PROMOTE
Promoting and Validating Key Competences in
Mobility and Traineeships in Europe

PROMOTE
Research methodology guide

PROMOTE Survey concept

PURPOSE

What will be the output of the survey?

1. a report which gives a good reason for our PROMOTE approach and project setting
2. a needs analysis underlining the PROMOTE concept that shall be developed within the knowledge alliance (connecting HE and Industry)
3. An entrance to educational stakeholders and employers

OBJECTIVES

Why do we want to do it?

- As a back-up for our PROMOTE approach in the following fields:
    i. To foster competence development in mobility
    ii. To strengthen the concept of learning to learn competences
    iii. To strengthen entrepreneurial competences
    iv. To connect with business
    v. To create an attractive offer for universities (to join us)

TARGET GROUPS

Whom do we like to ask?

- Educational stakeholders
    i. HE, AE, VET, schools (?), youth
- Potential employers
    i. Enterprises, Industry
    ii. NGOs
    iii. Public employers

CONTENT OF THE SURVEY

What do we want to find out?

1. The (key) competences
    a. Level of awareness about the 3 key competences among the 2/3 stakeholder groups
    b. Rating of the importance of these competences (lickert scale) for the stakeholders (groups)
    c. A more detailed idea, which sub-competences are considered being important for employability (drag and drop of 5 per key competence)
2. How can those competences be acquired?

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      a. In which educational field
      b. In which learning setting (maybe an open question, here)
      c. In mobility and traineeships
3. **Existing methods** as well as **demand** for the validation of personal and social competence development in different educational sectors; namely in connection with the following key competences:
      a. entrepreneurial competences and sense of initiative
      b. civic competences
      c. learning to learn competences

METHODOLOGY

How can we achieve this? (**methodology**)
1. Quantitative questionnaire
      a. Part:
            i. personal data
            ii. target group
                1. HE, AE, schools, VET, youth
                2. enterprises
      b. Part: Valuing the importance of the competences
                1. 3-5 stage likert scale
      c. Part: Considering the acquisition of these competences
                1. relating the competences with educational sectors
      d. Part: Validation of these competences (tools, approaches)
2. Qualitative (fine-tuning questions) in interviews.
3. Desk research.

NOTE

Some Basics *(for internal use)*

Some basic principles that we should take as (scientifically secured) basis
1. *Terminology (see presentations during the PROVIDE workshop)*
      a. *competence (definition)*
            i. *the ability to perform a mixture of knowledge, skills and attitudes in a particular situation and quality. Hence skills are part of a competence.*
      b. *informal learning*
            i. *is not the same as incidental learning (completely unintended learning).*
            ii. *Can be for instance acquisition of (intercultural) competences in volunteering, traineeships or mobility learning. If we operationalise this (make a learning arrangement) it may still be informal…)*
            iii. *Please let's not open the discussion with questions related to formal, non-formal and informal learning as it will lead us nowhere.*

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Quantitative Questionnaire

Part 1. Personal records:

How old are you?

☐ < 30
☐ 30 – 40
☐ 41 – 50
☐ > 50

Your gender:

☐ Female
☐ Male

Your country of residence: _____

Professional identification:

You are:

☐ Decision maker (CEO/manager, etc…)
☐ Trainer / coach / teamleader
☐ Teacher/lecturer
☐ Other: _____

Your main field of work is:

☐ School Education
☐ Adult education
☐ Higher education
☐ Post graduate in Higher Education
☐ Vocational education
☐ Youth (not formal learning, volunteering etc.)
☐ Business
☐ Public administration
☐ NGO
☐ Other: _____

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Part 2. Key Competences

How familiar are you with the following key competences?

1= not at all   5= totally familiar

	1	2	3	4	5
Entrepreneurship & sense of initiative					
Civic competences					
Learning to learn competences					

How do you rate the importance of entrepreneurship and sense of initiative in relation to...

1= least significant   5= most significant

	1	2	3	4	5
personal development					
success in formal education					
career development					
job opportunity					
continuing professional development					

How do you rate the importance of civic (active citizenship) competences in relation to...

1= least significant   5= most significant

	1	2	3	4	5
personal development					
success in formal education					
career development					
job opportunity					
continuing professional development					

How do you rate the importance of learning to learn competences in relation to...

1= least significant   5= most significant

	1	2	3	4	5
personal development					
success in formal education					
career development					
job opportunity					
continuing professional development					

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Which sub-competences do you think belong to entrepreneurship, civic and learning to learn competences? (Choose 5 competences you find most important and put them in the order of your priority from 1 to 5.)

	Entrepreneurship competences	Civic competences	Learning to learn competences
Communication			
Intercultural Communication			
Leadership			
Diversity Management			
Networking			
Teamworking			
Client orientation			
Conflict Management			
Negotiation			
Flexibility			
Self-reliance/Autonomy			
Readiness to be mobile			
Problem Solving			
Critical Thinking			
Creativity			
Evaluation, Reflection			
Virtual Communication			
Project Management			
Planning and Resource Management			
Knowledge and Skills Management			
Other. Specify…….			

In which educational domains can these competences be acquired?

	Entrepreneurship competences	Civic competences	Learning to learn competences
School Education			
Higher Education			
Adult Education			
Vocational Education			
Other:			

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In which informal learning contexts will these competences be acquired?

	Entrepreneurship competences	Civic competences	Learning to learn competences
In mobility (e.g. student mobility)			
Internships			
Voluntary work			
Traineeships			
At the workplace			
With family/friends			
Other:			

Part 3. Validation of these competences

Do you consider the validation of competences as important?

☐ Yes
☐ Partly
☐ No

Do you know approaches for validation?

☐ Yes
☐ No

In case you choose yes, please specify:

_____

_____

Where would you collect the evidence of validated competences?

	Yes	No	I do not know the instrument
Individual CV			
EUROPASS			
Youthpass			
Profilpass			
Linkedin			
My Vita			
Other. Please specify:			

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How important do you consider the validation of competences for….

1= not important   5= very important

	1	2	3	4	5
personal development					
success in formal education					
career development					
job opportunity					
continuing professional development					

Are you familiar with the following European standardised instruments?

1= not at all   5 = very familiar

	1	2	3	4	5
ECTS (European Credit Transfer System for Higher Education)					
ECVET (European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training)					
EQF/NQF (European/National Qualification Frameworks)					

How useful do you find these instruments in your professional domain?

1= unknown, 2= not useful, 3= fairly useful, 4= useful, 5= very useful

	Yes	No
Learning Management System		
Other learning platforms		
E-Portfolio Systems		
Webbased learning resources		
MOOCs		
Others. Specify…		

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If you ticked yes, how do you learn or teach with IT based instruments?

☐   Pure e-learning

☐   Blended learning

☐   Using IT based content as learning resource or learning object

Do you know open learning systems (e.g. the above mentioned) that connect with validation (assessment and evidencing)

☐   Yes

☐   No

In case you choose yes, please specify:

_____

_____

Would you consider the connection of IT-aided learning and validation as helpful in your professional practice?

☐   Definitely not

☐   Probably not

☐   I don't know

☐   Yes, it depends

☐   Definitely yes

Thank you!

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Qualitative Interviews

We use the Delphi method which is a structured communication technique, originally developed as a systematic, interactive forecasting method which relies on a panel of experts. Delphi is based on the principle that forecasts (or decisions) from a structured group of individuals are more accurate than those from unstructured groups.

The specific technique we use for PROMOTE is called mini-Delphi or Estimate-Talk-Estimate (ETE). The experts for our survey per country are decision makers
> - Education (Higher, Adult, School, Vocational training, Youth (not formal learning, volunteering etc.)
> - Enterprises or government.

They are asked to comment on statements and then to explain why they react in that way.

You can interview the experts individually or in focus groups.

Important: we would like you to target interviewees with different target groups, from different educational sectors and business.

The following key characteristics of the Delphi method help the participants to focus on the issues at hand and separate Delphi from other methodologies:

Anonymity of the participants

Usually all participants remain anonymous. Their identity is not revealed, even after the completion of the final report. This prevents the authority, personality, or reputation of some participants from dominating others in the process.

Structuring of information flow

The individual contributions from the experts are collected in the form of comments to statements. This avoids the negative effects of face-to-face panel discussions and solves the usual problems of group dynamics.

Feedback

After the first round of interviews, participants have the possibility to comment on their own forecasts, the responses of anonymous others and on the progress of the panel as a whole. So they even can revise their earlier statements.

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PROMOTE Interview questions

Interviews can be done either as individual or focus group interviews.

Each partner should come up with at least 3-4 interviewees.

Please note: Please understand the questions and sub-questions as a kind of guidelines – you don't have to answer all of them.

1. Topic: European concept of key competences in Lifelong learning

 Sub questions:
 1. Are you familiar with them, have you heard about them?
 2. How would you explain the three key competences?
    a. entrepreneurship and sense of initiative
    b. civic competences
    c. learning to learn competences
 3. Relevance: Why do you find them important?
    for instance for:
       i. personal development
       ii. success in formal education
       iii. career development
       iv. job opportunity
       v. continuing professional development
       vi. other……………

2. Topic: Learning programmes and/or learning activities that promote the acquisition of these competences.

 Sub questions:
 1. Please name and describe known programmes/actions
    a. Who is the organiser?
    b. Where do they take place?
    c. Advantages / disadvantages?
    d. What is your opinion about them?
 2. How do you think these competences can be promoted in rather formal learning environments? And how important do you find them in these educational domains?

    Can you give examples?
    • School education
    • Vocational Education
    • Higher Education
 3. How do you think these competences can be promoted in rather informal learning environments? And how important do you find them in these educational domains?

    Can you give examples?

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- In adult education
- In youth actions
- In mobility (e.g. student mobility)
- Voluntary work
- At the workplace
- Internships
- Traineeships
- Other

3. Topic: Validation of competences and learning outcomes

1. **How familiar are you with the concept of validation?**
   Sub-questions could be:
   a. For formal purposes (summative assessments and certification)
   b. For rather informal purposes (to give feed-back, to empower people…)

2. **How relevant is it in your professional field**
   Sub-questions could be:
   a. Some aspects are relevant (e.g. assessment, certification, feedback etc.)
   b. How relevant is it in your professional domain
   c. How relevant is it in your country
   d. Do you see a development

3. **Connect validation and learning**
   Sub-questions:
   a. Do you see a connection or do you see them as different concepts
   b. How would you connect validation into learning arrangements
   c. Do you know open (web-aided) learning systems (e.g. LMS, e-portfolios etc.) that connect with validation (assessment and evidencing)?
   d. Would you consider this as helpful in your professional practice?

4. Topic: External expertise and support related to validation and

1. **Would you be interested to get assistance and support?**
   Sub-questions:
   a. Which service would you be interested in?
      - External assessment of competence development
      - Consultancy
      - training / workshop

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b. Which field of expertise/support would you be interested in?
- Support to assessment of participants / learners
- Support to certification
- Human resources development, continuing professional development and/or career development
- Learning technologies
- IT-tools supporting assessments and/or learners' competence management
- Integrating the assessment/validation in the learning processes
- Other:………………………..

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Desk Research

The following questions should be answered per country by every member of the task force. The reason for the desk research is that we want to put the results of the quantitative and qualitative research in a wider framework per country.

You should check sources from your desk (Internet search is the most important method).

Part 1: VINFL in the partner countries
1. Legal national framework on VINFL
    o How is this reflected in the national educational system – is there any indication where these kinds of learning are supposed to take place?
    o How are learning outcomes of informal-non-formal and formal learning being validated - is there any kind of national legal framework to it? (e.g. national qualification frameworks); What is the role of the government?
    o How are different levels of formality/informality perceived in your country? What is the main understanding of formal/non-formal and informal learning in your country?
        ▪ This may also be differentiated on political/scientific levels
    o Is the affective dimension (already) introduced into the formalized assessment systems in your country?

2. Validation of the PROMOTE skills and competences
    o To which degree are personal skills /competences recognized and validated in your country? Is this the case both in formal and informal settings? Give examples.
    o To which degree are social skills / competences recognized and validated in the country? Is this the case both in formal and informal settings? Give examples.
    o To which degree are entrepreneurial skills /competences recognized and validated in the country?
3. Assessment tools and certification
    o Which assessment systems for these skills / competences exist in your country?
    o Are the existing certification systems an integrated part of Higher Education, or part of a personal Competences Development plan?
    o To which degree can the recognition of those skills and competences be strengthened?
    o Which tools does your country have to bridge the gap between formalized and informal learning?
    o Who is the owner of these tools?
    o Who has access to these tools?

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Part 2: VINFL in practice

1.   Competences and job opportunities:

Which cross-cutting competences are considered as important by enterprises, companies, private and public employers?

Proposal: How important do you consider social and personal competences

2.   Competences as a means for employer branding and corporate identity:

How do enterprises, companies, private and public employers in your country show which competences are important to them? About which skills and competences do they prefer to communicate? Which competences in their teams are they proud of?

3.   How important seems the practice of validation of competences and learning outcomes for educational institutes on the one hand and enterprises, companies, private and public employers on the other hand in your country?

4.   Do they use IT-aided assessments tools for validation in your country? Are they part of Open Educational Resources Can you give examples?

5.   Which are the institutes, organizations, involved in working on VINFL in your country

Part 3: Summary

Summary wrapping up the long national report (parts 1-2) consisting of 5-10 pages) along the following points:

1. The national approaches of VINFL in different educational domains (formal to informal)
2. National approaches to assess and validate personal, social and key competences
3. National practice to certification
4. VINFL in practice – employability and institutional structures

Bibliography.

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