

THE IMPACT OF VALIDATION AND GUIDANCE OF TRANSVERSAL SKILLS

Scientific impact study of the field trials of the European project
TRANSVAL-EU

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Executive summary

TRANSVAL-EU is a cross-country policy experimentation with a focus on training of validation and guidance practitioners for identifying, documenting, assessing, and certifying transversal skills. TRANSVAL-EU have addressed validation of transversal skills and guidance provisions both from the perspective of the practitioners as well as from the perspective of the validation and guidance candidates and evaluate these simultaneously based on real-life, field trials taking account of the diversity of practices in validation and guidance in the EU countries. Practitioners have been trained during five pilots in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania and Poland. This exercise has helped them to optimise the validation process of non-formal and informal learning among several validation candidates. An extra pilot has been done in Portugal. This specific field trial has only been evaluated among the involved candidates.

Based on the scientific evaluation among 78 validation and guidance practitioners and 256 validation and guidance candidates a significant share of both groups experienced an increase of their competences. According to the results among the candidates, 30% to 50% of them experienced that some of their transversal competences increased. Besides, 35% to 42% of candidates experienced an increase in social inclusion. Furthermore most of the involved candidates (89%) felt that they were involved in a constructive process of validation and guidance of transversal skills and perceived to be among others more aware of their transversal competences.

Besides, most of the involved practitioners (68% to 76%) experienced to have an improvement in their competency level of transversal competences, providing guidance during the validation process and providing an assessment. This increase seems to be significant. Based on the analysis it becomes clear that several elements of the TRANSVAL-EU project influenced this increase, to mention the European and national training, the translation into and the use of national training, workshops, tools materials, methodologies and workshops, the experience with the candidates themselves or in other words, the field work and the Transversal Competence Framework (TFC) seems to be very important to support this experienced increase of competences among the validation practitioners.

Chapter 1: Introduction

TRANSVAL-EU is a cross-country policy experimentation with a focus on training of validation and guidance practitioners for identifying, documenting, assessing, and certifying transversal skills. TRANSVAL-EU have addressed **validation of transversal skills and guidance provisions both from the perspective of the practitioners as well as from the perspective of the validation and guidance candidates and evaluate these simultaneously based on real-life, field trials** taking account of the diversity of practices in validation and guidance in the EU countries. The tools and methods used during these field trials can be found in the database of TRANSVAL-EU:

<https://www.transvalproject.eu/competences/>. Besides, the TRANSVAL Competence Framework, the European and national (regional) training and the competence profile of practitioners have been implemented in the different field trials. Practitioners have been trained during five pilots in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania and Poland. This exercise has helped them to optimise the validation process of non-formal and informal learning among several validation candidates. An extra pilot has been done in Portugal. This specific field trial has only been evaluated among the involved candidates. This report describes the results of the scientific evaluation focussing on the impact on the validation candidates and the practitioners involved, who have guided them during this 'renewed' validation process.

In order to evaluate the impact of the field trails among practitioners several research questions need to be answered, to mention:

- Have validation and guidance practitioners been supported with a suitable practice-oriented and innovative training and tools focusing on validation of transversal skills?
- Have the competences of validation and guidance practitioners been improved?
- Have the validation and guidance practitioners been more involved in the validation and guidance processes towards the learning environment of the validation/guidance candidates?

In order to evaluate the impact of the field trials among the validation and guidance candidates several research questions need to be answered, to mention:

- Have transversal skills systematically been embedded into validation and guidance processes and procedures?
- Do adult learners perceive an increase of chances on education, training, leisure, work, voluntary work, etc. due to improved access, support and guidance to validate their transversal skills gained?
- Have innovative tools for adults to validate transversal skills for upskilling, reskilling, job seeking or self-empowerment and development been offered?

The TRANSVAL-EU field trials offer real-life environments comparing quantitatively and qualitatively the outcomes and impact on these two target groups. Impact evaluations answer cause-and-effect questions to determine whether and to what extent an intervention caused an observable change. To maximise the understanding and learning about “why” the interventions of the field trials of TRANSVAL-EU worked, or did not work, we used mixed-method approaches, which build on qualitative and quantitative data and make use of several methodologies for analysis. This report has been structured in 5 different chapters, to mention:

- Chapter 2 explains the evaluation design focussing on the evaluation of the impact on both target groups;
- Chapter 3 will describe the field trials settings based on the monitoring information provided by the coordinators of the field trials and the practitioners involved in the different field trials.
- Chapter 4 will describe the evaluation results on the impact on the practitioners focussing on (changes) in their competences in providing guidance and validation services;
- Chapter 5 analyses the impact of field trials on the candidates referring to their perceived increase of empowerment, social inclusion, labour market position and their experience of using their transversal competences. Finally, the results will be compared with similar studies in the field of lifelong learning and development.
- Chapter 6 reflects on the realised results among the practitioners as well as the validation candidates.

Chapter 2: Research design

2.1 Research design of the TRANSVAL field trials on practitioners

Through participating in the TRANSVAL field trials, validation and guidance practitioners from 6 countries have experimented new methods and tools when working with the target groups (individuals going through the validation or guidance process). It has been tested whether the use of TRANSVAL tools and methods will lead to the foreseen outcomes (defined during the preparation phase of the field trials). In other words, the feasibility and suitability of innovative VNFIL practices (methods, tools and instruments) for transversal competences has been evaluated. From the perspective of the practitioners, the field trials tested the training toolkits and programme for validation practitioners in real-life situations with learners going through validation and guidance processes. The evaluation provides feedback on the usability, completeness, relevance and adequacy of the proposed training elements followed by fine-tuning and corrective measures whenever required and/or requested by the practitioners. The evaluation has also a specific focus on transversal skills' adequacy to better perform in the relationship with the validation and guidance candidates. Our research hypothesis is that if the competences of the practitioners will be improved it will positively influence the results of the validation and guidance candidates.

Research questions

Regarding the research-questions of this study, the researchers wished to explore the experiences of the practitioners with the renewed validation process for the validation and guidance candidates. Besides the experienced increase on their competences, these practitioners have been asked to reveal the (im)possibilities of the renewed guidance and validation process inspired by TRANSVAL-EU for the validation and guidance candidates.

The scientific study investigates the impact of the field trials on the knowledge, skills and attitude of the practitioners guiding the process of validation. The results focus especially on the increase of their competences in order to optimise the validation process for the validation and guidance candidates. Based on the hypotheses connected to the field trials the following research questions had to be answered:

1. *Have the validation and guidance practitioners gain a stronger awareness of transversal skills?*
2. *Do the validation and guidance practitioners perceive an increase in competences to (a) identify, document, assess and/or certify transversal skills and to (b) provide advice on how these skills can be used in different contexts, including different reasons for seeking validation (job- versus self-development)?*
3. *Are the validation and guidance practitioners able to embed and actively use transversal skills in their practices by incorporating them in the individual learning plans of each validation / guidance candidate?*
4. *Would the introduction of transversal skills in the practices of validation and guidance practitioners improve their cooperation with the different stakeholders?*

Research methodology: A mixed-method design

Field research

First, field research has been conducted. The main aim of the research was to provide an evaluation of the competences in validating transversal skills possessed by guidance and validation practitioners from five European countries, as well as to understand their perspective and identify their needs related to the topic of transversal skills. This has been realised by conducting both quantitative and qualitative methods by implementing a Computer Assisted Web Interview ('Competence Survey') for the competence evaluation and Design Thinking workshops with the practitioners for identifying their needs.

Quantitative study: Pre- and post-test design

First, a questionnaire has been developed in order to measure the increase of the competences among validation and guidance practitioners. These practitioners filled in the questionnaire twice (which refers to a pre- and post-test design). The basic questionnaire has been translated into the different languages of the field trials countries (French, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese).

Eventually change variables have been constructed for the diverse variables on the competences for the practitioners in order to describe the increase of the competency level

(e.g. the scores of the difference between the scores of the pre-test and the post-test of the practitioners on the competency level of providing guidance in relation to a typical validation process). This change-variable is calculated as the scores on the post-test minus the scores on the pre-test. Finally, by conducting a Paired Samples T-test one could determine if the increase is significant or not.

Qualitative study: Phenomenographic design

Second, in order to reveal the success factors and hindrances of the innovative guidance and validation process (as supported by TRANSVAL-EU) an in-depth analysis has been conducted. The in-depth analysis captures the complexity of the field trials as a result of the heterogeneity of the stakeholders in VNFIL and the different infrastructures in the six field trial countries.

The in-depth analysis builds on the methodology of the phenomenographic research. According to Tan (2008), Levitas et al. (2007), Asworth and Lucas (2000) and Howitt and Cramer (2008), phenomenographic research is a preferred method, when a researcher aims to explore interpretations and experiences of meaning and practices of individuals concerning a complex phenomenon. Marton and Booth (1997) point out that by using phenomenography it is possible to reveal different ways of experiencing a phenomenon among participants. This method is based on a clinical interview in order to probe participants' perceptions of a phenomenon (Marton et al., 1997). In comparison with earlier studies the phenomenographic approach seems to contribute to valuable knowledge by the wider research community (Harris, 2011).

Taking the guidelines of the phenomenographic approach in educational research into account, the interview technique used, was open and deep (using a semi-structured approach), referring to the guidance by the response of the interviewees and the encouragement to discuss the conceptions of the interviewees relating to the phenomenon (Booth, 1997).

In order to overcome possible subjective interpretation of answers from the interviewees, a team of several researchers were collectively instructed and then conducted 31 interviews. The interviewees have been recruited via the coordinators of the field trials. Each practitioner has been interviewed individually during one hour by one researcher. The interview questions have been reviewed by a team of experts in the field and checked by the researchers in the team of TRANSVAL-EU. The basic questionnaire was translated in the different languages of the field trials.

To undertake a detailed and highly qualitative analysis, the partners of TRANSVAL-EU have followed the different steps in analysing transcripts of a phenomenographic research as described by Marton et al. (1997). In order to ensure that the interpretations of the interviewee's experiences will not be biased, the investigator has bracketed the researcher's preconceptions and conducted a peer review (Eisner, 1998). With respect to this, in the first phase of analysis each member of the research team has individually read a selection of the transcripts and pool the perceptions of the interviewees into self-defined categories of descriptions of each interviewee independently. After generating 'this pool of meaning' (Bowden, 2000) discussion, debates and negotiations concerning the interpretations of perceptions of the interviewees were necessary. Then, all transcripts have been analysed collectively. Based on the results of this mediation process, the different categories of conceptions have been defined. After achieving consensus among the researchers, categories of conceptions have been formed (Marton, 1992). According to Marton (1992) this ordered set of descriptions is called the 'outcome space' of the phenomenon. As a result, an overview of success factors and barriers and influences on the validation and guidance process of VNFIL inspired by TRANSVAL-EU have been revealed.

Sample: Practitioners from six European countries

A total of 181 practitioners were involved in the overall study and filled in the questionnaire at the beginning of the field trial (pre-test). In order to conduct an analysis, only the practitioners who joined the pre- and the post-test were included in the current sample, to mention 78 practitioners (in Austria and Italy most practitioners have been involved due to the fact that in these countries two field trials have been conducted).

As shown in table 1 most of them describe their occupation as career guidance counsellor, educator / teacher / trainer / coach or have multiple functions. Besides, most of them work in a center of education or school, guidance organisation, or VET provider. Finally, it seems that the majority has over 5 years of experience in their current occupation (65.4%).

Table 1: Characteristics of work setting practitioners (N = 78)

| Characteristic of work setting | Category | Nr. of practitioners (%) |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Country | Austria | 24.4 |
| | Belgium | 7.7 |
| | Italy | 32.1 |
| | Lithuania | 23.1 |
| | Poland | 12.8 |
| Occupation | Career guidance counsellor | 27.6 |
| | Validation of non-formal and informal learning counsellor | 2.6 |
| | Educator – teacher – trainer – coach | 18.4 |
| | Examiner – assessor | 0 |
| | Multiple occupations | 18.4 |
| | Other | 32.9 |
| Organisation type | Center of education or school (excluding VET schools) | 25.6 |
| | Guidance organisation | 20.5 |
| | National office concerning the EQF | 1.3 |
| | National office concerning validation of prior competences | 2.6 |
| | Non-profit employer | 3.8 |
| | Private sector company | 9.0 |
| | Vocational Education and Training (VET) provider (including VET schools) | 17.9 |
| Years of experience | Other | 17.9 |
| | Less than 1 year | 12.8 |
| | 1-2 years | 5.1 |
| | 3-5 years | 15.4 |
| | 5- 10 years | 23.1 |
| | Over 10 years | 42.3 |

Missing values are excluded in percentage calculations

2.2 Research design of TRANSVAL field trials on candidates

The participants in this part of the study were the different candidates of validation and guidance of the field trials in six countries in Europe. These adults followed the validation and guidance process during the field trials in order to increase their confidence in addition to their key (inter-) personal and social competences based on the defined transversal skills. The sample encompassed a diversity of learners who have been stratified in the field trials in the different involved countries. For the pre-test, data have been collected on individual characteristics of the validation and guidance candidates in addition to the variables of social inclusion and labour market participation and transversal skills. At the beginning and at the end of the validation process (post-test) data was gathered on the impact of field trial on the variables of social inclusion and labour market participation and transversal skills in addition to individual characteristics. The hypothesis was that the perceived social inclusion and labour market position will be increased after joining the validation and guidance process provided by the field trial.

Research questions

Besides the impact on the practitioners, the scientific study investigates the impact of the field trials on the knowledge, skills and attitude of the validation and guidance candidates. The results focus especially on the increase of their social inclusion, educational chances and perspectives on the labour market. Based on the hypotheses connected to the field trials the following research questions had to be answered:

- 1. Do the validation and guidance candidates have a stronger awareness of transversal skills?*
- 2. Do the validation and guidance candidates experience enhancement of their employability?*
- 3. Does the validation and guidance practices offer the validation and guidance candidates a documentation, identification, assessment and/or if required certification of his/her transversal skills which were before not validated?*
- 4. Does the validation and guidance practices of the validation and guidance candidates have a positive impact in terms of empowerment of individuals?*
- 5. Have the validation and guidance candidates gained an increased self-reflection and self-expression on their transversal skills to be used in seeking employment, career orientation, self-development, additional training and education etc.?*

Research methodology: A quantitative pre- and post-test design

In order to get insights on the validation process the validation and guidance candidates have been involved in the evaluation. The Vrije Universiteit Brussel in cooperation with Maastricht University already developed the SIT-instrument (Social Inclusion after Transfer) in order to accomplish this. In a prior study this instrument has been developed and validated (De Greef, Segers and Verté 2010). The instrument consists of different scales in order to measure the impact of learning on different groups of learners (i.e. children and parents from a migrant or refugee background, women, children from low-skilled parents, low-skilled parents and employees, unemployed workers and the elderly). According to the SIT-instrument, the impact of learning has been based on the increase of social inclusion (e.g. decrease of social exclusion, increase of labour market position, increase of active participation in society in addition to increase of basic skills). The basic questionnaire has been translated in the different languages of the field trials.

The participants in this study were the validation and guidance candidates following the validation process during the field trial in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania or Poland. Besides these, an extra field trial was organised in Portugal. These validation and guidance candidates followed the validation process of TRANSVAL-EU in order to increase their labour market position and social inclusion and their transversal skills. The involved practitioners in the different partner countries asked the validation and guidance candidates to fill in the questionnaires. Every practitioner has been asked to involve different validation and guidance candidates in this study. In order to secure enough participants for the study the practitioners have been asked to guide the process of filling in the questionnaires with their validation and guidance candidates with 20 to 50 participants per country.

In order to optimise this process, the practitioners got a standardised instruction by the researchers in cooperation with the coordinators of the field trials. Accordingly, the practitioners handed over a questionnaire to the validation and guidance candidates at the start of the validation process (pre-test) and the end of the validation process (post-test).

Due to the fact that control groups and experimental groups of validation and guidance candidates will probably have the same practitioners (which may create a bias) we decided not to include control groups in the research design.

For the pre-test, data has been collected on individual characteristics, and the variables of social inclusion and labour market. At the end of the validation and guidance process (post-test) data has been gathered on the variables of social inclusion, labour market and impact on transversal skills. Eventually change variables have been constructed for the diverse variables on impact of social inclusion, labour market and transversal skills in order to describe the impact for the candidates. This change-variable is calculated as the scores on the post-test minus the scores on the pre-test. Furthermore, by conducting a Paired Samples T-test one could determine if the increase is significant or not. Finally, by conducting a non-parametric correlation analysis and a logistical regression analysis the influence of the possible factors of the learning environment and the life-environment of the validation and guidance candidates on the increased of competences had been determined.

Sample: Candidates from six European countries

Among 256 candidates a pre- and the post-test has been realised, before and after the validation process. According to table 2, slightly more women than men were included (circa 55% versus 45%). Besides, most of them (85%) were born in the country they live in.

Also, around 82% of the involved candidates were younger than 46 years. Furthermore, in terms of education, the study covered both high-skilled as low-skilled adults (see table 2). Finally, most of the involved candidates have paid work (38%) or are unemployed (30%).

Table 2: Sociodemographic characteristics of candidates (N = 256)

| Sociodemographic characteristic | Category | Nr. of candidates (%) |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Country</i> | Austria | 12.9 |
| | Belgium | 8.6 |
| | Italy | 22.3 |
| | Lithuania | 19.9 |
| | Poland | 23.0 |
| | Portugal | 13.3 |
| <i>Gender</i> | Male | 45.3 |
| | Female | 54.7 |
| <i>Nationality</i> | Autochthone | 84.8 |
| | Foreign | 14.8 |
| <i>Age</i> | 0 – 25 years | 37.8 |
| | 26 – 45 years | 44.6 |
| | 46 – 65 years | 17.7 |
| <i>Highest form of education</i> | Primary school | 10.5 |
| | Secondary school | 24.6 |
| | Vocational school | 11.7 |
| | High school | 21.1 |
| | University | 25.8 |
| | Other | 1.6 |
| <i>Years in education</i> | 5 years or less | 5.9 |
| | Between 6 and 10 years | 14.8 |
| | Between 11 and 15 years | 48.0 |
| | Between 16 and 20 years | 25.8 |
| | Over 21 years | 3.5 |
| <i>Job status</i> | Paid work | 38.3 |
| | Self-employed | 6.6 |
| | Voluntary work (unpaid) | 1.2 |
| | Paid work and voluntary work | 1.6 |
| | Unemployed | 30.1 |
| | Looking for a job | 16.8 |

Missing values are excluded in percentage calculations

Chapter 3: Description of the field trials settings

All national field trials were embedded into different settings. This chapter gives an overview of the different national and regional trainings and subsequent validation settings based on the analysis of the provided monitoring information of the coordinators of the field trial settings and the practitioners involved in the different field trial settings.

3.1 Lessons learned and experienced challenges of the field trials

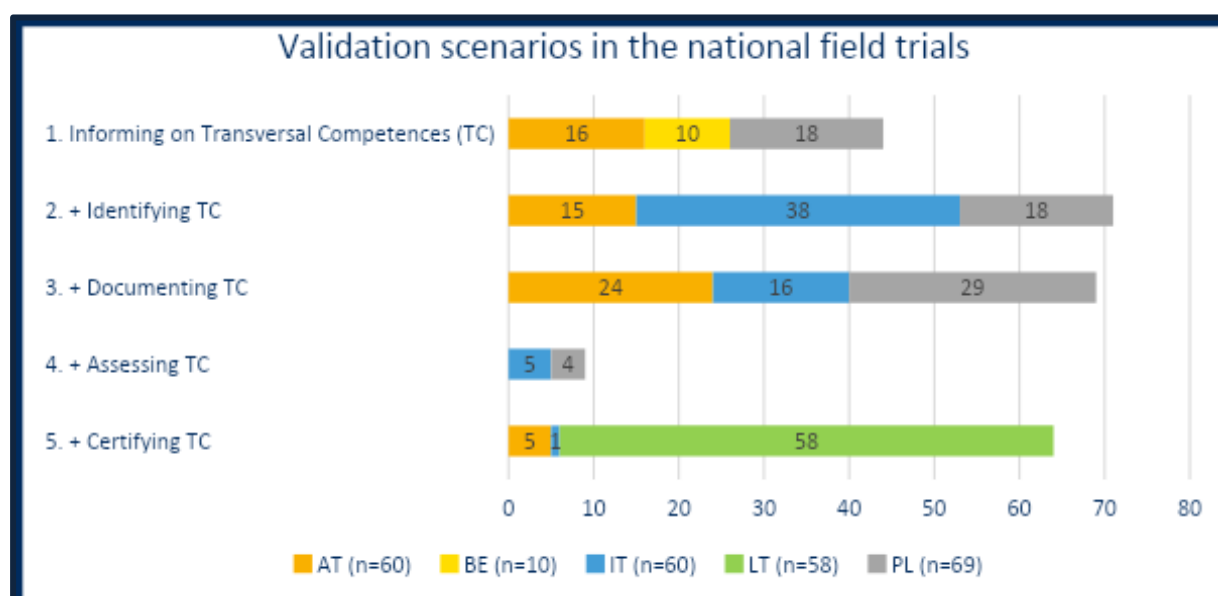
Although the field trials seemed to be successful some challenges and problems occurred during the implementation of the innovative way of providing guidance during the validation process. Problems reported include the fact that integrating the pre- and post-tests was a very time-consuming endeavour, as well as difficulty in understanding the language, both of the competence framework, and of some of the pre-/post-test questions, for example in Austria or Belgium: ‘Concerning the Competence Framework, some participants – as well as some practitioners – although they had extremely good language skills and an excellent way of expressing themselves, found the classification of the transversal skills into the individual EQF levels as very abstract and formulated in a theoretical *concept language*’. They proposed to add concrete context and a simple language, or other tools for localisation, like pictures, or "check questions" to help in this respect. Especially for candidates with language barriers or cognitive impairments a simpler language was mentioned to be beneficial. The pre- and post-test questions, which included a scale from 1 to 10, and did not have the option to select multiple answers regarding employment status and job search, were also reported to have created problems in some cases (e.g. in Austria and Belgium).

Practitioners actively involved in the field trials were asked to provide additional information on the type of validation arrangements they used in trying out the methods and tools presented in the national trainings. Data was collected for a total of 257 candidates across the 6 participating countries. Two countries (Belgium and Lithuania) chose the same setting for all of their field trials, while Austria, Italy and Poland have applied the methodology in differing settings. In Belgium, all candidates were informed about transversal competences, without identifying or documenting them, while in Lithuania, on the other hand, all candidates went through all four stages of the validation process and received a certificate for their transversal competences.

Overall, the majority of candidates were supported in identifying their transversal competences (71), and the least candidates assessed their transversal competences without certifying them (9), as shown in figure 1 below. Regarding the assessment of transversal competences, both in Italy and Poland, this was not done in an official way, but rather through self-assessment or informally.

It becomes clear that in each field trial a different ‘scenario’ of validation has been used. This means that each field trial implements a different way of providing guidance during the process of validation.

Figure 1: Validation scenarios in the national field trials (N = 257)



3.2 Austria

In Austria, two organisations set up national trainings, and recruited practitioners from various different organisations. One of the trainings was held in Vienna, in June 2022, the other trainings were held in Salzburg in autumn of 2022.

In Vienna, the training was attended by 16 practitioners from different organisations providing guidance and validation for different target groups in different regions in Austria. The national training was implemented by 4 persons with long experience and expertise in guidance, training and validation, who also participated in the European training in Perugia. During the training, possibilities for participating in the field trial experimentation in each practitioner’s own work context were discussed and elaborated on. From summer 2022

onwards, 10 of the 16 practitioners started with the field trials with a total of 36 candidates, who they recruited in their work contexts (of which 18 identified their transversal skills, but did not take part in the pre- and post-test). Some practitioners were not able to conduct trials due to organisational conditions or/and specific target group needs (e.g. persons with learning disabilities or language barriers). The field trial phase was accompanied by 2 community-of-practice-webinars for the practitioners, who did experimentations with candidates in order to exchange practical experiences and discuss questions concerning reporting and research requirements.

In Salzburg, the first training was held at AK Salzburg and lasted for a total of 24 hours spread over several days. The group was very heterogeneous with practitioners from different fields. The training included all the contents of the TRANSVAL-EU curriculum, tailoring the methods to regional conditions and the group of participants. The second training was significantly shortened and only took place on one day with less hours. It was attended by a group of practitioners working with teenagers and young adults. This allowed the trainers to show methods and tools that can be used well when working with exactly this target group. Parts of the curriculum had to be left out due to the shortness of the training (e.g. the stakeholder analysis).

The majority of the field trials in Salzburg took place within the project "Du kannst was". "Du kannst was" is a summative validation process that leads to the completion of an apprenticeship. Other field trials focused on a group of young adults who were already (briefly) employed but had to give up or lost their job and were now looking for orientation. Here the focus was on formative validation of transversal competences. Overall, 25 practitioners were involved and 43 candidates were reached, but not all of them were included in the monitoring tool.

3.3 Belgium

In Belgium, the field trials were conducted by the 'Consortium de validation des compétences' and included several steps: the first step was dedicated to the training, which was either delivered individually - to each Center involved - or during a workshop that gathered around the table validation Centers belonging to all the operators that form the Consortium. The trainings left out the competence profile for practitioners, and only briefly presented the database, since it does not include tools in French. Two of the Centers agreed to take part in the field trial following this training, including a total of around 40 practitioners and finally around 30 to 35 candidates. Several working meetings in each Center (between 2 to 5 per center until the end of the field trials) allowed the practitioners to identify the

transversal competences that the candidates need in order to increase their chances to be successful in the practical test. These competences were always linked to the task that the candidates need to perform in order to validate their competences. Hence, transversal competences have been identified so far (linked to the task of the practical test) for the occupations of administrative employee, roofer, barman, waiter and reception agent. Some centers were interested in including these competences in the positioning tool that they use in the guidance interview preceding the practical test, or even creating a positioning tool from scratch, having as a starting point the transversal competences. In some centers the candidates could also identify and self-assess their transversal competences – these however, did not return monitoring data and are thus not included in the data analysis. Centers joined the field trials progressively, and some of the trials were still ongoing at the cut-off date for data collection.

3.4 Italy

In Italy, the field trials were carried out in two regions, Umbria and Tuscany. The field trial in Umbria was organised by ARPAL FORMA.Azione, and focused on 6 transversal competences (to mention: use of oral communication in one or more languages, communication through digital technologies, building one's career path, developing one's competences and profile, solving problems and reacting to the unforeseen and managing information and critical thinking.). The training was delivered by the two organisations in cooperation. Starting from the tools at their disposal, the practitioners adapted and developed their own tool for the identification and documentation of transversal competences among candidates, and worked in groups to develop one scenario per competence. They also worked remotely and delivered their final proposals in October 2022. Meanwhile, a portfolio was provided which detailed all the steps of the implementation phase with candidates, and collected the EQF framework of the 6 competences as well the tools they had elaborated. Between December 2022 and January 2023 18 practitioners ran the interviews with 34 candidates, and some of the practitioners also moved forward to run a quick assessment of the competences, matching it to an EQF level of the framework provided. The process was also done in the form of a guided self-assessment with the candidate. It was decided that the interviews will continue until May/June 2023, since the practitioners found them very relevant.

The second Italian region trained 20 practitioners who conducted the field trials with 20 candidates. The training set up was different to many others, as Pluriversum specifically focused on a tool they have developed to identify and document transversal skills. The aim of the tool is to identify the skills of the participants through the analysis of a problem that occurred in the past and which they resolved. The skills that emerge are then directed towards writing an effective curriculum vitae and LinkedIn profile for job search.

3.5 Lithuania

In Lithuania, field trials were organised in cooperation with three different VET providers. Local trainings were organised in Kaunas in a 2-day face-to-face setting, followed by consultations of the piloting process, and after the piloting, one more session for feedback was also held face-to-face with the practitioners. The 31 practitioners also received accredited certificates. Candidates were recruited from the three VET providers. They were invited to participate and all participated voluntarily. Each practitioner chose the assessment methods, mainly using interview and observation methods. At the end, all of the 58 candidates received a certification about their competences.

3.6 Poland

The Polish field trials were initiated with an in-person training held in September 2022. Due to some organisational problems, the validation processes started only in January 2023, resulting in a relatively high drop-out rate. Thus, a second training was held online in February, with validation processes ongoing until the beginning of March. The trainings focused on the Skills Audit Method, 'MyPortfolio' App and also added a unit on documentation for the monitoring of the field trials. In total, 35 practitioners took part in the trainings, but finally only 19 filled in the pre- and the post-tests. Validation processes were carried out for 67 candidates. These mainly included informing, identifying and documenting transversal skills. Thanks to the different formats of trainings, different target groups could be reached, widening the reach of the field trials, with many practitioners from outside the capital city Warsaw participating.

Chapter 4: Results for practitioners

4.1 Results of the field research (preparation stage)

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This paragraph presents the context, methodology and first results of the field research conducted as part of the ‘Validation of transversal skills across Europe’ (TRANSVAL-EU) project. The main aim of the research was to provide an evaluation of the competences in validating transversal skills possessed by guidance and validation practitioners from five European countries, as well as to understand their perspective and identify their needs related to the topic of transversal skills.

The role of the field research was to inform subsequent project activities related to conducting field trials in the five countries, that include offering training and tools to the local practitioners. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods by implementing a Computer Assisted Web Interview (‘Competence Survey’) for the competence evaluation and Design Thinking workshops with the practitioners for identifying their needs.

The field research has been planned at the stage of developing the aforementioned Curriculum and Toolkit, which directly follows the mapping of existing practices and precedes the field trials stage of the project. As such, it was meant to provide useful insights on the main target group of the experimentation, that is the guidance and validation practitioners, whose ability and motivation to use transversal competences in their everyday work is a crucial condition of success in promoting the notion and in proving its applicability.

Based on the aims of the field research described above, the following corresponding research questions were formulated:

1. *What are the current competences in validating transversal skills of guidance and validation practitioners who are to take part in the field trials (before they take part in them)?*
2. *What are the needs of said practitioners in relation to validating transversal skills?*

Given the scope of the project, that includes field trials in 5 different contexts of the participating countries, three follow-up questions were considered:

- 1. Are there any differences between the countries taking part in the field trials (e.g. differences in competence profiles, or sectors the practitioners are working in, or in their education and training, or roles of practitioners, others differences)? If so, what are they?*
- 2. Do the differences impact the potential to validate transversal skills effectively? And if so, how?*
- 3. Are we able to address these differences in the toolkit and curriculum development process?*

The findings related to both research questions could inform the Curriculum and Toolkit development, if addressed by the scope and type of the training and tools provided. They also could prove valuable itself as a glimpse into the practitioners' work and self-evaluation tendencies, as well as the challenges they face and the resulting needs. Based on the field research results aimed at identifying the needs of the guidance and validation practitioners who were to take part in the TRANSVAL- EU field trials, five recommendations have been formulated:

- 1. The resources offered to the practitioners as part of the TRANSVAL-EU project should facilitate, or at least not impede, the most prevalent and important aspect of their work: establishing and maintaining direct relationships with the candidates.*
- 2. Any tools and practical advice proposed to the practitioners as part of the TRANSVAL-EU project and related to validating transversal competences should be described in terms of: (1) specific, self-contained, single actions with related tools needed to take them or helpful to perform them; (2) instructions on how to include them at different points of any given guidance or validation procedure.*
- 3. One of the most important resources the TRANSVAL-EU project can offer to the field trial participants and to practitioners wanting to work with transversal competences at large, is training. It should have a modular structure, preferably have both a face- to-face and an online format, as well as include practical exercises.*

4. *Among the different types of tools for working with transversal competences the TRANSVAL-EU project could offer, an e-portfolio has the most potential of being useful for both guidance and validation practitioners.*
5. *Both the Curriculum and Toolkit provided as part of the TRANSVAL-EU project should take into account the two Personas proposed as a result of the workshops.*

These results and recommendations cover the role, type and characteristics of the resources needed by the practitioners, as well as include two prototypes of such resources - a training programme and an e-portfolio.

4.2 Impact on competency level in terms of validation of transversal competences

Based on the analysis of the pre- and post-test it becomes clear that most of the practitioners have experienced an increase in their competence level in terms of providing guidance for the validation of transversal competences.

According to table 3, all scales seem to be reliable and the experienced increase for each of the variables is significant (based on the T-test).

First, circa 76% of the practitioners experienced an increase in their overall competence related to validation of transversal competencies. This means that they perceive themselves as more capable in e.g., creating a validation and guidance process, procedure, using a method or tool for working with transversal competences, teaching others how to work with transversal competences and defining transversal competences.

Second, most of the practitioners feel themselves more capable in providing guidance in the process of validation (see table 3). In other words, 68% experienced to be more competent in providing guidance in relation to the validation process. Besides, circa 76% of the practitioners experienced that they could provide better guidance in relation to validating transversal competences. This means that these practitioners have experienced to be more capable in e.g., communicating effectively with the candidates and with other practitioners involved in the process, identifying and adapting the ways to communicate with the candidates, building a relationship with the candidate and conducting the activities required to ensure the quality of the identification and documentation of the candidate's competences.

Third, most of the practitioners have experienced an increase in their competency level related to assessment (see table 3). Based on the analysis circa 72% experienced an increase in their competency level of assessment in relation to a typical validation process and circa 74% experienced an increase in their competency level of assessment in relation to validation transversal competences. More specifically, these practitioners experienced to be more capable in e.g., analysing the evidence and statements provided by the candidate, conducting the activities required to ensure the quality of assessing the candidate's competences, acting in accordance with rules and regulations and characterising the principles of working together with other practitioners involved in the process.

Table 3: Experienced increase of competences among practitioners (N = 78)

| Variable | Experienced increase among practitioners (in %) | Cronbach's Alpha of Scale | Significance of T-test |
|--|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Competency level of transversal competences</i> | 75.6 | 0.96 | $t(77) = -6.48, p < .05$ |
| <i>Competency level of providing guidance</i> | | | |
| In relation to a typical validation process | 67.6 | 0.97 | $t(73) = -4.68, p < .05$ |
| In relation to validating transversal competences | 75.7 | 0.97 | $t(73) = -7.58, p < .05$ |
| <i>Competency level of assessment</i> | | | |
| In relation to a typical validation process | 71.6 | 0.98 | $t(73) = -5.08, p < .05$ |
| In relation to validating transversal competences | 74.3 | 0.98 | $t(73) = -6.87, p < .05$ |

4.3 Success factors of the increase in competences experienced by the practitioners

In order to define the success factors of this experienced increase in competences a team of researchers conducted in-depth interviews among 31 practitioners from the involved pilot countries.

First, it becomes clear that especially the TRANSVAL-EU European training in combination with the national training provided in each country (for more information see

www.transvalproject.eu) influenced an experienced increase in competency in order to validate transversal competences among candidates. According to table 4, a lot of the practitioners experienced an increased awareness, as stated by this practitioner: *“Has my awareness increased? For sure. Of the existence of such competences and of a way to identify such competences. Of the need to test competences that are just being transferred from one workplace to another, or even from school to school. And, and that they are important”*. Besides most of the practitioners experienced an increase of competences concerning the validation process. The trainings seemed to influence the validation process which needs to be realised in a dialogue with the candidate like this practitioner explains: *“I found the training extremely interesting and extremely helpful. Yes, it has really brought me a lot. I can now, so to speak, explain validation a bit more understandably and easily for the participants, so to speak, because all the materials you find on the internet, i.e. during desk research, are designed more scientifically and during the training you really got a bit more understanding of what it actually means. That’s why yes, I really liked it and it helped a lot”*.

Second, as a part of the European and national trainings the moderators (trainers, speakers, presenters) seemed to have influenced the competency level of the practitioners. Especially referring to the involvement of the validation and guidance process itself (see table 4). Practitioners seems to be more involved, like this practitioner illustrates: *“Huge thanks to the trainers during the national training, because substantively they are really icons of guidance process. I want to thank them for their truly amazing support, but also for the vast knowledge they have shared with me, which will certainly translate into the quality of my work, but also my students’ satisfaction”*. But these moderators seemed also to influence the awareness of transversal skills among the practitioners, for example by starting a process of reflection by this practitioner: *“I think it was interesting to reflect a little more broadly on the fact that non-formal and informal systems contribute to the development of transversal competences”*.

Third, as part of the training the materials seemed to have influenced the competency level of practitioners (see table 4). Most of the practitioners experienced an increase in awareness, due to the training activities and materials used, but a lot of them also experienced an improvement in advising candidates in using transversal skills in daily or working life (see table 4). For example, this practitioner mentioned that it was helpful to improve the validation process with the candidates: *“I think that the project and therefore all the materials made available by TRANSVAL are very effective for a guidance practitioner in the identification and documentation phase. Precisely because, to have a reference framework, to have descriptors of competences, to be used in the process can make the experiences related to competences more precise”*. Furthermore, it improved the using and embedding of transversal skills in guiding candidates among several practitioners, for

example explained by this practitioner: *“The inclusive workshops, so that this (transversal competences) is applied throughout the process. That was really a highlight. In educational counselling and in institutions working in groups of participants, that was a highlight. Working with participants is great being on the road with this toolbox, and then asking the participants during coaching sessions, when you are able to ask completely different questions not only asking for their CV. To see that there is so much more behind it, that was also such a highlight, for example, that has done a lot.”*

Fourth, also as part of the European and national training but less strong than the other elements of the learning environment of the training, the interaction with the other practitioners seems to have influenced the competency level of several practitioners for example referring to their competences of the validation process itself (see table 4). According to this practitioner, the interaction with others during the training gave new ideas: *“Well, I think so, because there were two exercises that were very well important to me (...). We were doing this interview with an advisor from X (...). During this exercise various interesting things came out. We drew some conclusions and we also shared some previous experiences (...). It was something new and so surprising (...). Very fruitful”*. Besides due to this interaction their possibility of cooperation with other stakeholders seemed to increase as mentioned by this practitioner: *“Totally, in any case, I would say, but not only to transversal competences. I would extend it to validation in general and this network. One talks, one exchanges ideas, new networks are created, new contacts, the view beyond one's own nose is total valuable. You meet people you wouldn't otherwise meet and talk to them about technical matters”*.

Fifth, the TRANSVAL-EU Transversal Competence Framework (TCF) seemed to influence the increase of the competency level among a lot of practitioners (see table 4). They experienced an increased awareness of transversal skills by the TCF, which makes a stronger system of it as mentioned by this practitioner: *“About transversal skills, people say ‘I have it’ or ‘I don't have it’, but never how much they have it. The effort to systematise them (...) is therefore an added value”*. Besides, it seemed to improve the using and embedding of transversal skills in guiding candidates among several practitioners. For example, referring to the assessment as part of the validation process according to this practitioner: *“This standardisation attempt is very useful to move steps forward and especially, to run a relevant assessment”*.

Sixth, some of the practitioners experienced that the TRANSVAL Competence Profile (CP) (for more information see www.transvalproject.eu) supported an increase in competences (see table 4). This was not the case among a lot of practitioners, but just a few as mentioned by this one: *“It is clear that having an additional framework and profile of operators’*

competences for transversal competences, has simplified a lot (the work), because from something that was purely abstract and perhaps interpretable, we have moved on to having an unambiguous key, both as far as practitioners and users are concerned”.

Besides these influentials, as part of the organised activities and materials of the TRANSVAL-EU project, the practitioners mentioned also other influentials. Especially the national workshops, materials, tools and methodologies were really helpful for some of the practitioners. According to table 4, it supported the increase in competences of the validation process also according to this practitioner: *“And then I thought about trying one of the methods presented in national training (...). And I liked the method used by the Polish partner, an oral interview method, I can't remember the name, from X. (...) Skills audit method, that's what it was called, yes. And there were also materials from X that showed how to do it, we practiced it and we were able to try out parts of it”.* But also the field work, or in other words, the practical experience with the candidates seemed to have influenced the way of working during the validation process among some practitioners, like this one: *Working with transversal competences had an incredible impact on my working style. The people I work with now discover how much they can do. They feel proud. I know this has gone further, as more people come to me and tell me they are interested in learning more about identifying their skills”.* And finally, some of the practitioners experienced that the TRANSVAL-EU project in general contributed to an increase in competences as shown by table 4 on the next page. As mentioned by some practitioners it really supported them in using the term transversal competences or they seemed to be inspired by the other countries like this practitioner: *Very exciting projects in other countries such as Poland or Lithuania”.*

Table 4: Outcome space of influentials on increased competences of practitioners (N = 31)

| Outcome → | Increased involvement in validation and guidance process | Increased awareness of transversal skills | Increase concerning competences of validation process | Improvement advising candidates in using transversal skills in daily or working life | Increase in possibilities of cooperation with stakeholders | Improvement of using / embedding transversal skills in guiding candidates |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| Influential factor ↓ | | | | | | |
| 1. Influence of national / European training in general | 12 out of 31 | 17 out of 31 | 18 out of 31 | 5 out of 26 | 5 out of 26 | 14 out of 31 |
| 2. Influence of coach / trainer/speaker/presenter during national / European training | 10 out of 20 | 12 out of 24 | 3 out of 23 | 5 out of 18 | 2 out of 18 | 3 out of 24 |
| 3. Influence of materials and activities during national / European training | 6 out of 20 | 12 out of 23 | 9 out of 24 | 9 out of 20 | 6 out of 19 | 11 out of 24 |
| 4. Influence of interaction with other practitioners during national / European training | 5 out of 27 | 4 out of 27 | 12 out of 27 | 4 out of 12 | 8 out of 22 | 4 out of 27 |
| 5. Influence of Transversal Competence Framework (TCF) of TRANSVAL-EU | 12 out of 31 | 16 out of 31 | 12 out of 31 | 9 out of 26 | 8 out of 26 | 14 out of 31 |
| 6. Influence of Competence Profile of practitioners of TRANSVAL-EU | 2 out of 24 | 2 out of 27 | 4 out of 27 | 0 out of 19 | 1 out of 19 | 3 out of 24 |
| 7. National workshops, materials, tools and methodologies | 6 | 2 | 11 | 7 | 4 | 6 |
| 8. Influence of the practical experience with the candidates (field work) | 3 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| 9. TRANSVAL-EU project in general | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |

Chapter 5: Results for candidates

5.1 Impact of field trials on experienced increase of competences

By conducting a pre-and post-test among the 256 candidates involved, their experienced increase in several competences of the TRANSVERSAL Competence Framework (TCF) has been analysed, in addition to the rate of social inclusion and labour market position .

First, according to table 5, most of the used scales seems to be highly reliable according to the high scores for the Cronbach's Alpha. Besides, it becomes that based on the Paired Samples T-test that the experienced increase is significant for almost all variables except for 'managing information and critical thinking, building one's career path and developing one's competences and profile'.

Second, according to the experienced increase, it became clear that a significant share of the candidates experienced an increase in competences. This varies between circa 30% until 50% (except for communicating by using digital technologies). For example, the candidates felt to be more able to solve problems or foster cooperation or using oral or written communication. Besides, 35% to 42% experienced an increase in social inclusion (see table 5). To be more specific, these candidates meet more people and join new activities like nature or sports activities. Finally, the candidates experienced an improvement in labour market position. Some of them found a paid job or functions better in that job, or found voluntary work or started seeking a job.

Third, it becomes clear that most of the candidates experienced to be better involved in a validation process concerning validation of transversal skills. According to table 5, circa 89% of the candidates experienced that they know what transversal skills are, and they are aware of their transversal skills. Besides, they completed an assessment to test their skills and received a certification. Finally, they experienced that they could discuss which skills they have learned with their teacher and experienced that their learning experiences have been written down.

Table 5: Experienced increase of competences among candidates (N = 256)

| Competences | Used or newly constructed variable | Experienced increase among candidates (in %) | Cronbach's Alpha of Scale | Significance of T-test |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| Using oral communication | National language skills (SIT) | 49.1 | 0.95 | $t(233) = -3.91, p < .05$ |
| Using written communication | National language skills (SIT) | 49.1 | 0.95 | $t(233) = -3.91, p < .05$ |
| Communicating using digital technologies | Digital language skills (SIT) | 24.4 | 0.96 | $t(233) = -4.28, p < .05$ |
| Solving problems and reacting to unforeseen | Assertiveness (SIT) | 50.8 | 0.87 | $t(255) = -6.20, p < .05$ |
| Cooperating and fostering cooperation | Assertiveness (SIT) | 50.8 | 0.87 | $t(255) = -6.20, p < .05$ |
| Managing and organising activities | Newly constructed | 29.4 | 0.87 | $t(84) = -1.97, p < .05$ |
| Managing information and critical thinking | Newly constructed | 31.6 | 0.76 | $t(78) = -1.77, p > .05$ |
| Building one's career path | Newly constructed | 38.5 | 0.56 | $t(233) = -.57, p > .05$ |
| Developing one's competences and profile | Newly constructed | 38.5 | 0.56 | $t(233) = -.57, p > .05$ |
| Social inclusion | Meeting and attempting & Being active in nature and sports (SIT) | 41.9 – 34.8 | 0.82 – 0.70 | $t(233) = -2.75, p < .05$ / $t(232) = -1.88, p < .05$ |
| Paid work | Not applicable | 5.2 | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Voluntary work | Not applicable | 13.5 | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Apprenticeship | Not applicable | 8.0 | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Job seeking | Not applicable | 16.9 | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Job under supervision | Not applicable | 11.2 | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Transversal skills (incl. guidance & validation) | Newly constructed | 88.7 | 0.81 | Not applicable |

5.2 Success factors of the experienced increase in competences by the candidates

According to the results of the analysis it seems that some sociodemographic factors, in addition to the process of validation and guidance of transversal skills, influence the increase in competences for candidates. First, according to table 6 the country of which a candidate lives in seems to influence the increase in competences referring to 'communicating using

digital technologies', 'solving problems and reacting to unforeseen', 'cooperating and fostering cooperation', 'building one's career path', 'developing one's competences and profile' and one of the social inclusion variables.

Second, gender seems to influence the increase in competences concerning 'solving problems and reacting to unforeseen', 'cooperating and fostering cooperation' and one of the social inclusion variables.

Third, the influence of ethnicity seems to be limited to the competence concerning 'job under supervision' (see table 6).

Fourth, the socio-demographic factor of age seems to influence the competences referring to 'using oral communication', 'using written communication' and 'apprenticeship'.

Fifth, according to table 6 the level of education seems to influence three competences, namely 'communicating using digital technologies', 'building one's career path' and 'developing one's competences and profile'.

Sixth, it seems that years in education and job status do not influence any of the competences.

Finally, the validation and guidance process of transversal skills seems to influence six competences concerning 'communicating using digital technologies', 'solving problems and reacting to unforeseen', 'cooperating and fostering cooperation', 'managing information and critical thinking', 'building one's career path' and 'developing one's competences and profile' (see table 6).

Table 6: Experienced increase of competences among candidates (N = 256)

| Competences | Country | Gender | Ethnicity | Age | Educational level | Years in education | Job status | Transversal skills |
|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Using oral communication | 0.859 | 0.412 | 0.297 | 0.014* | 0.162 | 0.777 | 0.921 | 0.082 |
| Using written communication | 0.859 | 0.412 | 0.297 | 0.014* | 0.162 | 0.777 | 0.921 | 0.082 |
| Communicating using digital technologies | <0.001* | 0.812 | 0.218 | 0.060 | 0.020* | 0.056 | 0.544 | 0.047** |
| Solving problems and reacting to unforeseen | 0.001* | 0.002* | 0.679 | 0.902 | 0.342 | 0.958 | 0.069 | 0.005*** |
| Cooperating and fostering cooperation | 0.001* | 0.002* | 0.679 | 0.902 | 0.342 | 0.958 | 0.069 | 0.005*** |
| Managing and organising activities | 0.230 | 0.171 | 0.591 | 0.246 | 0.280 | 0.443 | 0.155 | 0.522 |
| Managing information and critical thinking | 0.587 | 0.644 | 0.910 | 0.598 | 0.318 | 0.657 | 0.976 | 0.017** |
| Building one's career path | 0.004* | 0.517 | 0.212 | 0.338 | 0.022* | 0.724 | 0.179 | <0.001*** |
| Developing one's competences and profile | 0.004* | 0.517 | 0.212 | 0.338 | 0.022* | 0.724 | 0.179 | <0.001*** |
| Social inclusion | 0.013* – 0.191 | 0.041* – 0.266 | 0.950 – 0.217 | 0.408 – 0.820 | 0.265 – 0.562 | 0.080 – 0.563 | 0.196 – 0.214 | 0.070 – 0.236 |
| Paid work | 0.167 | 0.667 | 0.583 | 0.350 | 0.115 | 1.000 | 0.407 | 0.416 |
| Voluntary work | 0.097 | 0.196 | 0.926 | 0.149 | 0.261 | 0.332 | 0.247 | 0.360 |
| Apprenticeship | 0.986 | 0.864 | 0.380 | 0.025* | 0.605 | 0.671 | 0.579 | 0.779 |
| Job seeking | 0.632 | 0.161 | 0.409 | 0.900 | 0.703 | 0.687 | 0.813 | 0.850 |
| Job under supervision | 0.768 | 0.612 | 0.020* | 0.982 | 0.162 | 0.055 | 0.400 | 0.366 |

*The significance level is 0.050.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In order to determine the most important influential on the several competences a logistical regression analysis has been conducted. According to the results of the analysis three variables seem to have the most important impact on five competences.

First, the validation and guidance process of transversal skills seems to be a significant predictor ($p < 0.01$) on 'solving problems and reacting to unforeseen' (0.019), 'cooperating and fostering cooperation' (0.019), 'building one's career path' (0.041) and 'developing one's competences and profile' (0.041).

Second, also gender seems to be a significant predictor on ($p < 0.01$) on 'solving problems and reacting to unforeseen' (0.017) and 'cooperating and fostering cooperation' (0.017).

Finally, according to the results of the analysis 'age' seems to be a significant predictor ($p < 0.01$) on 'apprenticeship' (0.003).

Chapter 6: Interpretation of impact and success factors

The TRANSVAL-EU project aims to contribute to a more constructive and reliable validation and guidance process. In order to do so, eight field trials were organised in six European countries (Austria, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal) that allowed to optimise the validation process concerning transversal skills.

Experienced increase in competences among validation and guidance candidates

According to the results among the candidates, 30% to 50% of them experienced that some of their transversal competences increased. Besides, 35% to 42% of candidates experienced an increase in social inclusion. According to the European study of Lupi et al. (2011), circa 30% to 45% of a comparable target group experienced an increase on some comparable competences and social inclusion. This study showed that learning interventions referring to formal, non-formal and informal learning for adults have impact on a significant share of these learners. The results of the field trials of TRANSVAL-EU are comparable and seem to be promising especially in comparison with the earlier published results of the study of Taris (2007) showing the impact of training of 10% to 20%.

Furthermore most of the involved candidates (89%) felt that they were involved in a constructive process of validation and guidance of transversal skills and perceived to be among others more aware of their transversal competences.

Experienced increase in competences among validation and guidance practitioners

Second, most of the involved practitioners (68% to 76%) experienced to have an improvement in their competency level of transversal competences, providing guidance during the validation process and providing an assessment. This increase seems to be significant.

Influential factors of experienced increase of competences among validation and guidance practitioners

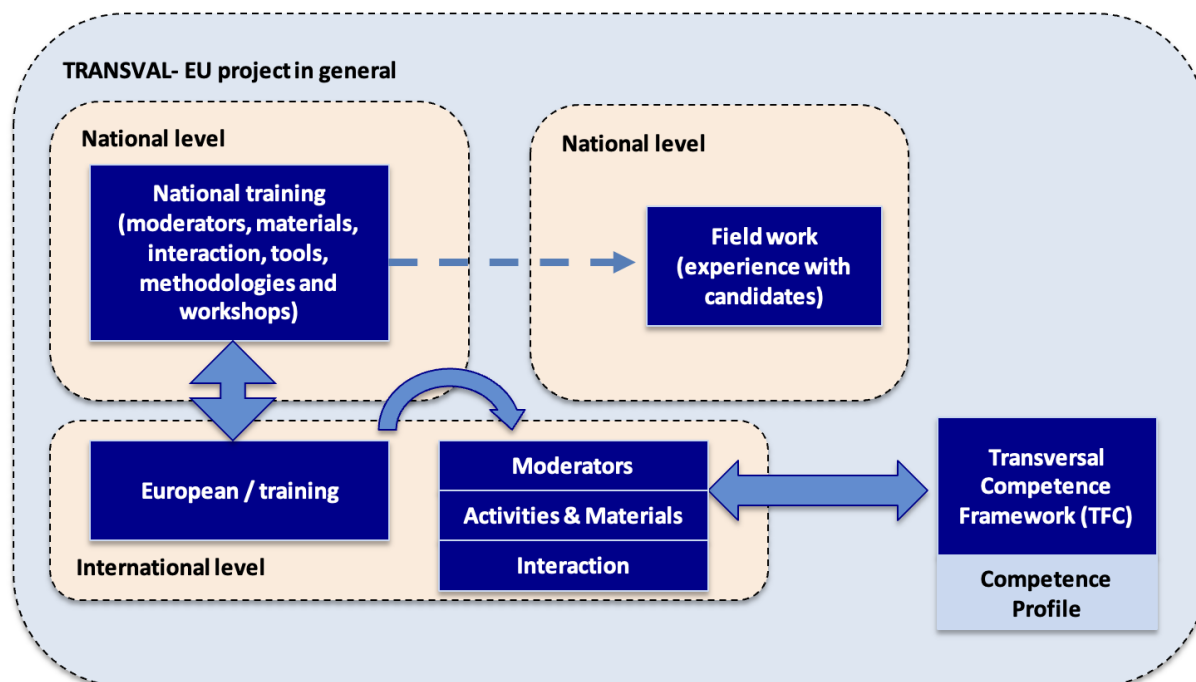
Based on the analysis it becomes clear that several elements of the TRANSVAL-EU project influenced this increase. According to figure 2, the basic elements of the European and

national training supported the increase in competences of the validation process in addition to the increased involvement in the validation and guidance process, awareness of transversal skills, possibilities of cooperation with stakeholders and the improvement of the using and embedding of transversal skills in guiding candidates and advising them in using transversal skills in daily or working life. In addition to this, the translation into and the use of national training, workshops, tools materials, methodologies and workshops seems to be very important to support this experienced increase of competences among the validation practitioners.

Furthermore, the Transversal Competence Framework (TFC) seems proved to be helpful when optimising the validation process. Also the experience with the candidates themselves or in other words, the field work seems to possibly influence the increase of competences among some practitioners.

Finally the TRANSVAL Competence Profile proved to be supportive for an experienced increase of competences among some practitioners.

Figure 2: Interplay of influentials on increase of competences among practitioners



According to the results of the analysis referring to the influentials on the experienced increase of competences among the candidates especially the validation and guidance process of transversal skills in addition to gender and age seem to be a significant predictor on several of the competences.

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