НАЦІОНАЛЬНА АКАДЕМІЯ ПЕДАГОГІЧНИХ НАУК УКРАЇНИ
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES OF UKRAINE

ДЕРЖАВНЕ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНО-ВИРОБНИЧЕ ПІДПРИЄМСТВО
ВИДАВНИЦТВО «ПЕДАГОГІЧНА ПРЕСА»

STATE INFORMATION-PRODUCTION ENTERPRISE
PUBLISHING HOUSE «PEDAGOGICAL PRESS»

ПЕДАГОГІКА І ПСИХОЛОГІЯ

Вісник НАПН України

PEDAGOGICS AND PSYCHOLOGY

Newsletter of the NAES of Ukraine

1 (102) 2019

НАУКОВО-ТЕОРЕТИЧНИЙ ТА ІНФОРМАЦІЙНИЙ ВІСНИК
НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ АКАДЕМІЇ ПЕДАГОГІЧНИХ НАУК УКРАЇНИ

SCIENTIFIC THEORETICAL AND INFORMATIONAL JOURNAL
OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES OF UKRAINE

Видається з вересня 1993 року
Published since September 1993

АДРЕСА РЕДАКЦІЇ:
04053, Київ, вул. Січових Стрільців, 52-а
Президія НАПН України
тел. (044) 481-37-40
e-mail: pedpsy@gmail.com; lida_rapina@ukr.net

Журнал «Педагогіка і психологія»
згідно з Постановою Президії ВАК України від 22.12.2010 р.
№ 1–5/8 (Бюлетень ВАК України. – 2011. – № 2. – С. 7) внесено до Переліку видань,
що друкують результати дисертаційних робіт на здобуття наукових ступенів
доктора або кандидата педагогічних чи психологічних наук

ISSN 2304-0629

ПЕРЕДПЛАТНИЙ ІНДЕКС **74105**

Засновано в 1993 р.
Свідоцтво про державну реєстрацію: серія КВ № 6907 від 29.01.03 р.

ЗМІСТ

УДК 377/378].013.31-027.572(4)

S. Babushko, L. Solovei

CORE INDICATORS OF ASSESSING POLICY OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ON VALIDATING NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is becoming popular as the tool with the help of which a wider range of people can enlarge their individual potential and employability, become included and competitive. Every European country has got its own policy of validating the results of non-formal vocational education and training (VET) and assessing mechanisms. Ukraine started to work out its national strategy in validating processes and has had little experience in it so far. Hence, the goal of the research is to investigate the core indicators which are used in EU to monitor "the design, implementation and fine-tuning" of validation policies.

A complex of corresponding methods was used: literature overview, analysis, synthesis, systematization, descriptive and prognostic methods. The literature sources were mostly reports of EU organizations and statistical data that gave the overall picture of the indicators of current VET. 2 types of core indicators for non-formal VET policy were found out: quantitative and qualitative. All in all, more than 140 quantitative and qualitative indicators are used by EU. They were called ideal indicators as they included those that would be desirable to improve monitoring VET and lifelong learning. 36 core ones were selected being based on 3 factors: access, attractiveness and flexibility; skill development and labour market relevance; overall transitions and employment trends. Their core indicators used in assessing initial and continuous VET were described in reference to National Qualification Frameworks. It was shown that links between NQF and validation varies. Besides, qualifications obtained through validation and those received in a traditional way through formal education may differ in their value.

The perspectives for further researchers in this field were outlined, as well.

Keywords: non-formal and informal learning, assessing policy, Europe, validation, core indicators.

I n t r o d u c t i o n. Currently non-formal and informal learning as the parts of continuous learning are gaining more popularity and acknowledgement throughout the world, including European countries. Europe's strategy for 2020 is with the

help of education to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth of the countries where the employment rate is 75% [3]. Definitely, the success of this strategy depends on the skills of the workforce. Factories, plants, enterprises, business – all spheres of economic activity – need skilled staff who can provide high-quality goods and services. According to European Commission, nearly a third of the working population in Europe (around 75 million people) have low levels of or no qualification [4]. It means all these people need vocational training. Moreover, they need it continuously as it gives them necessary knowledge and skills to be competitive. To satisfy their requirements in the full volume is possible within lifelong learning, particularly in non-formal education. Formal education cannot cope with these requirements due to its bureaucratic nature, slow transformation processes, poorer flexibility and outdated content on the whole. Whereas non-formal education offers a number of alternative forms of learning, more flexibility and mobility, a fast reaction to the changes and updated content. Hence, non-formal education is becoming of equal importance with the formal educational system or even higher as anyone can find optimal conditions for creative personal development in it [2, 2].

Thus, non-formal and informal learning have a range of benefits for different categories of people. One of them is widening possibilities for low-qualification workforce, school-leavers, partly employed, the unemployed, the imprisoned, migrants, people with special needs and other categories. All these people can benefit greatly from the validation of the results which were obtained throughout non-formal and informal learning. If to consider what validation of non-formal and informal learning is, it should be done from various angles.

In the view of the society, validation arrangements help the above-mentioned categories of people to be included, to enlarge their potential. In the view of labour market, validation of non-formal and informal learning improves the citizens' employability and eliminates the deficit of some professions in the country's economy and industry. From educational point of view, validation arrangements make lifelong learning easier and more flexible for those who have enough knowledge, skills and experience in certain spheres of the human activity but who do not have the proper document to certify their competence. Furthermore, there are also advantages for every individual especially the one who is working – shortening time for obtaining education or qualification, regulation of financing their education, satisfying individual's educational requirements and others [1, 496].

Yet, it has been a real problem to measure learning achievements of those who preferred non-formal educational opportunities. All EU countries face the challenge how to validate the obtained results. Not long ago every country had its own national mechanism. Definitely, it appeared almost impossible to define the state of validation processes and to trace their progress in the countries. The solution was offered by European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), the famous European organization which was founded in 1975 and whose goal is to "support the development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contribute to their implementation" [3].

Annually CEDEFOP publishes the overviews from European countries on their vocational and training policies using national evidence such as access, attractiveness, flexibility and continuous VET, investment, skill developments, labour market and employment trends. Currently, 36 indicators are used to monitor design, imple-

mentation and fine-tuning of VET policies. They are regarded as a tool to help policy-makers reflect on the situation and progress in each country.

The practice of collecting data on the progress in the non-formal system of VET started in 2010 as "statistical overviews" of each of 28 European Union (EU) Member states.

Unfortunately, Ukraine does not have a system of validation arrangements that concern non-formal and informal results. Hence, it does not prepare its national review on what has been done and what is being done in this field. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Ukraine has some achievements. There has been worked out legislative basis for validating the non-formal learning in working professions: Laws of Ukraine "On Employees' Professional Development", "On Population's Employment", "On Vocational Training", Orders by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine and Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine.

According to the normative documents, there have been established corresponding authority bodies that are responsible for validation arrangements (State Employment Services) and the organizations controlling these processes (Ministry of Social Policy and Ministry of Science and Education). To continue its experience in validating non-formal and informal learning and to improve the available achievements in Ukraine, it is necessary to acquaint with the best practices of European countries. It is possible to know the general picture and the current state of things in Member States through various overviews, annual reports, statistical data and other EU documents which are open to the public in the Internet.

Taking into account the European achievements and little experience of Ukraine in the investigated field, **the goal of the research** is to explore the core indicators of the EU assessing policy of non-formal and informal learning.

The aim of the core indicators is not to assess whether the national system or policies are good or not. Their aim is to find common things to compare and to measure. In addition, the core indicators set the targets for the European countries and show the perspective pathways to develop their policy in validating the results of non-formal and informal learning.

On the whole, the core indicators are headline figures for summary overviews. However, to identify the adequate indicators it is necessary to define and then to select which data are to be collected. As non-formal and informal learning encompasses a great extent of types: vocational training, adult learning, elderly learning, migrants' learning, etc., it was decided to investigate the EU core indicators of vocational education and training (VET).

To achieve the established goal, the following tasks should be performed:

- to overview the literature related to the investigated question;
- to consider the basic concepts which are used in the scientific and statistical literature;
- to substantiate the quantitative and qualitative indicators in EU states;
- to illustrate indicators with some examples.

M e t h o d s o f t h e R e s e a r c h. As the research is more of theoretical character, the methods were chosen correspondingly. It means that these methods were applied to perform the tasks established by the authors in this article. Firstly, it is the literature overview method which is essential to identify what has been written on the specific research subject and to what extent the problem in question has been investigated. Secondly, analytical methods (analysis, synthesis, systematization) were used to explore the research terrain,

identify basic concepts of the research, discover content relevant to the research journey and to systemize the obtained data according to the established criteria. Thirdly, a descriptive method was applied to describe the research results and put them in a logical order. The use of the mentioned methods allowed to substantiate the selection of the criteria for assessing the results of non-formal and informal learning in EU national reports. Finally, a prognostic method was used to outline the perspectives of the further research.

Literature Overview. Analysis of the foreign and domestic scientific literature shows the scarcity of the related literature sources.

Mostly, the analyzed literature sources on validating the results of non-formal education are focused on the principles for validation arrangements indicating the importance of linking validation arrangements to national qualifications frameworks [11, 16].

Very useful for this research were reports of EU organizations and statistical data that gave the overall picture of the indicators of VET such as European Inventory, European Guidelines on Validation, European Database on Validation. Case Studies and Thematic Studies for the last 3 years [5; 6; 7]. They helped to outline the challenges that EU countries face and what was done in the related field. In addition, they were of significant importance to select the criteria of validating non-formal and informal learning to get a concise picture. Particularly, identification of these indicators could demonstrate Ukraine what direction to choose and what should be taken into account in the validation process.

Results of the Research. The analysis of 2014 European Inventory showed that validation of non-formal and informal learning varied greatly in different countries. A number of reasons such as demographic trends, general education and labour market, socio-economic situations in the countries influenced European VET policies greatly. Hence, Member States were given the task to establish the arrangements for validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018. As E. Villaba-Garcia, M. Souto-Otero, I. Murphy state there are significant achievements in this field. Thus, the coordinating body has been created – EQF Advisory Group; there have been worked out the systems that are used for reporting and monitoring the situation concerning validation (ECTS and ECVET) which assure coherence between different European tools; EU transparency tools (Europass, Youthpass); annual reports that provide an accurate picture of the situation regarding validation arrangements across Europe, notably the European Inventory and the European Guidelines [11,16]. One more great achievement is design of a standardized set of indicators.

In close cooperation with European Commission, Member States and social partners a new framework for European non-formal VET policy was worked out to support it across Europe. It included 2 types of indicators: quantitative and qualitative. The first ones were called quantitative benchmarks, the latter – qualitative priorities [9].

All in all, more than 140 quantitative and qualitative indicators were identified. They were called ideal indicators as they included those that would be desirable to improve monitoring VET and lifelong learning. Out of 140, there were selected 36 core indicators based on 3 factors.

Firstly, the availability of good quality data in each EU country can result in reliable indicators. On the contrary, qualitative criteria, for instance legislative or other policy change in reforming VET, are not restricted by a set of indicators but are best and fully revealed in policy reports. Secondly, all indicators focus on VET and its contribution to EU education and employment policy for 2020. Thirdly, the chosen indicators are complementary. That means that the policy themes can be too complex to be reduced to 1

or 2 core indicators. Besides, for some themes the data can be unavailable or poor. That is why, each indicator can relate to more than one theme. The main aim is to be linked to European VET policy and to ensure coherence and relevance to it.

On the whole, the quantitative benchmarks are the figures EU countries should reach by 2020, although these figures are not the national targets. Member States can set their own national goals for the above-mentioned year. The point is that with the help of these quantitative benchmarks EU countries are to consider how and to what extent they can contribute to the collective achievement of the established target. The quantitative VET policy benchmarks can be grouped into 3 categories:

- for employment, education and training;
- for education and training;
- other quantitative indicators.

For instance, for employment, education and training the 2020 benchmarks of the EU are:

- to increase an employment rate up to 75% among 20-64 year-olds;
- to make lower than 10% of early education leavers;
- to achieve at least 40% of 30-34 year-olds with tertiary level education.

Education and training quantitative targets of EU members for 2020 which relate to non-formal and informal vocational education and training are the following:

- at least 15% of adults should participate in lifelong learning;
- not less than 40% of 30-34 year-olds should have tertiary level education attainment.

The third group which contains other EU quantitative benchmarks for 2020 are:

- the number of 20-34 year-olds employed graduates who leave education and training 3 years before the reference year should be at least 82%;
- not less than 20% of higher education graduates should have a period of related study or training (including work placements) abroad;
- at least 6% of 1-34 year-olds with initial VET qualification are anticipated to have a related study of training period, including on the-job training [5; 9].

As the analysis shows, the main users of validation in education are adult learners, workers and low-qualified individuals. The limits of the article do not allow to illustrate other quantitative benchmarks for such categories of people as older workers, people with disabilities, volunteers, migrants/refugees, young people and early school leavers. Traditionally, all these categories are reported to receive less attention. However, it should be mentioned that the introduction of early skills profiling for third country nationals is likely to lead to an increase in the targeting of this group and future take-up of validation by third country nationals [7, 78]. And this is rather important since validation of non-formal and informal learning can be an effective tool of social inclusion especially for the above-mentioned groups.

Qualitative priorities are main areas that Member States agreed to work on or to improve. Generally, there were set out 22 short-term deliverables or intermediate objectives. They are expected to contribute to European VET policy strategic goals for 2020. Besides, they show the direction EU states should keep to in developing the system of validating non-formal and informal learning. Finally, qualitative priorities encourage the process of reporting the national achievements in validating non-formal and informal learning. To name a few, they are:

- making initial VET an attractive learning option with high relevance to labour market needs and higher education;

• easy access to continuing VET for people in different life situations which simplifies the skill development and career changes;
• inclusiveness of VET for various groups of people;
• flexible systems of recognition of learning outcomes, including diplomas and individual learning pathways;
• easier movement between different parts of the education and training systems;
• cross-border mobility of VET practice;
• skill development;
• language learning;
• improving VET quality;
• technological innovation;
• encouraging investment in VET;
• entrepreneurship [8; 9].

To summarize, the qualitative priorities can be grouped under 3 broad headings:
• access, attractiveness and flexibility;
• skill development and labour market relevance;
• overall transitions and employment trends.

D i s c u s s i o n. The limits of the article make it difficult to conduct a detailed analysis of each core indicator in these groups. Hence, only the first group core indicators are chosen, particularly, participation in initial and continuing VET. Participation is chosen the best proxy for the attractiveness of VET as a learning option. Indicators for initial VET consider school and work-based learning. The core indicators for continuous VET cover training provided by employers, including courses and on-the-job training [10].

EU experts marked the availability of validation arrangements in this sector of education in all EU countries except Croatia. There, the system has been developing since June 2016. It is necessary to mention that the process is taking place within National Qualification Framework (NQF) implementation.

It is widely acknowledged that the existing EU validation arrangements and their links to NQFs can clearly present the current state of play. Firstly, because NQFs can bridge the available validation arrangements in different sectors. Besides, they are becoming increasingly operational and are fast expanding across Europe [8]. It means that since 2008 EU countries has been establishing or reviewing their NQFs. And the development of validation arrangements is carried out with the link to national NQFs. As it is revealed in the European Inventory, NQF developments in most countries are mainly concerned with formal qualifications that might open doors to non-formal and informal learning [6]. Certainly, the links between NQF and validation varies in European countries.

There are 22 countries that allow acquisition of a NQF qualification or parts of such qualification through validation. In 19 countries access to NQF qualifications can be granted through validation of non-formal and informal learning. Obtaining a qualification can be done through credits. For instance, 26 EU countries allow individuals to obtain credits through validation of non-formal and informal learning. An increasing number of these countries is traced in the reports (from 19 countries in 2010 to 23 in 2014 and 26 in 2016) [6; 7; 8; 9]. These data also include countries that grant qualifications that are not part of the NQF through validation.

Actually, qualifications which are obtained through validation do not necessarily mean the same as those obtained through formal education. The experts state that the difference can be traced in initial VET in 13 countries and in CVET this was the case in

12 countries [7]. However, there is not enough evidence for an average citizen to perceive this difference, i.e. if the qualifications obtained through validation and those received in a traditional way through formal education may differ in their value.

C o n c l u s i o n. To conclude, it is worth stating that the identification of core indicators is beneficial for a number of reasons. Quantitative and qualitative criteria in their complex make the analysis of validation arrangements of non-formal and informal learning in EU countries reliable and objective. It is important that work continues to enhance the core indicators both through improving the existing and developing new sources of data. As validation of non-formal and informal learning is becoming a common feature in educational systems of EU Member States, most countries are developing national or sectoral strategies of obtaining full or part of qualifications through validation. NQFs contribute to the development of validation arrangements in EU countries. Despite the still available difference between qualifications obtained in formal and non-formal way, most countries do their best to assure the equivalent value of these qualifications.

T h e p e r s p e c t i v e d i r e c t i o n s o f f u r t h e r r e s e a r c h can encompass new indicators both quantitative and qualitative which are included in EU reports on assessing validation arrangements; the methodology of how these reports are prepared and comparative analysis of the experience of EU Member States in validating the results of non-formal and informal learning in different sub-sectors of education: initial vocational education (IVET), continuous vocational education (CVET), adult learning, lifelong learning (LLL).

1. *Бабушко С. Р.* Європейський досвід підтвердження результатів неформальної освіти. Концептуальні засади розвитку освіти дорослих: світовий досвід, українські реалії і перспективи: зб. наук. статей / за ред. Кременя В. Г., Ничкало Н. Г. – К.: Знання України. 2018. 495–502 с.

2. *Лук'янова Л.* Неформальна освіта дорослих як невід'ємна складова освіти впродовж життя. URL: http://www.uaod.org.ua/data/PRO_ OSVITU_DOROSLYH/unformal_OD.PDF (дата звернення: 18.01.2019).

3. *CEDEFOP:* official site. URL: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/about-cedefop (дата звернення: 3.02.2019).

4. *European* Commission. Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/ (дата звернення: 15.02.2019).

5. *European* Guidelines for Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning. CEDEFOP. Luxembourg: Publications Office. 2015. URL: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073_en.pdf (дата звернення: 17.02.2019).

6. *European* Inventory of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – 2014. Executive Summary. URL: https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2014/87250.pdf (дата звернення: 17.02.2019).

7. *European* Inventory of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – 2016 Update. Synthesis Report. CEDEFOP. Luxemburg: Publications Office of the EU. 2017. 98 p. URL: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981 /8764530/Synthesis+report.pdf/3bdfa08c-8023-473a-6500-db6a2223b9c3 (дата звернення: 17.02.2019).

8. *On the way* to 2020: data for vocational education and training policies. Country statistical overviews – 2016 update. Cedefop research paper. No 61. Luxembourg: Publications Office. 2017. URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/414017 (дата звернення: 15.02.2019).

9. *On the way* to 2020: data for vocational education and training policies. Country statistical overviews. Luxembourg: Publications Office. 2013. 162 p. URL: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/publications/2013/th_lg_cedefop _research_paper_no._31_2013.pdf (дата звернення: 13.02.2019).

10. *UNESCO* OECD Eurostat (UOE) Joint Data Collection – Methodology. Eurostats Statistics Explained. 2018. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/ (дата звернення: 16.02.2019).

11. *Villaba-Garcia E.,* Souto-Otero M., Murphy I. The 2014 European Inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning. BWP. 5. 2014. P. 16-19.

References

1. *Babushko S. R.* Yevropeiskyi dosvid pidtverdzhennia rezultativ neformalnoi osvity (European experience of validating results of non-formal learning). Kontseptualni zasady rozvytku osvity doroslykh: svitovyi dosvid, ukrainski realii i perspektyvy: zb. nauk. statei / za red. Kremenia V. H., Nychkalo N. H. K.: Znannia Ukrainy. 2018. 495–502 pp.

2. *Luk'ianova L.* Neformalna osvita doroslykh yak nevid'iemna skladova osvity vprodovzh zhyttia (Non-formal adult education as a constituent part of lifelong learning). URL: http://www.uaod.org.ua/data/PRO_OSVITU_ DOROSLYH/unformal_OD.PDF (Retrieved: 18.01.2019).

3. *CEDEFOP:* official site. URL: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/about-cedefop (Retrieved: 3.02.2019).

4. *European* Commission. Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/ (Retrieved: 15.02.2019).

5. *European* Guidelines for Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning. CEDEFOP. Luxembourg: Publications Office. 2015. URL: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073_en.pdf (Retrieved: 17.02.2019).

6. *European* Inventory of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – 2014. Executive Summary. URL: (Retrieved: 17.02.2019).

7. *European* Inventory of Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – 2016 Update. Synthesis Report. CEDEFOP. Luxemburg: Publications Office of the EU. 2017. 98 p. URL: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/ 1017981/8764530/Synthesis+report.pdf/3bdfa08c-8023-473a-6500-db6a2223b9c3 (Retrieved: 17.02.2019).

8. *On* the way to 2020: data for vocational education and training policies. Country statistical overviews – 2016 update. Cedefop research paper. No 61. Luxembourg: Publications Office. 2017. URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/414017 (Retrieved: 15.02.2019).

9. *On* the way to 2020: data for vocational education and training policies. Country statistical overviews. Luxembourg: Publications Office. 2013. 162 p. URL: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/publications/2013/th_lg_ cedefop_research_paper_no._31_2013.pdf (Retrieved: 13.02.2019).

10. *UNESCO* OECD Eurostat (UOE) Joint Data Collection – Methodology. Eurostats Statistics Explained. 2018. URL: (Retrieved: 16.02.2019).

11. *Villaba*-Garcia E., Souto-Otero M., Murphy I. The 2014 European Inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning. BWP. 5. 2014. P. 16–19.

Рекомендовано до друку.
Д-р пед. наук проф. дійсний член НАПН України Н. Г. Ничкало