in-depth analysis of almost 300 initiatives from 32 countries of higher education institutions and organisations committed to welcoming refugees that have participated in EUA's Refugees Welcome Map Campaign up until early 2017. The aim of the GPC is to serve the academic communities in Europe and beyond as a source of information and inspiration, and to enable exchange and collaboration between interested stakeholders. While it focuses on refugee students and researchers, it should also foster a broader discussion and include higher education institutions' strategies, their third mission and their approaches to diversity management. The cases are arranged under 11 topical categories.

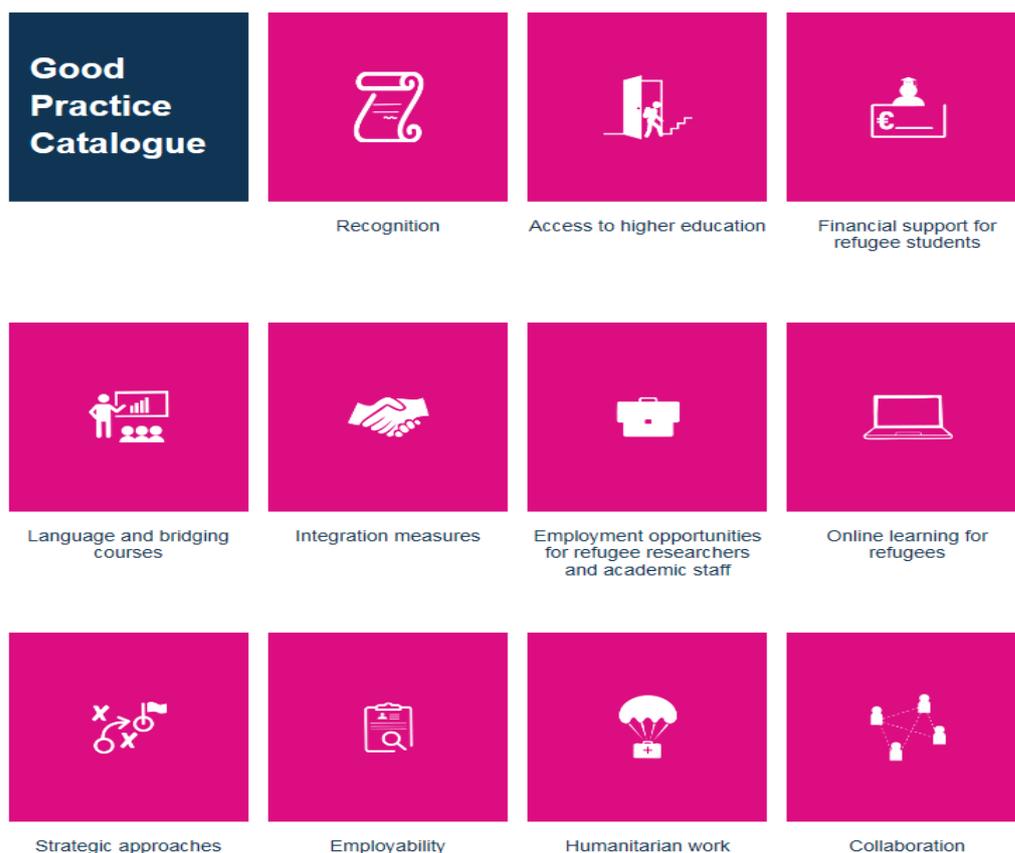


Figure 19. Categories of the Good Practice Catalogue (inHere project website)

The selection of the cases for the catalogue was based on a set of criteria, focusing on actual or potential high impact on the integration of refugees into study and social life. Each case has several category tags, the first one being that under which it was selected. The descriptions of the initiatives are based on the text submitted to the Refugees Welcome Map, plus a set of follow-up questions to the participants.

The initiatives analysed in the Good Practice Catalogue are examples, but no inventory of the measures undertaken to include refugees in European higher education. This is even more so as the Refugees Welcome Map is not the result of a systematic mapping, but represents voluntary submissions of institutions and organisations via a short questionnaire.

Link to the inhere Good Practice Catalogue and Refugees Welcome map
<https://www.inhereproject.eu/outputs/good-practice-catalogue>

IV: ROUTES TOWARDS LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION FOR REFUGEES IN TURKEY

The focus of this report is on practices from Europe in the areas of recognition and validation of qualifications and skills of refugees. In this last part, we look at how these practices could fit in the Turkish context of labour market integration of refugees. Although a thorough exploration of the Turkish practices of recognition and validation for refugees is outside the scope of the report, we make use of available information, being aware that this information is limited and might be outdated. Part IV intends to inspire discussion and further exploration of Turkish practices and use of European examples with Turkish stakeholders. A first opportunity for such discussion will be the conference “Improving skills and labour market integration for refugees and host communities” 20 and 21 September 2017 in Adana.

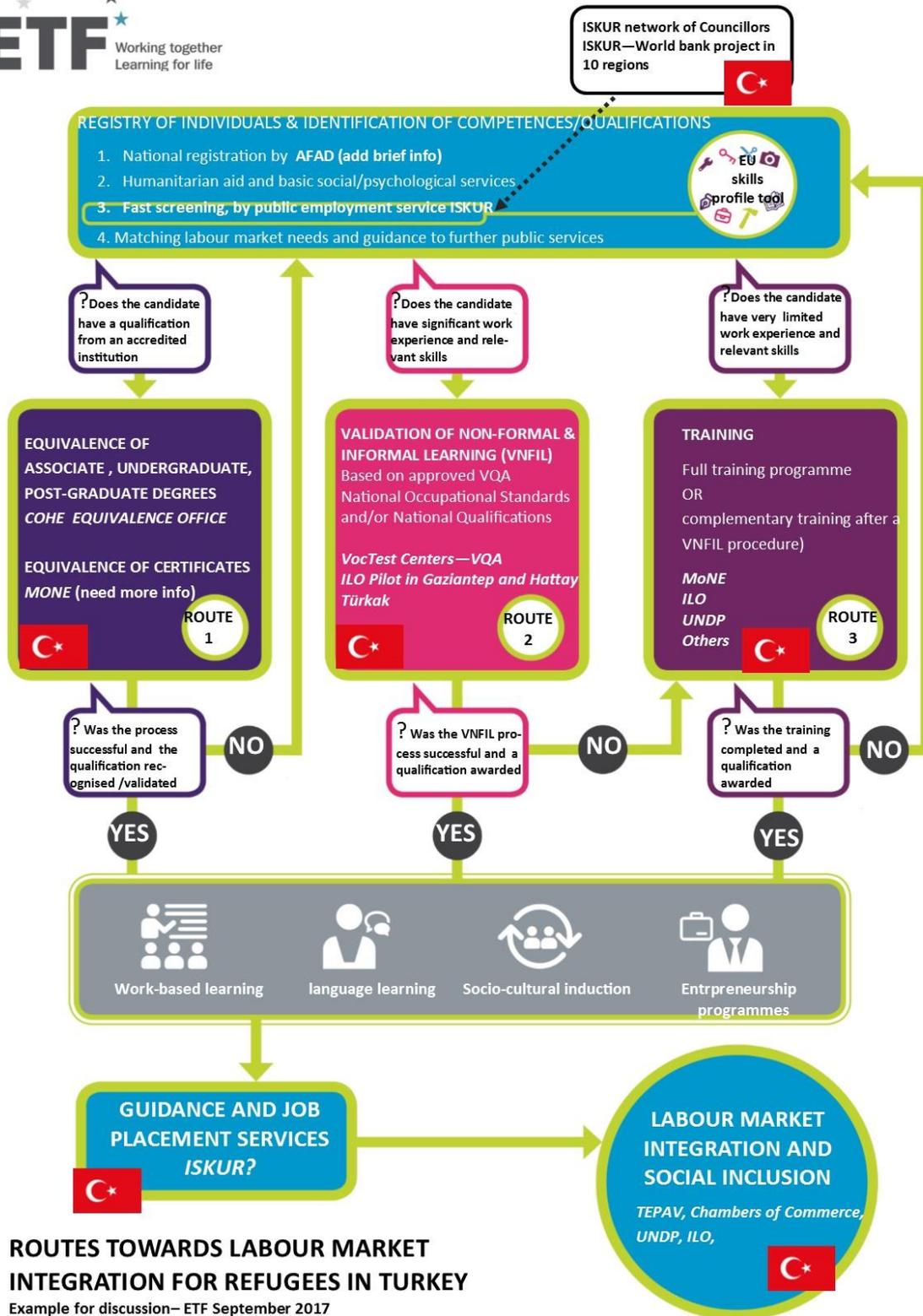
Process chart

As a starting point, we take again the process chart Routes towards labour market integration for labour migrants and displaced persons that was introduced in the Introduction (figure 1). We compiled a version for Turkey of this process chart (figure 20), showing a schematic presentation of a possible system of labour market integration of refugees in Turkey⁶. In this chapter, we use the sections of the process chart to structure existing practices in Turkey and relevant practices from Europe. The sections are:

- Fast screening
- Route 1 for candidates with formal qualifications from an accredited institute
- Route 2 for candidates with relevant work experience and skills but no formal certificate
- Route 3 for candidates with very limited work experience and skills
- Supplementary training and programmes
- Guidance and job placement services
- Labour market integration and social inclusion

In parallel with the scope of this report, the focus of this chapter is on Routes 1 and 2 of the process chart. The other sections will be dealt with briefly.

⁶ A general version of this process chart was discussed in an ILO workshop with Turkish stakeholders in May 2017. Based on the outcomes of the discussions the process chart was adapted to the Turkish context. The Turkish version will be discussed and elaborated in the conference in Adana in September 2017.



ROUTES TOWARDS LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION FOR REFUGEES IN TURKEY
Example for discussion— ETF September 2017

Figure 20. Process Chart - Routes towards labour market integration for refugees in Turkey (ETF)

Fast screening

There is general consensus among researchers⁷ and policy makers that identification of qualifications and skills of refugees and migrants should start as soon as possible for their effective labour market integration. A fast screening of skills and competences could take place already in the registration phase, next to humanitarian aid and social services, preferably by an integrated reception desk. Often such a fast screening is a task of the public employment services.

Practice in Turkey

The Turkish public employment service ISKUR has a nationwide network of councillors that are tasked with guidance and job placement services of Turkish job seekers. ISKUR with support of the world bank is strengthening its capacities in ten regions to carry out fast screening and guidance and job matching services for refugees.

Relevant practices from Europe

The EU Skills Profiling Tool for third country nationals (see chapter 6) provides a flexible format for a fast screening of skills, competences and qualifications of third country nationals. The tool also helps councillors to guide individuals to various routes towards labour market integration. The tool is currently available in a Beta version to be tested, further improvement and updates will be made before release of the final version. The tool could be adapted to the Turkish context and used by ISKUR councillors for fast screening and guidance of refugees. The tool is not yet available in Turkish and should be translated.

The Swedish example of the introduction program (see chapter 5) contains elements that could be useful for the ISKUR / world bank project, such as the introduction interview by PES councillors and the personalised introduction plan aimed at entering the labour market or enrolling in a university (or vocational) program.

Route 1 - candidates with formal qualifications from an accredited institute

Part I of this report “Recognition of qualifications” describes practices in Europe of recognition of qualifications issued by accredited institutes. For the field of Higher Education there is a systematic approach towards recognition of foreign qualifications based on the Lisbon Convention. Some countries have also recognition procedures for non-tertiary vocational qualifications. Many countries have introduced special procedures for persons with no or partial documentation.

Practice in Turkey

Recognition of foreign academic qualifications

Turkey has a functioning system for the assessment and recognition of foreign academic qualifications in Associate’s, Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees that is supported by legislation

⁷ See research reports mentioned in the section Further reading of this report.

and in line with the Lisbon Convention. The Equivalence office of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE/ YÖK) deals with recognition and equivalence⁸ requests in these degrees. CoHE is part of the ENIC-NARIC networks.

Many professions in Turkey are regulated. Requirements to execute a regulated profession in Turkey are defined in different laws. The Turkish Council of Higher Education has adopted a Regulation on the Harmonisation of the Minimum Training Requirements for the Seven Regulated Professions stipulated by the EU-Directive 2005/363. This should bring the minimum requirements for these seven regulated professions in compliance with the mentioned Directive.

Turkey CoHE Equivalence office website	http://www.yok.gov.tr/en/web/en-denklik-birimi/home
Turkey Regulation on Recognition and Equivalence of Foreign Higher Education Diplomas	http://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/7780883/28452321/Denklik_Yonetmeligi_Ingilizce.pdf
On recognition of professional qualifications: Turkey screening report (2005) on chapter 3 of the acquis– Right of establishment and freedom do provide services	https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/turkey/screening_reports/screening_report_03_tr_internet_en.pdf

Recognition of foreign craft certificate in Turkey

To execute a craft profession in Turkey one needs to have a mastership certificate. Foreigners can establish a business or work as an employee, if the equivalence of their certificate is recognised by the Ministry of Education (in addition they need a residence and work permit). Legislation involved: Law N° 3308 on vocational training (as amended by Law No 4702).

Turkey Law N° 3308 on vocational training (as amended by Law No 4702)
<http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.3308.pdf>

Recognition of qualifications for refugees in Turkey

Turkish universities have enrolled nearly 15.000 Syrian students in the academic year 2016-2017. The numbers have increased substantially, in 2015-2016 almost 10.000 students were enrolled and 5.500 in the year 2014-2015. Syrian students are now among the largest groups of foreign students in Turkish universities. Syrian HE students are enrolled in universities all over Turkey but most are in Gaziantep University (almost 1700) and in Istanbul University. Most of the students are enrolled in 1st cycle programs. Based on

⁸ The Turkish Regulation on Recognition and Equivalence of Foreign Higher Education Diplomas distinguishes between **Recognition** of Higher Education Institutes and Programmes and **Equivalence** of Higher education degree diplomas issued by a foreign higher education institute that is recognised by CoHE with a HE degree diploma issued by a higher education institute in Turkey.

figures of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) there are 392 Syrian academics in Turkey, this is 11% of the total number of foreign academics in Turkey.

YÖK has installed a number of actions to facilitate entry of Syrian students in Turkish Universities. There is a transfer process for Syrian students that have started education in associate, undergraduate and graduate degree programs in their country and have the required documentation of their achievements. For those who do not have the necessary documents there is a special student status. They can take university courses under this special student status. Turkish universities also offer programs in different languages, special tuition fees and placement of scholarship students. The Türkiye Scholarship Program has provides scholarships to 3,473 students in the 2016-2017 academic year. The SPARK scholarship programme supports Syrian in Turkey and other host countries in the region and in Syria.

The YÖK equivalence office has recently started a special recognition / equivalence process for Syrian students with missing documentation. In March 2017 YÖK organised the “International Conference on Syrian Students in the Turkish Higher Education System” in the Mustafa Kemal University in Hatay. In the opening session, YÖK Deputy President Prof. Hasan Mandal made a presentation on Syrian students in Turkish Higher Education. He shared good practices and future prospects and challenges. Next to financial concerns, lack of support mechanisms, inequality of men and women, lack of information and a language barrier, he mentioned Academic qualifications and recognition of qualifications as a big challenge for the coming years.

Turkey, 'International Conference on Syrian Students in the Turkish Higher Education System, March 2017 Hatay

http://yok.gov.tr/en/web/cohe/detail/-/asset_publisher/5RbPUkPMffYu/content/international-conference-of-the-council-of-higher-education-in-hatay;jsessionid=2FB058B75A210253EA8D84D2442A3F9E?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fyok.gov.tr%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fcohe%2Fdetail%3Bjsessionid%3D2FB058B75A210253EA8D84D2442A3F9E%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_5RbPUkPMffYu%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_stat%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-1%26p_p_col_count%3D1

Relevant practices from Europe

The YÖK equivalence office that has recently started a special recognition / equivalence process for Syrian students with missing documentation, could benefit from experiences described in chapter 3

- the background Paper
- the Norwegian Qualifications Passport
- the Italian national coordination group of experts from universities that execute a tested procedure for the recognition of qualifications held by refugees with partial or absent documentation and

The methodology developed for the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees described in chapter 6 could also be of interest.

The Dutch procedures for credential evaluation (chapter 2) and indication of education level (chapter 3) could provide relevant elements for the recognition / equivalence of non-academic foreign qualifications in Turkey.

Route 2 - candidates with relevant work experience & skills but no formal certificate

Part II of this report describes practices in Europe of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL), based on the EU Recommendation for VNFIL of 2012 and the European Guidelines and Inventory on validation. The inventory shows that although there is increasing attention for migrants and refugees, they are still underrepresented as target groups for validation of non-formal and informal learning. There are however many initiatives to make skills and competences of refugees and migrants visible by identification and documentation and initiatives aimed at labour market integration of refugees and migrants. Chapter 5 describes selected examples of these initiatives.

Practice in Turkey

Turkey has an operational system for assessment and certification for workers that have no formal qualifications. Workers can go through an assessment and certification process and acquire a Vocational Qualifications Certificate without a lengthy education or training program. The Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) has a functional role in the process. The Vocational Qualifications Certificate is based on VQA approved occupational standards and VQA authorizes Authorized Certification Bodies (ACB). At the time of writing there are 86 ACBs that carry out assessment and certification activities in 204 national qualifications. 70% of the ACBs are non-profit organisation such as professional bodies, chamber of commerce and industry, LLL centres of universities, employee unions and employer associations. ACBs assess the individuals who wish to be awarded with a VQA Vocational Qualification Certificate and decides whether candidates have passed the assessment. Following the decision of the ACB, VQA prepares and delivers the VQA Vocational Qualification Certificates to the successful candidates. To date, VQA has issued almost 226.000 Vocational Qualification Certificates. The VQA web portal publishes the issued certificates.

VQA National Vocational Qualifications are structured in units. If a candidate passes the assessment for part of the units of the qualification but is not successful for all units, ACB awards a Certificate of Unit Achievement for the units which the candidate has passed. Thus, individuals can accumulate the units which they have passed and they can apply for the awarding of the full qualification if they have achieved all units. Additionally, Europass Certificate Supplements for VQA Vocational Qualification Certificates are prepared and published on the VQA portal.

In 2015, Turkey adopted legislation that makes certification compulsory for occupations that involve health and safety risks. Employers will have to make sure their employees in these occupations are certified. This will be a major challenge for the Authorized Certification Bodies in Turkey as it concerns millions of workers – in the construction sector alone, this will involve 1.4 million employees.

The General Directorate for Lifelong Learning drafted a guideline on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)⁹ in June 2013 and has conducted a pilot study in three occupations. The RPL approach of the Ministry of national Education (MoNE) puts importance to the roles of counsellors and assessors.

2014-2018 Lifelong Learning Strategy Document for Turkey strongly focuses on the RPL processes and promotes extensive use of it.

The Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) supports RPL. The TQF was designed to allow for recognition of qualifications achieved by learning in informal and non-formal contexts. RPL arrangements should become available for all qualifications in the TQF. The TQF Council is preparing principles and procedures for RPL that will be applied by the responsible bodies for RPL (VQA, General Directorate of Lifelong learning of MoNE and Council of Higher Education).

Validation procedures for refugees in Turkey

Available documentation gives the impression that Turkey has not yet much experience with VNFIL for refugees. The country report on Turkey of the European Inventory on Validation (see chapter 4) mentions that there is no specific work on the validation of skills for immigrants/refugees at present.

Also the ILO report "A model for the validation of non-formal and informal learning for the Syrians under temporary protection regime"¹⁰ states no specific work on the validation of skills for immigrants/refugees at present. The ILO report proposes a model of validation for Syrian refugees that has been tested by ILO and Gaziantep Chamber of Industry in a pilot with 20 Syrian refugees during the summer of 2017.

The European Recommendation and Guidelines on VNFIL describe the four phases of VNFIL processes: identification, documentation, assessment and certification.

The Authorized Certification Bodies are strong in assessment and certification processes and could apply them to refugees, although ACBs would need more capacity and possible adaptation of methods and materials to facilitate assessment and certification of refugees. However, the ACBs have no substantial practice in the identification and documentation phase of VNFIL, which would be important phases for VNFIL procedures for refugees. The RPL pilot of the General Directorate for Lifelong Learning of MoNE has put emphasis on the roles of counsellors and assessors and could provide methods and tools for the identification and documentation phase.

⁹ Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a much used term that basically has the same meaning as Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL). The term VNFIL was introduced by the EU with the Recommendation of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal learning in 2012.

¹⁰ The ILO Ankara office has reviewed existing practices in Turkey for the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL) and made recommendations for short, medium and long-term interventions for a VNFIL model that facilitates access of Syrian refugees to the labour market. During the summer of 2017, ILO and the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry have tested the proposed model in a pilot with 20 Syrian refugees. The ILO report and the results of the pilot will be presented during the conference in Adana, 20/21 September 2017.

More information on VNFIL in Turkey in the Turkish Referencing report to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning	http://tyc.gov.tr/trr.pdf
Country report Turkey of the European Inventory on Validation 2016	https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016_validate_TK.pdf

Relevant practices from Europe

The PLA “How to make visible and value skills and competences of refugees” (2016) formulated the following messages about identification and documentation of refugees’ skills and competences:

- The identification of refugees’ skills and competences requires a consideration of language needs, cultural background and a lack of formal documentation. Therefore, methods for identification should be flexible enough to deal with the “unexpected”.
- Self-assessment of skills may be important in the first phase of identification where there is little information or formal documents on the refugees. Initial self-assessment by the refugee should be combined with guidance and counselling.
- The initial identification should not only focus on the refugees’ skills and past experiences, but also their aspirations as to what job or profession they would like to have in the labour market.
- Self-assessment could be combined with group assessment. Group assessment can be a viable method in the early phase of identification of skills as some refugees with language skills then can help to provide information on other refugees.
- Tools for identification and documentation should address both the needs of government administrations and the needs of the refugees. Documentation can help the refugees by providing a portable skills portfolio, which they can use for labour market and education purposes. At the same time, the documentation needs to be structured and consistent for administrative use and exchange of information.

Chapter 5 describes three German tools that make skills and competences visible, ProfilPASS, Competence cards for analysis of social abilities and skills of migrants and Skills identification through image and video based tests. These tools could be used in the identification and documentation phase of validation for refugees. ProfilPASS is not specifically focussed on refugees and migrants but provides a complete portfolio format that could be used in group assessment, supported by guidance and counselling. The other two instruments are specifically designed for refugees and migrants.

The same PLA formulated also messages about the assessment and validation process:

- A key challenge in the assessment and validation process is to define the frame of reference and to develop neutral assessment instruments that are not cultural biased and measure adequately what should be assessed. (In Turkey the frame of reference are VQA approved occupational standards and National Vocational Qualifications that are part of the Turkish National Qualifications Framework).

- Skills and competences of refugees cannot only be assessed against the qualification standards of the host country. For example, a machine operator in advanced European manufacturing has to be experienced in ICT application in work tasks, while this may not be the case for a machine operator from a very different business environment and education system. Therefore, the validation procedure is an incremental approach, which systematically explores and assesses people's skills and competences in relation to work tasks of specific qualifications and occupations.

The EU project Visible Skills for Adults (VISKA – chapter 6) has developed a model with four stages. Elements of this model could be relevant for validation procedures for refugees in Turkey. The four stages are:

- Mapping of Competences (including self-registration and self-assessment)
- Career Guidance
- Assessment
- Certification (leading to employment, education or training)

The model is being trialed with 500 asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, low-skilled adults across the four partner countries; Ireland, Iceland, Belgium and Norway.

Route 3 - candidates with very limited work experience and skills

Refugees with very limited work experience and skills should be offered training so that they can acquire skills and competences that are relevant for the labour market. To make training effective and rewarding, the choice for a training program should be the result of a fast screening of skills and competences and based on the individual's abilities and interests and on labour market relevance.

Practice in Turkey

Many organisations offer training to refugee in Turkey. It seems not always clear whether the choice for a training program is based on an identification of qualifications and skills and whether training is combined with and followed by guidance and job placement services.

Relevant practices from Europe

Chapter 5 describes two Swedish and a Dutch approach towards labour market integration of refugees that combine skills identification, recognition and validation activities, training and job placement services. These integrated approaches take the individual refugee as a starting point and work with personalised plans aimed at getting a job or entering a university or vocational study program. Such approaches work best in contexts with clear labour market demand, where there is a need for skilled and competent people. The influx of refugees can also create demand. One of the reasons to set up a fast track for teachers in Sweden was the influx of 162.000 Syrian refugees, among which 70.000 children in 2015 (the country has ten million inhabitants). Schools needed many more teachers to provide education for the Syrian children and an obvious solution was to get Syrian teachers ready for Swedish schools and preschools, as quick as possible through a fast track scheme. Such integrated approaches require substantial capacities of public employment services and good cooperation with social partners and education and training institutes. The Dutch

public employment service of the municipality of Eindhoven works together with educational institutions in the region. Labour market specialists of PES analyse gaps between the Dutch labour market and the competences of the refugee and the three regional educational institutions: Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Summa College, and ROC Ter Aa develop tailor-made educational modules to close these gaps.

From recognition and validation to labour market integration and inclusion.

Successful recognition of a (partial) qualification and validation of non-formal and informal learning do not automatically lead to jobs and social inclusion. Most refugees will need additional support, such as language learning and socio-cultural programmes, work based learning to acquire specific skills or entrepreneurship programmes to help start a business. In addition, refugees will need guidance and job placement services to match their qualifications, skills and competences with vacancies and the regional labour market perspectives.

Many organisations in Turkey provide these types of programmes and services. The public employment service ISKUR provides guidance and job matching services for job seekers, Chambers of Commerce know the regional labour market, international organisations such as UNDP and ILO provide training. Refugees under Temporary Protection can be granted a work permit in Turkey, but the number of applications for work permits have so far been limited. Both refugees and employers will need guidance and support to acquire work permits that gives refugees the right to work legally in the country.

Further reading

From Refugees to workers Mapping Labour-Market Integration Support Measures for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in EU Member States

Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016

The study identifies and analyses policies and practices in different EU Member States to facilitate the labour market integration of recent refugees and asylum-seekers. The research is based on nine brief country case studies of the following EU Member States: Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Volume I: Comparative Analysis and Policy Findings

https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/Studie_NW_From_Refugees_to_Workers_Vol1.pdf

Volume 2: Literature Review and Country Case Studies

https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/user_upload/Studie_NW_From_Refugees_to_Workers_Vol2.pdf

Recognising Refugee Qualifications: Practical Tips for Credential Assessment

A report from WES Research USA. May 2016

The report provides an overview of WES's extensive research on worldwide practices in the assessment of credentials and qualifications of refugees and other displaced individuals. It seeks to provide educational institutions, licensing bodies, and employers – particularly in North America – with an understanding of promising and actionable practices for recognizing the qualifications, credentials and abilities of students and trained professionals.

<http://knowledge.wes.org/WES-Research-Report-Recognizing-Refugee-Credentials.html>

Recognising the skills of immigrants and refugees: a European perspective.

Presentation by Liam-Patuzzi of Migration policy Institute Europe for Gulbenkian Foundation Lisbon. March 2017.

<https://gulbenkian.pt/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/27-mar-Liam-Patuzzi.pdf>

Refugee Qualification Equivalence: Improving Integration through Skills Recognition.

Paper, Wilberforce Society UK. April 2016.

The paper outlines a strategy to improve upon formal and informal recognition of qualifications held by refugees entering the UK

<http://thewilberforcesociety.co.uk/refugee-qualification-equivalence-improving-integration-through-skills-recognition/>

List of Abbreviations

- CoE Council of Europe
CIMEA Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze
CNVQR Coordinamento Nazionale sulla Valutazione delle Qualifiche dei Rifugiati
EAR European Area of Recognition
ECTS European Credit Transfer System
ECVET European Credits for Vocational Education and Training
EEA European Economic Area
ENIC European Network of National Information Centres on academic recognition and mobility
EP –NUFFIC the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education.
EQF European Qualifications Framework
ETF European Training Foundation
EU European Union
LLP Life Long Learning Programme
NARIC National Academic Recognition Information Centres)
NOKUT (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education)
NQF National Qualifications Framework
OECD The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PES Public Employment Service
RAGU The Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit
RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning
UNESCO The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UVD Recognition Procedure for Persons without Verifiable Documentation (UVD-procedure)
VET Vocational Education and Training
VNFIL Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning