



Brussels, 1.7.2020
SWD(2020) 122 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

Accompanying the document

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience

{COM(2020) 274 final} - {SWD(2020) 121 final}

The Recommendation is an element of European cooperation in the area of lifelong learning. It aims at ensuring that individuals who developed skills through non-formal and informal learning can have them validated and use them for their careers and further learning.

1. Scope and method

The geographic scope includes all EU Member States. The Recommendation asked Member States to take action no later than 2018, therefore the evaluation covers the period from the adoption of the Recommendation (end of 2012) to 2018 included.

2. Main findings and lessons learnt

The evaluation covers the five criteria set out by the Better Regulation guidelines. The evaluation has drawn lessons, upon which **further action could build to better pursue the goals of the Recommendation**, to provide more people with access to validation opportunities, enabling them to access further learning and to put their skills to good use in European society and labour market.

Analysis of the **effectiveness** shows that the ambitious objectives of the Recommendation have not been fully achieved, but there is evidence of significant – albeit fragmented – progress since 2012. All Member States have **taken action by 2018**, using to a large extent the principles suggested. However, the main lesson to be drawn is that providing more validation opportunities is not enough, **providing support to individuals is necessary**. In 2012 it was pragmatic to focus on providing “more opportunities”; in 2018 it is necessary to open up opportunities and support individuals to actually take advantage of them. A related major lesson is that to make opportunities available to everybody, provision of validation opportunities needs to be an element of a **comprehensive skills strategy**, along with education and training, guidance and qualification policy.

A comprehensive and coherent validation provision based on wide stakeholders’ cooperation would be both more effective – through better visibility, wider reach out, operational synergies – and **more efficient**, by distributing burdens, sharing facilities and mutual learning. In particular, closer cooperation and effective coordination between providers of **guidance and validation** would promote take-up in general and improve effective tailoring of validation initiatives addressing disadvantaged groups.

The objectives and measures of the Recommendation are considered still fully **relevant** in the current socio-economic situation. Their general **coherence** with the policy context is also acknowledged, although coordination with policy tools at operational level could improve. It would be possible to increase relevance and coherence through coordinated implementation of **validation and national qualification frameworks**. While well established in the Recommendation, and effectively pursued through the EQF advisory group, the link between validation and qualification frameworks needs to develop in its practical implementation.

The **EU added value** is most visible in the higher policy profile and increased practice of validation observed to different degrees in all Member States, in some of which it is recognised that national action alone would not have achieved the same results. The current level of information is clearly not enough. **Systematic information collection on validation is necessary.** With a proper information basis, it would be possible to agree on indicators, monitor progress and better assess the added value of the initiative.