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**ILO -EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

# **Introducing Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms in Albania**

## **Final Report**

Tirana, December 2014



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### **List of Abbreviations**

AQF	Albanian Qualification Framework
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation to Albania
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science/Ministry of Education and Sport
MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MoSWY	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
NAVETQ	National Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Qualification
NES	National Employment Service
NQF	National Qualification Framework
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SLI	State Labour Inspectorate
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VNIFL	Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning



## **ILO -EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

### **0. Introduction**

The IPA 2010 project on Human Resources Development in Albania, funded by the European Union is implemented by the International Labour Organization, under the leadership of the Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe (DWT/CO-Budapest, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY), the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) and their implementing agencies. The overall objective of the Project is to improve labour market functioning and the quality of human capital, while the specific objectives cover the improvement of the capacity of labour market institutions, mainly the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) and National Employment Service (NES) as well as development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Lifelong Learning (LLL) systems in Albania.

Under Component 3 - VET Reform, technical assistance has been required regarding the testing of the Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms (RPL) in Albania. The RPL is defined in the VET Law N° 8877 (dated of 2002, and amended in 2011 and in 2014) and the informal and non-formal learning are referred to in the Albanian Qualification Law (2010), however no by-laws have been issued so far to implement this process in the country. In order to test the ground, before a feasible legal framework is developed and adopted, a frame methodology on the RPL has been developed by the Project and validated by the Beneficiary as a preparatory phase. Furthermore, 5 qualifications have been identified as more relevant, and among them the textile sector has been selected to pilot the RPL mechanism. This choice was due to the importance placed in the sector by the Government of Albania, in the framework of other measures taken to strengthen the skills in the textile industry<sup>1</sup>.

Following the discussions between the main stakeholders and representatives of Board of Façon in specific consultation workshops, the two occupations were selected for the development of occupational standards: a) Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing; and b) Quality Controller in the Leather Shoes Manufacturing. The occupational standards were developed according to the “Guidelines for developing competence based occupational standards” together with specialists from the textile industry and National Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Qualification (NAVETQ). The development of the training of the assessors and the piloting of the assessment tools followed as a testing ground to support the introduction of the RPL processes in the country.

The aim of this final report “Introducing Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms in Albania” is to analyse the benefits of these mechanisms, the steps that have been undertaken by the Project experts to test it and to recommend a set of further developments needed to implement the RPL processes in the country.

The authors of this report have taken into consideration the input and feedback of all involved collaborators from the MoSWY, NAVETQ, social partners’ organisations, companies, VET experts and the RPL pilot assessors and participants.

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<sup>1</sup> Following a social dialogue negotiation process, in April 2014 a package of actions for the Façon Industry were introduced by the Albanian Government aiming at supporting the industry with facilitating fiscal and financial measures. These measures were further supported by the Council of Ministers Decision Nr. 784, date 19.11.2014, on the establishment of the Façon Industry related to tailored-made active labour market programmes for the (re)training of the workers in the textile sector.



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### **1. What is Recognition of Prior Learning?**

The RPL is a process of certification by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard. RPL is usually associated with (but not limited to) the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

Modern societies and competitive labour markets value both formal education and work experience. The ever-changing labour markets, the lack of employment stability, and the speed of technological evolution, all require adults to adopt practices of re-skilling and re-training more often than ever before.

Given the extensive occurrence of company-based training throughout the private sector in Albania, confirmed by the results of different Skills Needs Analysis carried out in the recent years, the establishment of feasible and sound RPL mechanisms revealed to be very relevant and useful, namely for specific target groups, such as returning migrants and technical specialized workers with low formal qualifications.

Moreover, many governments across the world are concerned with the quality of the human resources made available in their countries and in their economies and foresee RPL as an important element of national policies on education, training and employment, especially for adults, as it is the case of many European Union Member-States.

The assessment and validation of competences (comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes) acquired through non-formal and informal learning processes, including work experience, are the most crucial part of RPL mechanisms, if we want to secure a trustful process. Thus, the methodological framework shall take this principle as a first assumption for establishing such processes.

#### ***1.1. Principles of RPL***

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning has an important role in making lifelong learning a fully functional process. Individuals, especially adults, are hardly motivated for new learning experiences unless they get recognition for the skills and knowledge they already acquired.

The individual who get recognition of his/her competences (learning outcomes) can easily move across different forms of learning making the best use of each of them, in accordance to their own capacity and aspirations.

In order to establish a sound RPL system in Albania, the following principles of RPL were considered:

- RPL processes are centred on individuals and their enrolment for RPL must be voluntary;
- The privacy of individuals should be respected;
- Equal access and fair treatment should be guaranteed, and at the same time inclusiveness and equal access to learning opportunities should be ensured;
- Stakeholders (from the industry, VET sector, responsible institutions) should be involved in establishing systems for validation;





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- Systems should contain mechanisms for guidance and counselling of individuals;
- Systems should be underpinned by quality assurance;
- The professional competences of those who carry out assessments must be assured.

The development and assessment of competences is a matter of proficient performance. In order to be able to identify competences in different "pieces of evidence" produced by the candidate, it is necessary for the assessor to have a strong understanding of the occupation/qualification being assessed.

Therefore, the assessor must demonstrate a double set of professional qualities. By one hand he/she must have relevant and current experience in the occupation/qualification assessed. By other hand he/she must be a qualified assessor, detaining skills and competences to guide the candidates in producing/gathering evidence about their competences, and in weighting those evidences against the requirements of the occupational/qualification standard.

The above mentioned principles have been central elements while organising and delivering the training to the industry and VET experts that will become assessors for RPL in Albania.

### ***1.2. Main features of RPL***

While defining the RPL mechanisms that best suits the Albanian needs, it was important to have in consideration the comparability of approaches to validation and recognition of competences at different levels and in various contexts, as it is part of developing trust at local, national and international level.

Lack of system comparability makes it difficult for individuals to recognise their learning outcomes acquired in different settings, at different levels and even in different countries.

In order to secure compatibility of RPL mechanisms it is necessary to understand a set of aspects meant to give coherence, consistency and robustness to these processes, such as the following ones:

- RPL is referenced to national standards (occupational standards, training standards, qualification standards, where the learning outcomes are defined for each qualification according to labour market specific needs and features);
- RPL is based on the assessment of individual's competences (comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes);
- The assessment processes are conducted by competent assessors, dully selected and trained;
- The assessment processes take place in assessment centres which need to be officially recognised by the national authorities.

To highlight the importance of such processes in the context of the European Union, the Council of European Union adopted the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012, on validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/ C 398/01) meant to harmonise the efforts of the Member-States for developing a robust and consistent system of VNFIL in the European Union, aimed to support the individuals getting recognition of their competences, irrespective the way they acquired them.



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### ***1.3. Preconditions of RPL in Albania***

The first principle mentioned in the EU Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning highlights the importance that validation arrangements are required to be linked with the National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs), thus being recognised at the system level with the same value and the same qualification granted as other VET programmes.

As in many others countries, the Albanian Qualification Framework (AQF) is based on levels of qualifications (Levels 1 to 8)<sup>2</sup>. Each full qualification can contain one or more occupations.

The tasks and responsibilities within each occupation and the related competences needed for a proficient performance are included in Occupational Standards. In other words, an occupational standard describes the workplace requirements expressed in knowledge, skills, attitudes and their respective performance criteria.

The development of Occupational Standards is to be done by occupational/sector specialists to ensure their relevance against the workplace requirements.

Based on specific Occupational Standards, the education and training specialists can define the learning outcomes, which are the focus of the qualification description and related curriculum/programmes. This is the way of making sure that training programmes are in line with the industry requirements.

The Occupational Standards are also the basis for developing assessment tools to be used by the assessors in the RPL processes. That is the reason why assessment tools must be developed and tested before hand. Analysing the occupation/qualification which will be assessed by educational specialists and occupational experts is a way of deciding what assessment method (or combination of several methods) are more adequate to be applied to each candidate.

This is to say that the candidates for RPL processes can use the Occupational Standards for reflecting ahead on their own performance and competences.

The assessors are another key factor on the implementation of RPL processes. Only experts with relevant and current experience in the competences to be assessed can make a good judgment of the performance and evidence produced by the candidates.

A legal framework allowing RPL processes to be fully implemented at the system level is particularly important. It will ensure links between RPL and the Albanian Qualification Framework, by one hand, and between RPL and the VET system as a whole, by other hand.

In November 2014, the Council of Ministers of Albania adopted the National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020 and its action plan which includes concrete measures for the implementation of the RPL in the country.

Thus, the arrangements for RPL in Albania should include the following elements:

- Identification of individual's competences (expressed in learning outcomes) acquired through non-formal or informal learning processes;
- Gathering documentation about individual's learning outcomes;

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<sup>2</sup> Albanian Qualification Law No 10247, dated 4.3.2010.





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- Assessment of an individual's skills, knowledge and attitudes;
- Official recognition of an individual's acquisitions in form of a certificate covering a part of a qualification of the full qualification.

### ***1.4. The RPL Process***

A Recognition of Prior Learning process starts with the candidate's expression of interest for getting recognition of his/her work experience, and ends with the issuance of a certificate by a State recognised authority.

In fact the process starts when the candidate acknowledges the specifications of an occupational/qualification standard, reflects on his/her own competences (comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes), decides when is ready to go through the assessment process and enrolls for validation in an assessment centre.

After the candidate application to an RPL process, the assessment centre allocates an assessor who decides in consultation with the candidate for an assessment plan. During this process, the assessor decides whether the candidate has all competences and recommends the certification (for acquiring a full certification/qualification) or if there are gaps in certain competences. In the latter, the assessor will recommend further training (formal, informal or non-formal) and agree with the candidate on a development plan.

When the candidate accomplishes the development plan and provide new evidences for validating the missing competences, the assessor shall re-assess the candidate. Then, after a successful validation procedure, the assessor will recommend his/her full certification/qualification.

Usually the certificates are issued under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and/or of Ministry of Labour, In specific cases, the certificates can be issued by the National Authority for Qualifications, when a delegation of competences is granted by the Government to these public institutions. Actually, the certificates can be issued by the body, which is responsible for the quality assurance of the assessment processes. In Albania this can be done under a joint certificate by the MoSWY and MoES or by NAVETQ, depending on the institutional arrangement adopted in the country..

There are a few categories of people who might need or might be interested to apply for RPL, such as: persons working in small family business, returning migrants, redundant workers, people who dropped out early from the formal education, specialised workers with no formal qualifications, amongst others.

### ***1.5. Institutional Arrangements***

RPL needs to have agreement and involvement of the social partners (the industry/employers' representatives and the trade unions/workers' representatives). The private sector is the main beneficiary of having a skilled and well prepared labour force, in which they can base its business development, as well as being prepared for a competitive, global and innovative economy. The participation of the social partners in the definition of the conditions for the



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certification of competences gives the confidence to the employers that the certificates and diplomas issued reflect the real workplace practices and needs, and are quality assured.

The following institutions need to be identified and its institutional roles need to be defined: (i) assessment centre; (ii) institution responsible for accreditation/certification; and (iii) institution responsible for external quality assurance.

First, it is important to define which institutions can host and develop the assessment processes. Given the complexity of this process, the need of having an adequate work environment, equipment, tools, and competent assessors can help to select the most suitable institutions to become assessment centres. In the Albanian context these institutions are:

- The vocational training centres operating under coordination and authority of MoSWY/NES, with good conditions for assessment of competences.
- Private training providers which have access to work conditions and also trainers with necessary skills and experience for assessing competences.

Regardless the type of institution chosen to become an assessment centre, this will require them to undergo an accreditation process under strict rules defined by the National Authority in charge of VET sector.

In Albania, the key role in overseeing the implementation of RPL might be shared by NAVETQ and NES, the first being concerned with RPL procedures regulation and management, and the later being able to identify the needs for RPL as per the registered unemployed and the labour force in general. However, the awarding of a full qualification needs to be supervised/regulated by MoSWY and MoES if we want to have a RPL system compatible with formal education and training and linked to the respective AQF levels.

### ***1.6. Funding Mechanisms and Sustainability***

RPL is a process that requires time and competent work. Both also requires significant financial resources. This includes but is not limited to the following elements:

- the costs for developing Occupational/Qualification Standards;
- the training process of RPL assessors and its working time;
- the physical resources (facilities and equipments) for the assessment of all activities (from written tests to work performance in real situation or in simulated environment);
- running costs and consumables.

All these expenses should be covered/subsidised by the State budget in the starting phases of the implementation of such processes within the VET sector. Thus, the process would not be hindered by the fact that it will result too expensive for the candidates and the assessment centres. In subsequent phases, the costs can be shared by the assessment centre and the candidates, in the form of a fee paid by the candidates.

The initial support for starting the implementation of RPL in Albania is expected to come from the governmental institutions (MoSWY, MoES, and implementing agencies such as NAVETQ and NES). Either the funds are allocated from the State budget or, more likely, from international projects, it should be with support and encouragement of the above mentioned



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institutions, with due attention to the definition of ad implementation of sound and feasible quality assurance mechanisms.

In some countries, the European structural funds have been used as a financial resource to design, test, and implement the RPL mechanisms. There are also experiences with employers organisations co-funding such processes, through employment and qualification funds, which can be a good solution for the up-scaling of the system, namely in the textile industry, using the Façon Fund.



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### 2. Best practices of RPL in Europe

#### 2.1. France

France is one of the EU countries at the forefront of the development of the validation of formal and non-formal learning. France was in fact the first Member State to introduce legislation with respect to validation, when in 1934 a law was introduced to enable individuals to obtain an engineering diploma on the basis of professional experience.

In 1986, the Ministry of Employment created a network of over 100 publicly-run skills assessment centres (*Centres Interinstitutionnels de Bilans de Compétences*, CIBC). These centres were designed to enable individuals to analyse their skills and the opportunities open to them and, on this basis, to define a personal training or occupational plan.

In 1992, further legislation enabled the concept of *Validation des Acquis Professionnels* ('VAP 92') to be used for exemptions for qualifications awarded by the Ministries of Education and Agriculture (secondary and higher education). People with five years' work experience could apply for exemptions by submitting a portfolio detailing the activities undertaken and skills (competencies) gained through their experience, which was then examined by an assessment panel (jury).

In 1999, this law was extended to include qualifications delivered by the Ministry of Youth and Sport.

Within the 2002 "Social Modernisation Act", this model of validation was extended to include all the main types of qualification (certification) used in France and allow complete qualifications to be awarded on the basis of knowledge gained through experience.

The legislation on the **Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience (VAE)** (2002) places more emphasis on summative validation (the award of certificates) than the previous concept of *Validation des Acquis Professionnels* (VAP). Whereas VAP was designed to allow professional experience to be taken into account alongside more traditional means of assessment in the award of formal qualifications, VAE can be used as a basis to award full qualifications, rather than just units or "parts" of a full diploma. VAE is also the main system in France for validation of informal and non-formal learning.

The National Commission for Vocational Certification (CNCP) was created in January 2002 by the Social Modernisation Act, the same legislation that set in place the concept of VAE.

The Commission is composed of ministerial representatives, social partners, experts and representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and the Regions.

The body functions on the basis on a national secretariat and network of regional "correspondents".

#### 2.2. Portugal

Portugal has comprehensive national systems in place since 2005 for the validation of informal and non-formal learning after a first stage of gradual implementation from 1999 to 2004.



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Due to the Vocational Education and Training System Reform, today there is only one main system for validating and certifying competences acquired through non-formal or informal means in Portugal: *The Sistema de Reconhecimento, Validação e Certificação de Competências* (Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences System), which comprises the educational scheme (the RVCC - academic) and a vocational scheme (RVCC-Professional).

This system was created and put into operation at government level by the Ministry of Education (ME) and the Ministry of Labour and Welfare (MTSS) in 1999. The Agency coordinates the implementation of the young and adult education and training policies and assures the development and management of the National System for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences, within the National Qualification System.

The National System of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (SNRVCC) comprises two areas: education and training. It is important to mention that joint work between these two systems has been established in an effort to promote the individual's social and professional development, not only in the education and training systems, but also on the labour market.

The network of Centres for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) was first established in Portugal in 2000. These Centres were responsible for the implementation of a national system for recognising, validating and certifying competences on behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Welfare and the Ministry of Education. They are financed by the State Budget and the European Commission through the European Social Fund, as negotiated at the time of the Community Support Framework III. They faced different phases: in the beginning they were settled as RVCC Centres, afterwards known as *New Opportunities* Centres because they were not only responsible for the providing the RVCC Process, but also for finding a suitable educational and training pathway for every adult who wants to improve his/her qualification level.

The New Opportunities Centres were promoted by public or private sector bodies with local, regional or national level standing. The National Agency for Qualification, I.P., was responsible for the creation of these Centres.

There were more than 450 New Opportunities Centres functioning in Portugal till 2012, located according to demographic density and geographical distribution related criteria, in order to mitigate regional asymmetries.

By 2011, more than 1.000.000 adults have applied to a New Opportunities Centre and more than 400.000 have achieved a full certification, mainly in the educational component. Every individual record of each candidate is saved in an integrated Information System managed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour (the *Sistema de Informação e Gestão da Oferta Educativa e Formativa*), which allows also the issuance of the official certificates and diplomas.

Recently, the European Commission, the UNESCO and the OECD have been recognizing the New Opportunities Initiative as one of the best practices to be followed by other Member-States in the field of education and training public policies. In the latest Inventory produced by the CEDEFOP on the VNFIL topic, Portugal is presented together with other Northern





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European Countries and France has one of the highest-developed RPL systems so far in Europe.

### ***2.3. Romania***

Romania was the first country in Central and Eastern Europe to start developing competence-based occupational standards for being used as foundation for new vocational education and training programmes and for improved assessment and certification practices, within the framework of the education reform launched in 1994 and funded jointly by EU, World Bank and Romanian Government.

The occupational standards are already the reference points for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The key development is the Order No. 3329/81/2005, which was issued by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity in 2005. The Order establishes the procedures for the evaluation and certification of informal and non-formal learning.

The certification is a collaborative process between the NAQ and recognised Assessment Centres. Certificates are issued by the NAQ and delivered by Assessment Centres to customers of the on their successful completion of the assessment process.

The Assessment Centres are accredited by NAQ.

The results of the assessment are recorded, and they include information on whether the individual meets all the occupation requirements or whether she/he needs to undertake training or develop specific competence areas.

The actual assessment procedure is followed by a process of internal verification, and an opportunity for the applicant to appeal against the decision.

### ***2.4. Norway***

Norway approached the validation of non-formal and informal learning long ago, one policy paper on this subject being issued in 1985. From 1999 to 2002, The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) set up a project for developing a system for formal validation of non-formal, informal and formal learning at all levels of education and training, from primary school to higher education.

The procedures of validation of non-formal and informal learning follow the same general stages as those described in European documents, including the provision of high quality information and guidance to all relevant target groups at the preparatory stage. The national curriculum for the relevant programme is used as reference for assessment and validation. The Norwegian wage agreement between the social partners encourages enterprises to have systems for documenting employees' competence as a means of visualizing workplace learning. The professionalization of assessors is the responsibility of the education sector, and at the primary and secondary levels this is followed up by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training or local educational authorities or institutions.



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Norway is developing a NQF. In this context, validation of non-formal and informal learning as a part of the formal education system is seen to be formally unproblematic, since it relates to criteria in the formal system, which will automatically be related to certain levels in the framework.

In 2009, MoER assigned the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning, Vox, to map the status of implementation of RPL at the national level, initiate activities to strengthen coordination between all stakeholders, and improve quality assurance in the provision of RPL at the different levels of education and training.



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### **3. Preparatory phases for the Piloting of RPL in Albania**

In this section, it will be reported the necessary steps undertaken to pilot the RPL mechanisms in Albania in the textile industry.

Further to the adoption of the National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020 and its Action Plan, and in the scope of the ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania, the following actions were implemented and completed:

1. As a first preparatory step, a frame methodology was developed by the international expert Ms. Elisabeta Mitroi to support the test of RPL mechanisms in Albania (Annex 1). The methodology laid down the principles and preconditions of the RPL processes, including the identification of the necessary and concrete steps of its implementation. The Frame Methodology was presented, discussed and approved by the MoSWY and main stakeholders;
2. The second step was the development of Guidelines for the Development of Competence-based Occupational Standards in Albania. These Guidelines provided the users with the necessary instructions on how to develop and approve/validate an Occupational Standard, including the related templates and the description of the profile and role of occupational developers. For the development of the Guidelines, the international expert Ms. Mikaela Kets cooperated and benefitted from a continuous support and feedback from the project experts and from the main VET stakeholders (MoSWY, NAVETQ, NES, VET Providers, Chamber of Façon, National Chamber for Garment, Confederate of the Trade Union, Union of the Independent Trade Unions of Albania);
3. The Guidelines for the Development of Competence-based Occupational Standards in Albania underpinned the development of two Occupational Standards for the textile sector: (i) Quality Controller in Leather Shoes Manufacturing; and (ii) Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing. Project and NAVETQ experts, professionals from textile companies, facilitated by chambers of industry representatives, were involved in the development of these Occupational Standards. In order to collect accurate information and to better understand the production/manufacturing processes, the experts team in charge of developing the Occupational Standards visited two companies and have directly observed the work processes and discussed both with the workers and their supervisors on the most important and relevant topics for the process of developing the standards; The industry and VET stakeholders selected to pilot the RPL mechanism and to develop assessment instruments for the occupation of Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing. This was considered a key-occupation involving many workers with specialised knowledge acquired through the work experience without formal certification;
4. Next step was the design of assessment tools, so that it matches the structure of the Occupational Standard. Then, the format and the contents of the assessment tools have been developed. Self-assessment, Portfolio, Written test, Third party report and Direct



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observation sheets were discussed both with the project experts and with the experts of the NAVETQ Assessment Sector;

5. Further to the development of all the materials needed for the pilot exercise, a call for expression of interest to social partners, companies and education and training providers working in the textile sector was opened in order to select the RPL assessors whom were specifically trained for this purpose. This was followed by a transparent selection process based on advertised criteria. 10 potential assessors have been selected to participate in the training action;
6. An intensive practice-based training session was organised for the selected 10 persons (out of a total number of 16 short-listed applicants) from textile industry, employers' organisations and vocational education and training sector. The assessment tools were then revised, improved and adapted during (and after) the training session so that they would be more appropriate to facilitate the piloting of the RPL mechanism in Albania;
7. The RPL mechanisms were successfully piloted in Albania in November 2014 for the selected occupation in a close cooperation with NAVETQ and private sector. The assessment of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts of 5 (five) candidates was completed for the selected occupation of *Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing*. A set of conclusions and recommendations from this pilot can be found at the end of this report.

### ***3.1. Guidelines for the development of Competence-based Occupational Standards in Albania***

The development of Occupational Standards is an important step in the implementation of RPL system as a reference framework of knowledge, skills and attitudes which can be assessed and certified individually. RPL mechanisms can't work without occupational standards, because they are the main national referential to the assessment and certification processes.

The *Guidelines for the development of Competence-based Occupational Standards in Albania* (Annex 2) should help the experts to develop these kinds of standards. These Guidelines constitute the basis for developing recognition of prior learning mechanisms in Albania. In this respect, it was proposed a "simple" occupational standard model, easy to be applied, that can be adopted by the partners and afterwards further developed.

The objective of developing Occupational Standards is to provide a basis for a coherent and transparent national qualification framework for both initial and continuing vocational training. Since the country is in the process of developing further its Albanian Qualification Framework (AQF), it cannot stand away from the trend of developing and using Occupational Standards as a national reference. Thus, the Occupational Standards developed in close cooperation with the industry experts in Albania can become a basis for the vocational qualifications embedded in the AQF.



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Qualifications Standards can be also developed directly from the corresponding Occupational Standards, making them broader, and relevant for both labour market dynamics and education and training system organisation.

To ensure the link between qualifications and labour market there is need to develop Occupational Standards that describe the job requirements, together with emphasizing the competences required. For a more clear analysis of the workplace, the Guidelines use elements from the DACUM method employed by NAVETQ in Albania.

Occupational Standards specify what a person should know and do, in order to perform efficiently and effectively in the workplace. Occupational Standards are statements of competences required in the workplace.

- It is called “Occupational” because they describe what is done in the workplace – they are about job roles and job activities.
- It is called “Standards” because they are based on an agreed minimum best practice and take into account all statutory requirements.

The developed Guidelines intend to approach the Occupational Standards description in terms of competences. It was decided that the Occupational Standards should be described in terms of competences to ensure a better link with the labour market, focusing more on learning outcomes rather than only on learning inputs.

It is recommended to visit several companies to develop a single Occupational Standard in order to get information on the different variants that occupation might have according to different working contexts.

Based on the Occupational Standards developed in the scope of the IPA 2010 project, assessment tools were designed and used for the assessment of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.

### *3.1.1. Development of the Occupational Standard “Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing”*

The development team of the Occupational Standards was moderated by the international expert Ms. Mikaela Kets. Participants included industry specialist and NAVETQ experts. The development team was appointed in cooperation with the Board of *Façon*.

A successful garment manufacturing company in Tirana was visited in order to understand better the production process and the role of the Line Production technician.

The specialists experience together with direct observation of the process led to the detailed description of the Occupation, as it performed in a daily bases in the company workplaces.

For the development of the Occupational Standard “Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing” (Annex 3), the following activities were carried out the:

1. Collect information on the occupation
2. Identify duties and tasks based on the information collected
3. Determine the (specific) competences and units of competences
4. Describe the competences in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes





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5. Establish performance criteria
6. Double check the draft with direct observation
7. List contexts and tools, materials, machinery, technical documentation, working conditions.

After completing all the activities described above, the occupational standard was developed. It was then revised and improved following the input of chambers of industry.

### *3.1.2. Development of the Occupational Standard “Quality Controller in Leather Shoes Manufacturing”*

The development team of the Occupational Standards was moderated by the international expert Ms. Mikaela Kets. Participants included industry specialist and NAVETQ experts. The development team was appointed in cooperation with the Chamber of *Façon* of Albania. The team visited a very successful shoe production company in Tirana, in order to observe and understand better the production process and the role of the Quality Controller. The same methodology was followed here as for the previous Occupational Standard.

The exercise of developing Occupational standards, as described in the Guidelines, showed that this methodology was particularly relevant and useful for Albania. The industry-based process led to developed Occupational Standards appreciated by social partners, other companies not directly involved in the development team, and checked and approved by assessors and candidates later on.

It should be noted that **“Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing”** and **“Quality Controller in Leather Shoes Manufacturing”** (Annex 4) are the first Occupational Standards developed in Albania.

### *3.2. Training of the RPL Assessors*

Numerous preparation activities and support materials were developed to ensure the successful implementation of the training programme for RPL assessors.

Thus, the RPL international expert, first, has developed a Concept Note on *Training Programme for Assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Processes in Albania* (Annex 5), where the following topics were approached, developed and explained:

1. Background information on the Project/RPL output,
2. Expected results,
3. Objectives of the Training,
4. Training Participants,
5. Profile of assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Processes for the Occupation of Production Technician in Garment production,
6. Requirements for the selection process to become assessor (participant in the training),
7. Duration of the training,
8. Training plan,
9. Training methods to be used during the training,
10. Training materials,



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11. Training Documents,
12. Trainer's reference.

The following aspects were highlighted during the training for the full cycle of RPL assessment: the necessary time to develop assessment instruments for all the 13 units of competence; the complexity of the assessment instruments; the appraisal procedures; the number of assessors in an assessment commission; how to apply the assessment instruments; the assessment of the unit of competences as a whole *versus* the assessment of separate competences within a unit of competence; following the most relevant aspect, the final decision on competence validation.

Nine main units of competence of the Occupational Standard Line production Technician in Garment Manufacturing were selected to be included in the assessment tools for the piloting purpose.

### 3.2.1. *Development of the assessment tools*

The assessment tools (Annex 6) for the RPL piloting were further developed during the training session for the assessors, based on the pre-model prepared by the international expert Mrs. Mikaela Kets.

The trainees (selected potential assessors) and NAVETQ experts decided to use for this piloting exercise the following assessment tools: Direct Observation; Written Test; Portfolio and Third Party Reports, as these configure the most appropriate tools for the selected occupation under test. These tools were complemented by the use of a Self-assessment Report and an individual Registration Sheet filled in by each candidate.

A template and an explanation for each assessment tool was provided to the trainees, including the assessment objectives, expected outcomes and the appraisal procedures. The assessment tools were developed based on the existing information on the Occupational Standard and in full compliance with it.

The role of the industry experts was crucial in determining the questions for the written tests, the weight of the Direct Observation Tool in the overall assessment, the selection of the most relevant unit of competences to be observed and the role of the candidate's portfolio in the assessment process.

The final version of the assessment tools was completed after the training session. Furthermore, the Self-assessment Report was developed.

The development of the assessment tools was an opportunity to check the Occupational Standard compliance and relevance. The majority of the training participants endorsed its contents. However, there were discussions on whether "cutting skills" should have been more highlighted in the standard depending on the responsibilities carried out by the Line Production technician in different companies.



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### **4. Piloting of RPL processes in Albania**

The project experts undertook various preparatory actions to ensure a proper implementation of the procedures involved in the assessment of professional competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts in Albania, in other words, to ensure a proper piloting of the RPL mechanisms in the country.

Before initiating the pilot itself, the candidates were selected as per the defined profile of the candidate (provided in advance by the international expert to the project experts for this selection procedure in close cooperation with textile companies operating in Tirana region).

The companies employing the candidates were contacted and briefed in advance, to facilitate the process and avoid disruptions in the work process. A Concept Note for the Piloting Stage of RPL in Albania (Annex 7) was developed, addressing the following topics:

1. background information on the project/ RPL output,
2. expected results,
3. objectives of the pilot stage,
4. guidance/counselling of assessors during the pilot stage,
5. assessor's role and profile,
6. candidate's role and profile,
7. work context,
8. duration of the piloting stage,
9. work plan,
10. resources,
11. recommendations, and
12. coach's reference.

The piloting stage was developed according to the objectives and agenda included in the Concept Note.



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### 5. Conclusions

The initiative of the ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on HRD in Albania to develop the first pilot for introducing the RPL mechanisms in Albania has demonstrated to be highly relevant as a way to encourage labour market mobility and leverage of the already existing skills of the work force.

The development of Guidelines for the Development of Occupational Standards and the training provided for the potential RPL assessors aimed to support not only the implementation of the RPL system but also to raise awareness among the main stakeholders involved in the development of the adult training /Lifelong learning in Albania.

The industry professionals highly appreciated and showed a very serious commitment to the activities implemented under this project Component contributing decisively to a sound and active collaboration between the private sector and the VET sector.

Although, initially the communication between the labour market professionals and the education experts experienced to be difficult, it has improved significantly during the project activities implementation, which has revealed to be an interesting way of exchanging information and coaching the public administration staff.

The candidates assessed during the piloting of RPL mechanism for the Line Production technician provided a positive feedback regarding this innovative process as it was feasible, very transparent and understandable for them.

The following elements resulted from a SWOT analysis carried out after the RPL piloting, which includes also the main feedback from the pilot participants. Main strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats are listed below:

#### Strengths

- The engagement of participants and organizers in the process
- Strong ownership of the RPL process by NAVETQ
- Very good cooperation between the Project team, NAVETQ, the involved companies, the vocational education and training institutions, and the candidates
- The evaluation conducted in real work conditions allows to assess objectively the competences of a worker according to the respective occupational standard
- The use of assessment instruments in real training and working conditions allowed for an ongoing improvement of assessment tools
- This system allows for the assessment of knowledge, skills and attitudes in a very comprehensive way
- The long duration of the assessment process allowed assessors to observe the candidates in different real work situations and provided the candidates more opportunities to demonstrate their competences

#### Weaknesses

- Limited time available to apply the assessment tool “Direct Observation”
- Development of assessment instruments for the entire unit of competence, not for each



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<p>competence, as advised during the training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited participation of an observant from Façon and Non-Façon companies</li> <li>• Limited time to assess all competences of Occupational Standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPL help us to value all learning achievements irrespectively to where and when the learning took place</li> <li>• RPL helps identifying the skill gaps and reintegrating the individual in formal learning/training processes for filling these gaps</li> <li>• RPL is a valuable means for encouraging and supporting Lifelong Learning</li> <li>• The development of assessment tools was an opportunity to check the information included in the developed Occupational Standard</li> <li>• Availability of trained, qualified and certified RPL assessors for future implementation of these processes</li> <li>• The certification of RPL assessors enhances the quality of the assessment process</li> <li>• Ability to develop new assessment tools based on the experience gained</li> <li>• A new occupation is forecast to be developed in the labour market - the competences assessor</li> <li>• New jobs for RPL assessors, therefore new employment opportunities</li> <li>• The RPL assessors may undertake their activities both in private companies and public institutions</li> <li>• Increased self-assessment capacity of candidates</li> <li>• Increased self-confidence of candidates</li> <li>• The VET teachers had contact with different assessment processes, more practical and experience-oriented, as well as based on competences</li> <li>• The shift in the Albanian system, from theory to applied theory, integrated in practical activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quality training of the Assessors may increase the costs of the assessment process</li> <li>• The training for Assessors might become a formality, unless it is finalised with a real assessment, under real working conditions</li> <li>• Poor training of Assessors may have a negative impact as it may undermined the trust in the system</li> <li>• The lack of a quality assurance in RPL mechanism may diminish the trust in the system</li> <li>• Lack of legal framework and established legal procedures for the implementation of the RPL mechanism at national level are a gap to its further development</li> <li>• Qualitative assessment process requires time and resources.</li> </ul>

As mentioned previously, the RPL processes are becoming a reality and an integral part of many VET systems across the European Union countries. This is due to the fact that learning processes are not so steady and unilateral as they used to be in the past, acquiring new formats





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and new dynamics every day. Thus, it is important that the education and training systems are aware of these fundamental changes and do what is necessary to be done to accommodate these innovative schemes of assessing and certifying learning outcomes. This is a demand of modern societies and developed economies. And for individuals, the RPL processes represent an unique opportunity to recognise and validate their learning efforts over the lifetime.

As Albania is in its way to access the European Union, it is very important that since this early stage, the test and further implementation of such innovative practices took place, as they will become part of the Albanian Qualification Framework and will represent a major progress for a more dynamic labour market, and for a more modern and up-to-date VET system.

Actually, the EU recommendation on Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning Processes has advised the EU Member-States and candidates countries to define policies and measures to encourage the implementation of RPL processes or similar systems. Albania is then in the right way, having acquired not only a set of methodological knowledge and tools for the implementation of such processes, but also clear guide and experience on how to develop such assessment and certification of vocational competences. This is to say, that the pilot undertaken had a double specific purpose, focusing both on methodological and operational conditions of RPL mechanisms.

Starting from the recommendations included in the *Methodological Frame for Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms in Albania* till the end of the pilot stage, a statement was kept: “RPL mechanism cannot work as the result of one single organisation, as there is not only one user and beneficiary of RPL”. Thus, the involvement of different stakeholders was of course one of the main assets of the entire piloting process.



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### 6. Recommendations

The main recommendations emerging from the piloting of RPL mechanisms in Albania, can be synthesised in four different dimensions: the institutional/legal, the financial, the methodological and the operational. Not aiming to be exhaustive, the following list of recommendations pretends to identify the most important elements to be taken into consideration for the further implementation of RPL mechanisms in the country, in the near future.

#### INSTITUTIONAL/LEGAL

- The introduction of the RPL mechanisms in Albania shall follow the conceptualisation of other advanced models in the European Union. Thus, it is recommended that the terminology to be used goes also along with the real needs of the country, using *Recognition and Certification of Vocational Competences* as the official reference for such sub-system under the current Vocational Education and Training System.
- The management of RPL process should be under responsibility of NAVETQ, as an integral part of the Vocational Education and Training system in the country, thus leading to recognised qualification/certification and linked to national standards (occupational and/or qualification standards).
- The necessary linkages to AQF/EQF levels 2/3 as a starting point to introduce RPL in the Vocational Qualification System in Albania should be a grounded element of the definition of such intervention.
- A comprehensive/complete legislative framework needs to be adopted for introducing and implementing the RPL mechanisms at the system level. This should be completed in advance and as part of the overall revision of the VET legislation foreseen to happen in the forthcoming years in the country.
- The legal framework should envisage the involvement of MoSWY, NES and NAVETQ experts in all actions related to RPL implementation in Albania, and identify the institutional roles and responsibilities of the different institutions (assessment centres, institution responsible for certification, institution responsible for external quality assurance, amongst other coordination activities to be established under cooperation agreements).

#### FINANCIAL

- There is a need of developing sustainable financing mechanisms supported, in a first phase, by the State budget, to initiate RPL implementation and institutionalisation, and gradually being transferred to the private sector and/or candidates co-funding.
- There should be considered the different financial opportunities raised by the Façon Fund and/or the EC Budget Support funds, as a way to include in their annual activity plans, calls for specific funds in order to foster the implementation of RPL in other economic sectors, besides the Façon industry.



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### **METHODOLOGICAL**

- It is highly recommend to start a comprehensive revision/updating of the National List of Occupations, in order to include the new occupations that have arisen from the labour market dynamics, as it is the case of the two occupations identified as very relevant for the Albanian textile and footwear manufacturing industry, and worked in the scope of RPL piloting. Qualification levels should be related only to qualifications, not necessarily to occupational standards.
- The revision of the existing qualifications should follow a logic of increased comprehensiveness towards the achievement of full qualifications by the Albanian youngsters and adults. This is to say that is necessary to develop qualifications that will include several occupations, and academic/vocational components, as envisaged in the EQF guidelines. To rename some qualifications and its related contents so that they reflect the links with the current labour market needs and the occupations they include.
- It would be highly recommended to extend and replicate the activities undertaken under this project to other economic sectors/qualifications, as per the identified needs, so as to identify new opportunities and work situations, in which RPL can make a difference. The findings achieved by the Skills Needs Analyses and the sectoral studies carried out shall inform the decisions to be taken on the selected sectors to apply RPL processes.
- The validation of the already prepared Occupational Standards by the national authorities will facilitate its recognition and relevance by the private sector and trade unions.
- There is a need to develop an Occupational Standard for the RPL Assessor of vocational competences, which shall be used for further training/certification of the future assessors.
- It is necessary to update and further develop a set of Guidelines to frame the implementation of the RPL processes.
- Assessment tools are needed for each competence (within a specific Occupational Standard) rather than for each unit of competences, thus ensuring transparency and fairness of assessment.

### **OPERATIONAL**

- The already trained assessors in the scope of this pilot shall be used for delivering Training of Trainers actions for other potential assessors.
- There is need to define which certification options for the RPL processes can be used in the scope of the VET system in Albania (diploma or certificate, or both).
- At the operational level it needs to be developed procedures and tools to create multiple possibilities to enter and to exit from the education/training system, avoiding dead-ends and blocking the permeability across qualifications/ educational pathways.
- The Albanian Qualification Framework should provide multiple opportunities for acquiring certified qualifications, while having the option for the Albanian population to have their competences recognised regardless the context they have been acquired.



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This is to say, as a conclusion and general recommendation that it is essential to have sound outcomes of RPL implementation in order to raise the interest and confidence of the individuals and of the employers. When individuals understand and feel the concrete benefits of RPL processes, they become the most important promoters of these qualification pathways. This also paves the way to other individuals and organisations to accept this a valid qualification pathway and to support financially their own assessment and certification.

A similar *rationale* can be applicable to the employers who will be interested to assess and certify their personnel for commercial reasons (e.g. participation to tenders when certified personnel is required). Until the RPL mechanism is well established it is unlikely to be financed from private and individual resources, therefore it is important to have a synergic involvement of all stakeholders in the development and pilot implementation of RPL mechanisms in order to obtain a robust model that will meet the requirements and expectations of all actors. This is exactly what have been done in the pilot trial done in Albania for the textile and footwear manufacturing industry.



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### **ANNEX 1**

#### **Frame Methodology for implementing Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms in Albania**





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## **Frame Methodology for implementing Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms in Albania**



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### **9. 1. Introduction**

The present document is aimed to assist in establishing a system for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Albania. It was developed under Component 3 (VET Reform) of the IPA 2010 project “Human Resources Development in Albania” funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO) and their implementing agencies.

It is addressed to the all stakeholders in vocational education and training, but it is equally useful for general education as well, particularly to those who commit to engage actively in setting up a RPL system in Albania. They need to have a clear and comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the process in order to contribute to the development of the legal and institutional framework of RPL.

Over the past decade, Albania has been one of the fastest-growing countries in Europe, enjoying positive annual real growth rates, accompanied by rapid reductions in poverty. The proportion of the population in absolute poverty declined from over 25% in 2002 to 12.4% by 2008 (UNDP 2010). At the same time, Albania has experienced a population decrease of 7.7% as a result of high rates of emigration and fertility decline, which creates new challenges to the sustainable economic growth.

On one hand the emigration process drained the country of young and skilled labour force, on the other hand the fertility decline leads soon to an ageing population. The negative effects of these trends on economic performance can be reduced by increasing the skill level of the active population, encouraging older workers to update their knowledge and skills, and creating opportunities for learning and for acquiring new competences. The recognition of knowledge and skills acquired through work experience and/or voluntary activities is a valuable tool to encourage people to pursue lifelong learning and for optimising the training costs.

These aspects represent matters of concern not only for Albania but for many other countries which faced dramatic consequences of the global crisis. Therefore national governments, European and world organisations, but also individual organisations and NGOs worked for developing mechanisms and tools for encouraging the continuous learning and professional development of individuals, as most powerful tool for increasing the adaptability to the changing life and work conditions.

The introduction of RPL mechanisms is supported at European level with guidelines and recommendations aimed to harmonise and consolidate national efforts and approaches of individual countries.

This Methodological Guide on RPL will be presented and discussed with the main stakeholders and will incorporate aspects resulting from their comments and suggestions.



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### **10.2. Concept definition**

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), better known in Europe as Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL), is one of the most valuable tools for increasing the participation of individuals in lifelong and lifewide learning.

The high mobility of individuals, in general, and the migration of the labour force, in particular, allows the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences not only through formal learning, but also through work practices, social and work experiences, known as non-formal and informal learning. The need for transparent qualifications encouraged countries to develop models for emphasizing vocational routes and work experience of individuals.

The type of non-formal and informal learning may occur:

- On the job, by performing work activities
- In volunteer activities
- Through a hobby or interest
- In military service
- Through travel
- Through independent study
- Through family and life experiences

A modern society and labour market value both formal education and experience. The ever-changing job market, the lack of employment stability, the speed of technology development all require adults to re-skill and re-train more frequently than ever before.

Many Governments across the world are preoccupied about the quality of the human resources involved in their economies and see RPL as an important element of national policies on education, training and employment.

The RPL is a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard. RPL is usually associated with (but not limited to) the validation of non-formal and informal learning

According to the CEDEFOP glossary of terms<sup>3</sup> validation of non-formal and informal learning

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<sup>3</sup> Glossary Quality in Education and Training, 2011



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is ‘The confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification.’”

RPL usually consists of the following distinct phases:

1. Individual expresses the interest for getting recognition of competences acquired through work experience and applies formally for this recognition in a specialised institution (i.e. assessment centre)
2. The institution provides the applicant with the relevant reference documentation (occupational standards, occupational profiles, qualification specs, learning outcomes based curriculum and guides him/her through self-reflection on own life/work experience)
3. The assessment centre in consultation with the applicant set up the assessment process
4. The applicant pursues the assessment process and a decision is given, followed by a formal certification and/or further learning.

The assessment of work experience (synthetised in knowledge, skills and competences) is the crucial part of RPL if we want to secure a trustful process. Therefore a special attention will be paid for describing in detail the principles and features of the assessment and to the assessment process itself.

There are many benefits of RPL for the individuals:

1. Eliminates duplication of learning: Individuals should not have to re-do courses which content they already know or can do. For most adults, this shortens the route to access a full qualification, encourages the participation to short training programmes aimed to support the continuous professional development and update their competences.
2. Increases self-esteem and self-confidence: RPL advances and enriches an adult's learning process through the promotion of self-esteem, self-known, and the mobilization of resources toward actualization of knowledge and skills.
3. Validates learning through work and life experiences: Too often nowadays, the only learning that the society recognises is that gained through formal learning. RPL process allows individuals to emphasise and get recognition for the learning achieved through work and life experiences.





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4. Identifies areas requiring further studies or training: Individuals are not always aware of what knowledge and skills they *do* and *do not* possess. By helping individuals pin point their areas of strengths and weaknesses, the RPL process allows individuals to self-determine what further work will be needed in order to fill the gaps and acquire a certification or full qualification.
5. Gains an understanding of personal strengths and professional aspirations: Through the RPL process individuals do a great deal of self-reflection and identification of interests and abilities. They set goals and determine their aspirations and needs in a wide range of areas of their lives. This helps them clarify where they want to go and how to get there.
6. Encourages learners to pursue education: RPL can give a person the base from which to pursue further education. Individuals can develop goals from their prior learning, knowledge, and skills. Lifelong learning is validated and offered as a possible goal.
7. Increases access: Adult learners who might not come back for further or higher education may be attracted to get certificates of competence or even full qualification (certificate) through RPL. The RPL processes give the individuals the possibility to obtain the equivalent of a qualification through assessment of work experience and their informal and non-formal learning experiences.
8. May shorten the time to complete a learning cycle: When individuals are assessed for their prior learning they can receive a number of credits for courses or parts of programs. Assessment may allow learners the chance to demonstrate skills and knowledge through a portfolio, challenge exams, skill demonstrations, projects, interviews, or simulations.
9. Provides career development: Individuals who do RPL can expect to identify career goals, career objectives and paths to job advancement. When individuals clearly understand their skills, knowledge and abilities, they identify routes to gaining recognition and also a better understanding of the requirements of different job categories. RPL can prepare individuals to challenge employers for job promotions and/or career development opportunities.



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### 11.3. Principles of RPL

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning has an important role in making lifelong learning a fully functional process. Individuals, especially adults, are hardly motivated for new learning experiences unless they get recognition for the skills and knowledge they already acquired.

Recognition can only happen if all stakeholders have agreed on what constitutes the common core of all forms of learning and highlight the mechanisms of these elements.

Over the last five years important organisations worldwide conducted extensive consultations with the delegations of their Member States on the demand of recognition of all forms of learning and included the conclusions in the policy documents, which were jointly adopted<sup>4,5</sup>. They also mandated their specialised organisations to issue guidelines<sup>6</sup>, with main aim to assist national institutions in developing or improving the procedures and institutional frameworks for implementation of RPL.

These guidelines harmonize the principles and mechanisms of RPL so that the individual who get recognition of learning outcomes can easily move across different forms of learning making the best use of each of them, in accordance with own capacity and aspirations.

The principles of RPL are synthesised below:

- **RPL processes are centred on individuals and their enrolment for RPL must be voluntary**

RPL must be seen as a right of the individual, and not as an obligation. Therefore the individual decides if and when is ready to be assessed for getting the certificate for skills and knowledge acquired through experience.

- **The privacy of individuals should be respected**

Personal data used in the enrolment for RPL, or the information occurring during the assessment process (the results of the written/oral test, the level of performance) should be

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<sup>4</sup> *Belém Framework for Action* adopted by the UNESCO delegates to the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) (Brazil, 2009)

<sup>5</sup> *The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for the period 2011-2020* adopted by the European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training, the European Social Partners and the European Commission (Bruges, 2010)

<sup>6</sup> In 2009 CEDEFOP issued *European Guidelines for Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning*, and UNESCO-UIL issued *UNESCO Guidelines for the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of Non-formal and Informal Learning*.



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known only by the interested parties and are never subject of public information and discussions.

- **Equal access and fair treatment should be guaranteed, in the same time inclusiveness and equal access to learning opportunities should be ensured**

All individuals should have access to RPL processes, with no limitation, irrespective of gender, race, disabilities, etc. Many countries decided for positive discrimination measures, by tailoring validation systems to the needs of particular groups, notably immigrants, individuals with disabilities, unemployed or the low-qualified but this practice might run the risk of placing validation outside mainstream qualifications policies and different weights for the same certificates, depending on the route to certification. Since the Albanian system is at the very beginning, abiding the principle in its letter will create no confusion, or complication difficult to handle. The main idea is to create equal access and fair treatment and not to allow for preferential conditions.

- **Stakeholders** should be involved in establishing systems for validation.

It is not possible to focus on those directly involved in RPL processes – candidate, assessor, counsellors, managers of the institution that host the assessment processes (e.g. assessment centre) or of the authority - without referring to stakeholders that have an interest in the successful RPL operation. They might represent:

- public or private bodies that fund the process;
- public bodies that have agreed a policy for RPL;
- employers;
- authorities and NGO's committed for lifelong learning.

These stakeholders often serve on advisory committees at the national level, industry or sector level, or within assessment centres. The most effective participation of the employers and industry representatives in the development of adequate instruments and tools for quality VET of is through VET Sectoral Councils or Committees, which are entities organised at the industry level.

- Systems should contain **mechanisms for guidance and counselling** of individuals.

The candidate who enrolls for assessment might have a personal understanding about the requirements for a certain job. Since the occupational standard or description of qualification have been developed by industry experts, the structure, format and terminology might differ from the candidates view. For making the best use and obtaining the expected outcomes from assessment process, the candidate should be guided in the process of self-assessment in order to ease the process of producing and collecting evidence of competence.



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Guidance and counselling might be needed at the end of the assessment process as well, when the assessor identifies skill gaps and the candidate should be directed to further learning. The assessment centre need to provide guidance for closing the cycle of learning, otherwise the process remains unfinalised.

- Systems should be underpinned by **quality assurance**

Certificates and qualifications received as a result of successful assessment have national recognition, even might be subject of international negotiations in HR issues. This would be a heavy burden on the shoulders of assessors and on assessment centre. The quality assurance mechanism consolidate the confidence and trust of the users and of the stakeholders that the assessment process provides reliable and valid results, certificates being comparable across the VET system, irrespective how knowledge and skills have been acquired.

- The **professional competences of those who carry out assessments** must be assured.

Developing competencies, as well as assessing competencies is a matter of competent performance. With other words if teaching and training is a matter of well defined qualifications, assessing is also subject of a self standing qualification, i.e. assessor of competence. In the same time, for being able to identify competence in different pieces of evidence produced by the candidate, it is necessary for the assessor to have a strong understanding of the occupation which is assessed. The assessor must demonstrate a double set of professional qualities. On one hand must have relevant and current experience in occupation assessed. On the other hand must be qualified assessor, must have skills and competences to guide candidate in producing/ gathering evidence, and in weighting the evidence against the requirements of the standard/qualification.

### 12. Main features of RPL

It is important to strengthening the comparability of approaches to validation at different levels and in different contexts, as it is part of developing trust at international level. It has been said that the national and regional methods and systems developed so far can be considered 'islands' of validation. Lack of system comparability makes it difficult for individuals to combine learning outcomes acquired in different settings, at different levels and in different countries.

In order to secure the comparability of RPL mechanisms we need to understand and comply with a set of aspects meant to give them coherence, consistency and robustness:



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- **RPL is referenced to the national standards** (occupational standards, training standards, learning outcomes defined for each qualification etc.).

The knowledge an individual possesses might be broad and divers. So are the skills and work experience. The recognition cannot be given by comparing two individuals, one is more knowledgeable or much skillful than the other. The knowledge, skills and competences of a person should be compared with the competences defined for an occupation, or with the learning outcomes of a qualification as these have been agreed with the stakeholders at the national level.

- **RPL is based on assessment of individual's knowledge, skills and competences**

No decision for validating the non-formal or informal learning can be done unless the individual who required recognition is assessed and is found competent. The assessment must reflect the specifications of an occupational standard or other reference document that describes the learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences necessary to perform certain work activities.

- The assessment processes are conducted by a **competent assessors**

The decision whether or not a person posses the knowledge, skills and competences required in an occupation can be done only by a person who already proved own competence for respective occupation and, in addition, is trained as assessor. Conducting assessment processes requires capacity to decide what evidence of competence the individual should provide, how the evidence must be understood and interpreted for a valid and fair decision, if the individual has knowledge and/or skill gaps and how these gaps should be filled by further learning.

- The assessment processes take place in **assessment centres**

The assessment process must emphasize the capacity of individual to perform work activities, using knowledge, skills and competences described in the occupational standard or another reference document. It means that main assessment method should be the practical demonstration of work performance in conditions similar or as close as possible to the real work situations. In addition any other assessment method used, e.g. written test, oral test, simulation, etc., must provide comparable conditions for all individuals who are assessed. Moreover the data resulting from assessment processes should be safely stored for verification and audit purposes. Therefore it is necessary that the institution that host the assessment process to have:

- Conditions for practical demonstration (equipment, materials, tools) in real work conditions or simulated ones
- Conditions for applying other assessment methods





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- Conditions for administering and storing the information and data resulting from assessment processes

The assessment centre should be the main interlocutor for the individuals who search for RPL and it should provide them with information, guidance and counselling regarding the assessment and validation process, so they become more aware of their competences and capacity to fulfill the assessment requirements.

The assessment centre is also responsible for implementing a system of quality assurance, which will consolidate the confidence of the users and of the stakeholders that RPL is consistently implemented in accordance with the agreed principles and features.

In December 2012, the Council of European Union adopted a recommendation<sup>7</sup> meant to harmonise the efforts of the member states for developing a robust and consistent system of VNFIL, aimed to support the individuals getting recognition of their competences, irrespective the way they acquired them.

The arrangements for RPL include the following elements:

### **1. Identification of an individual's skills, knowledge and competences (expressed in learning outcomes) acquired through non-formal or informal learning.**

It is always a challenge for the learner to be able to describe his/her relevant competence, for example through documentation in a portfolio or by way of dialogue, in a manner that it can be validated. Another challenge is the need for competent assessors that have the ability to recognize the competence in question toward the learning outcomes in the curriculum.

### **2. Documentation of learning outcomes**

This refers to national or sectoral/industry standards and subsequent used as reference documents for learning, assessment and certification. The subsequent documents originating in occupational standards might be – qualification descriptions, learning outcomes and, if relevant curriculum specifications, assessment instruments, guiding and counselling materials, etc.

### **3. Assessment of an individual's skills, knowledge and competences**

For RPL a mechanism of holistic assessment of an individual's skills, knowledge and competences, quality assured, consistent with formative and summative assessment should be developed and accessible in the assessment centre. The certification can be consolidated on the decision taken at the end of an assessment process.

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<sup>7</sup> Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012, on validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/ C 398/01)



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### **4. Official recognition of an individual's acquisitions in form of a certificate covering a full or part of a qualification**

The certificate issued at the end of an assessment process, as a conclusion of RPL process on which an individual had enrolled might cover all competences of an occupation or only a few of them in accordance with the agreement established with the main stakeholders. They decide what and how many competences are necessary for official recognition, in fact for granting the individual with the trust to practice work activities. They can decide also that full qualification can be acquired through non-formal or informal learning.

### **13 Preconditions for RPL**

The first principle mentioned in the Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning from December 2012 requires the validation arrangements to be linked with the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs).

In many countries NQFs are based on occupational standards that describe the workplace requirements expressed skills, competences and necessary knowledge. The development of occupational standards needs to be done by occupational/sector specialists, to make sure their relevance against the workplace requirements.

From occupational standard, the education and training specialists will define the learning outcomes, which are the focus of the qualifications and of the curriculum. This is the way of making sure that training programmes are in line with the industry requirements.

A fully defined qualification contains assessment specifications from which can be developed assessment tools used in the process of producing evidence of competence.

The candidates to RPL can use the occupational standards for reflecting on own performance and competences. Only when the candidate is fully aware about the content of the occupational standard and decides that he can produce evidence of competence, the assessment process can start. If the candidate fails in providing appropriate evidence, the assessor must explain what is not matching the requirements set in the standard, and guide the candidate on further learning.

The assessor is another key factor of implementation of RPL. Only persons with relevant and current experience in the competences that are assessed can make a good judgment of the performance and evidence produced by the candidate. The assessor, apart from the professional competence, must also be trained in how to conduct the assessment process and to make the decision. Usually assessors are vocational trainers with current knowledge and experience, or practitioners in respective occupation/qualifications who attend training for assessment.



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For the assessment process to start, assessment instruments must be developed and tested. Analysing the occupation or qualification which will be assessed the educationalists and occupational experts will decide what assessment method is applicable. The options include knowledge tests – written test, oral test, interview – product observation, performance in real work conditions or in simulated environment, etc. All methods are operationalised in assessment instruments, which need to be tested and validated prior to the use with real candidates, for ensuring the trust of users and beneficiaries.

### **Setting up the preconditions for RPL implementation in Albania**

The development of pre-conditions for the implementation of RPL should take into consideration that Albania does not have yet a portfolio of occupational standards to be used as reference documents. The development of occupational standards is planned for the third AQF implementation phase 2013-2017. The implementation of RPL should not be delayed because of lack of occupational standards.

Given the fact that descriptions of qualifications have been developed with support of industry experts and reflect the features of the occupations and work activities, they might be used as reference documents, although they have a much concentrated structure and their content is not organized by assessable and certifiable units. In addition the orientative program, attached to each description of qualification, might be used as a relevant source of information for the development of assessment tools.

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Review of existing description of qualifications and of the related orientative programs for the selected occupations/qualification
- Development of a reference framework of knowledge and skills, units based, which can be assessed and certified individually, for each qualification
- Establishment of assessment methods and development of assessment instruments relevant and applicable to each unit
- Selection and training of assessors – the future assessors will be selected from the industry experts with relevant and current experience in the occupation(s), which will be assessed. The stakeholders representing the industry sector should recommend them. An ideal situation is for some industry experts who used to be involved in the processes of on-the-job training of apprentices.



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### 14

#### 14.1 RPL Process

Recognition of Prior Learning is a process, which starts with the candidate's expression of interest for getting recognition for work experience, and ends with the issuance of a certificate.

In fact the process starts when the candidate acknowledges the specifications of an occupational standard or of the qualification, reflects on own knowledge, skills and competences, decides when is ready to go through the assessment process and enrolls for assessment in an assessment centre.

After the candidate applies for RPL, the assessment centre allocates an assessor who decides in consultation with the candidate for an assessment plan. During the process the assessor decides whether the candidate has all competences and recommends the certification (for full or part of qualification) or if there are gaps in skills, knowledge and competences. In the latter case, the assessor will recommend further learning and agree with the candidate on an assessment plan.

When the candidate will accomplish the development plan and provide new evidence of competence, the assessor will re-assess the candidate. If the candidate is successful, the assessor will recommend the certification. Usually the certificate is issued auspices of Ministry of Education, but in some countries under the logo and authority of Ministry of Labour, or of the national Authority for Qualifications. In fact the certificates are issued by the body, which is responsible for the quality assurance of the certificates and assessment processes.

As mentioned above, for securing the robustness of the process a quality assurance mechanism will be in place. It means that apart from reference documents (standards, qualifications, learning outcomes, assessment instruments), and competent assessor, the centre will set up:

- a system of recording assessment data where all relevant information will be stored and make available when a control or an audit will be required
- an appeal process is in place and acknowledged to all parties involved in the RPL
- an internal verification mechanism that will ensure permanent improvement of processes, and consistency in decision making process.

#### **RPL Process in Albania**

The main questions popping up when starting the implementation of RPL in Albania are "Who should have access to RPL? Who are the beneficiaries of RPL?"

There are few categories of people who might need or might be interested to apply for RPL:

First of all there are **persons who used to work in little family business**, developed



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skills and experience by practicing work activities but did not attend a relevant formal vocational programme. In Albania these people come mainly from agriculture, car repairers, tourism or handicraft. Many times they come to the National Employment Service and require to be registered for a certain qualification, but have no certificate or other evidence. They would benefit from RPL by getting recognition for the skills they can demonstrate, and also by identifying their skills needs and directing future learning towards filling these gaps.

One relevant group are **returning migrants**. Many Albanians who chose to work abroad are expected to return due to the long effects of the global crisis. They left the country without a formal qualification, or found work in other occupation than the one they were qualified. It is undoubtedly they acquired skills, knowledge and competences through work experience. Albania could also benefit from their skills. Assuming they worked in a well equipped work-place, we can imagine they acquired skills and knowledge as well as more sophisticated competences. They should be given the chance to get recognition for what they achieved through non-formal and informal learning. From NES data the returning migrants have work experience for the following occupations: cook, construction worker, baby sitter, worker in textile industry.

Another group is **redundant workers** who were dismissed when a factory was closed for various reasons. These people have a qualification in an occupation which is not required anymore, have also work experience and they should have the chance to be assessed and redirected towards additional training for a related occupation with more employment opportunities.

Least but not last should be mentioned the **people who dropped out the formal education** before achieving a qualification. After years of work experience, in the country or abroad, they must have been acquired knowledge and skills which might be assessed against an occupational standard and can form the basis for further learning finalised with a certificate of some sort.





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### 14.2. Institutional Arrangements

The institutional arrangements refer to the organisations and institutions involved in the mechanism of RPL.

RPL needs to have agreement and involvement of the social partners. The industry is the main beneficiary of the qualified labour force. The participation of the social partners in defining the conditions for certification gives the confidence of the employers that certificates and diplomas reflects the real workplace practices and needs and are quality assured.

Support of the public authorities responsible for qualification and certification is also important to be sure that successful assessment will lead to the formal recognition through a certificate of competence for a part of qualification, or a diploma for the full qualification.

An important institution in the RPL process is the assessment centre where the full set of activities for assessment are carried out: enrolment, planning, gathering evidence, recording data, decision making process, internal verification.

#### **Institutional arrangements for RPL in Albania**

The following institutional roles need to be sorted out and institutions identified for each role: assessment centre, institution responsible for certification, institution responsible for external quality assurance.

As mentioned above, it is important what institution hosts the assessment processes. Given the complexity of this process, the need for adequate work environment, equipment, tools, and competent assessors the suitable institutions to become assessment centres are:

- The **training centres** operating under coordination and authority of MoLSAEO through NES which have been recently established and have good conditions for assessment of knowledge as well as assessment of skills.
- **Private training providers** (e.g. Wifi Albania), which have access to work conditions and also trainers with necessary skills and experience for assessing competences.

The key role in overseeing implementation of RPL might be shared by **NAVETAQ** and **NES**, the first being concerned for the knowledge and skills related to general education and the later for the vocational part of the qualification. However the awarding of the full qualification needs to be supervised by **MoES** if we want to have a RPL system compatible with formal education and training.



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### **14.3. Funding Mechanisms and Sustainability**

RPL is a process that requires time and competent work. Both should be converted in financial resources. Here we talk about, but not exclusively:

- the time and competence of the assessor;
- the physical resources for all assessment activities, from written tests, to work performance in real situation or in simulated environment;
- energy costs and costs for facilities

All these expenses should be covered somehow; otherwise no organisation would be willing to become assessment centre.

As a rule of thumb, the assessment expenses are covered by the party that is interested in results of RPL, e.g.:

- The candidate who needs a certificate of competence or a qualification diploma.
- The employers who need certified personnel. This is usually the case when a company applies for accreditation of quality assurance system, or when applies in public tenders.
- The education/training institution for making a better use of resources and avoiding duplication of learning.

#### **Funding mechanism for RPL in Albania**

The initial support for starting the implementation of RPL is expected to come from the Governmental institutions MoES, MoLSAEO, NAVETAQ, and NES. Either the funds are allocated from the budget or (more likely) from international projects, it should be with support and encouragement of the above mentioned institutions, which need to be very careful for quality assurance.

It is essential to have sound outcomes of RPL implementation for rising the interest and confidence of the individuals and of the employers. When individuals will understand and feel the benefits of RPL they will become important promoters and other individuals will accept to support financially own assessment and certification. A similar rationale is applicable to the employers who will be interested to assess and certify their personnel for commercial reasons (e.g. participation to tenders when certified personnel is required). Until the RPL mechanism is well established it is unlikely to be financed from private and individual resources, therefore it is important to have a synergic involvement of all stakeholders in the development and pilot implementation of RPL mechanisms in order to obtain a robust model that will meet the requirements and expectations of all actors.



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### 15. Experience of other countries in RPL

#### 15.1 France

France is one of the EU countries at the forefront of the development of the validation of formal and non-formal learning. France was in fact the first Member State to introduce legislation with respect to validation, when in 1934 a law was introduced to enable individuals to obtain an engineering diploma on the basis of professional experience.

There has been growing concern in France about the need to recognise individuals' skills and competences since the 1980s, when the country suffered from high unemployment rates, particularly among young people and those lacking qualifications. The importance of the validation of experience and skills has thus been recognised through policy initiatives and confirmed by legislation, including Social Modernisation Act (2002) and the cross-sectoral agreement on lifelong learning, confirmed by law in 2004. Initiatives such as the *Répertoire National de la Certification Professionnelle* (RNCP – national repertory of vocational certification) have been set in place on a national level, with collaboration from relevant stakeholders, including the social partners, and support for their implementation at a regional level. Measures have also been taken to identify and address issues and problems with the existing methodologies and practice, in order to ensure that the systems in place best meet the needs of end users.

Some of the initiatives implemented on a national level have been set in place as a response to European policy cooperation recommendations – the RNCP, for example, is in line with the recommendations by the Directorate General for Education and Culture for the transparency of qualifications.

In 1986, the Ministry of Employment created a network of over 100 publicly-run skills assessment centres (*Centres Interinstitutionnels de Bilans de Compétences*, CIBC). These centres were designed to enable individuals to analyse their skills and the opportunities open to them and, on this basis, to define a personal training or occupational plan. At this stage, the objective of the initiative was not to provide summative validation, but rather to provide guidance and promote training opportunities.

In 1992, further legislation enabled the concept of *Validation des Acquis Professionnels* ('VAP 92') to be used for exemptions for qualifications awarded by the Ministries of Education and Agriculture (secondary and higher education). People with five years' work experience could apply for exemptions by submitting a portfolio detailing the activities undertaken and skills (competencies) gained through their experience, which was then examined by an assessment panel (jury). In 1999, this law was extended to include qualifications delivered by the Ministry of Youth and Sport.



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Within the 2002 “Social Modernisation Act”, this model of validation was extended to include all the main types of qualification (certification) used in France and allow complete qualifications to be awarded on the basis of knowledge gained through experience. The developments outlined above have created a legal and educational environment in France where non-formal and informal learning is taken into account through both summative and formative approaches.

The legislation on the **Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience (VAE)** (2002) places more emphasis on summative validation (the award of certificates) than the previous concept of Validation des Acquis Professionnels (VAP). Whereas VAP was designed to allow professional experience to be taken into account alongside more traditional means of assessment in the award of formal qualifications, VAE can be used as a basis to award full qualifications, rather than just units or “parts” of a full diploma. VAE is also the main system in France for validation of informal and non-formal learning. This law made access to validation of knowledge gained through experience a right for everyone with at least three years of paid or voluntary experience (compared to five previously). Non-formal and informal learning can be considered as a basis for the award of all types of nationally-recognised qualification, which are recorded in the national vocational certifications directory (RNCP), overseen and documented by the *Commission Nationale de la Certification Professionnelle* (National Vocational Certification Commission).

The National Commission for Vocational Certification (CNCP) was created in January 2002 by the Social Modernisation Act, the same legislation that set in place the concept of VAE. The body had three key objectives:

- ✓ to establish and maintain a National Register of Vocational Qualifications (*Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles*, RNCP);
- ✓ to oversee reform and updating of qualifications (diplomas and certificates) on the basis of developments in education and the labour market;
- ✓ to provide recommendations to organisations that deliver vocational qualifications and provide information about the relationship between different types of qualification.

The Commission is composed of ministerial representatives, social partners, experts and representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and the Regions. It has also set up a specialized Commission to examine requests to include qualifications in the RNCP. The body functions on the basis on a national secretariat and a network of regional “*correspondents*”.



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### 15.2 Portugal

By 2007, Portugal had become a country with a high degree of acceptance for the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

There are a number of policies, which have been developed and applied by the Portuguese government on validation of competences acquired outside the formal education and training systems. The qualifications deficit among Portugal's adult population and compliance with community guidelines are key drivers behind the rationale for these policy initiatives. As stated in the National Employment Plan 2005/2008, in spite of an increase in the number of young people completing secondary and higher education and a fall in the school dropout rate, Portugal's position is still one of the least favourable in Europe.

Portugal thus has comprehensive national systems in place since 2005 for the validation of informal and non-formal learning after a first stage of gradual implementation from 1999 to 2004.

Due to the Vocational Education and Training System Reform, today there is only one main system for validating and certifying competences acquired through non-formal or informal means in Portugal:

- ✓ *The Sistema de Reconhecimento, Validação e Certificação de Competências* (Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences System), which comprises the educational scheme (the RVCC - academic) and a vocational scheme (RVCC-Professional).

This system was created and put into operation at government level by the Ministry of Education (ME) and the Ministry of Labour and Welfare (MTSS) in 1999. The key body, which oversees implementation, is nowadays the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education, I.P. (*Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e Ensino Profissional*, I.P., ANQEP, I.P.), under both the Ministry of Education (ME) and the Ministry of Labour and Welfare (MTSS). The Agency coordinates the implementation of the young and adult education and training policies and assures the development and management of the National System for Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences, within the National Qualification System (the *Sistema Nacional de Qualificações*) implemented in 2007 by a Decree-Law approved by the Government of Portugal - Decree-Law 396/2007).

The need to address this demand had been reiterated in the Agreement on Employment, Labour Market, Education and Training, signed by the Government and Social Partners in February 2001. The Agreement reflected a consensus that promotion and invigoration of adult education and training should be encouraged. Thus, adults should have the opportunity to independently and continually access educational, technological, cultural, vocational and professional





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progression by valuing educational and vocational competences developed through life experiences.

The Agreement set the following objectives in relation to recognition and certification of competences:

- to develop and consolidate the SNRVCC;
- to test and implement methodologies for the recognition and validation of a basic training level (acquired throughout life experiences) and for the certification of competences;
- to promote, within the training/certification system, the implementation of methodologies that underpin the transferability of competences;
- to make the certification systems for competences acquired in formal and informal contexts, both operational and intercommunicable.

The 'New Opportunities' Initiative (*Iniciativa Novas Oportunidades*), established within the scope of the National Employment Plan and the Technological Plan in 2005, defines a comprehensive qualification strategy for the Portuguese population, taking as reference the generalisation of secondary education as a minimum education level. The New Opportunities has two main axes: one for young people and another for adults.

For young people, the initiative aims to implement measures to stop the flow of young people leaving the education and training systems without achieving secondary-level education and thus implying that 50% of those who attend the secondary level of education enroll in dual system/vocational courses.

For adults, the New Opportunities is given to all those (seeking their first job, employed or unemployed) without full secondary education. The Initiative employs actions such as expanding Adult Education and Training Courses and expanding the National Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences System, based upon the *double certification* principle (both academic and vocational certification is possible in order to achieve a full qualification)

The National System of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (SNRVCC) comprises two areas: education and training. It is important to mention that joint work between these two systems has been established in an effort to promote the individual's social and professional development, not only in the education and training systems, but also on the labour market.

The network of Centres for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC) was first established in Portugal in 2000. These Centres were responsible for the implementation of a national system for recognising, validating and certifying competences on



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behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Welfare and the Ministry of Education. They are financed by the State Budget and the European Commission through the European Social Fund, as negotiated at the time of the Community Support Framework III. They faced different phases: in the beginning they were settled as RVCC Centres, afterwards known as *New Opportunities Centres* because they were not only responsible for the providing the RVCC Process, but also for finding a suitable educational and training pathway for every adult who wants to improve his/her qualification level throughout counseling and guidance services, and nowadays they have been proposed to change to Centres for Qualification and Vocational Education (*Centros para a Qualificação e Ensino Profissional*) envisaging also a wider providing of counseling services to the youngsters less qualified. This third phase is under public consultation and it is not in place yet.

The New Opportunities Centres were promoted by public or private sector bodies with local, regional or national level standing. The National Agency for Qualification, I.P., was responsible for the creation of these Centres. The Regulation nr 86/2007, of January 12, allocated these powers to this organism which took over the responsibility that belonged previously to the ANEFA (National Adult Education and Training Agency) and later to the DGFV (General Directorate of Vocational Training).

There were more than 450 New Opportunities Centres functioning in Portugal till 2012, located according to demographic density and geographical distribution related criteria, in order to mitigate regional asymmetries.

Adults without the secondary-level of education apply to a New Opportunities Centre. Then, the centre, through several means (e.g. personal interview, group sessions and Curriculum Vitae analyses), defines their profile and jointly (with the adult) establishes the most suitable qualifying path for them: the RVCC Process or another training itinerary. Following this stage, the candidate, using their profile to develop the process, takes part in sessions in which their key competences are identified according to the Key-Competences Reference Framework for Adult's Education and Training (Alonso *et al.*, 2000; Gomes *et al.*, 2006). Validation must comply with the Key-Competences Reference Framework, organised according to the different educational levels: Basic (1, 2 and 3) and Secondary. For the vocational certification processes there are more than 100 occupational standards, and its related assessment tools, classified and referenced to the National Qualification Catalogue (*Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações*) and linked to the National Qualification Framework (the *Quadro Nacional de Qualificações*), which are used for the processes of RVCC-professional.

Competences recognition is based on a range of activities, which are supported by the competences assessment procedures (competences are identified and evaluated) and by a variety of means (such as personal and group interviews, practical activities, games, role-plays, simulation exercises).



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Candidates then prepare a Personal Dossier (Basic level), a Learning Reflexive Portfolio (Secondary level) and/or a Professional Portfolio (RVCC Professional). The Dossier and Portfolios are made up of documents which demonstrate the competences which adults have acquired through life experiences, covering the key competence areas given in the Competence Reference Frameworks. Once the evaluation is carried out, the candidate requests the validation of the key competences by a jury. The jury is constituted by an external expert (Avaliador Externo, which is accredited by the National Agency for Qualification throughout an open application and an exhaustive selection procedure based on their qualifications and experience in the education and training field) and the technical and pedagogical team. In particular cases, for the RVCC professional, social partners or employers' organizations must participate as well in the jury.

If the adult is found not to have the necessary competences, he/she may be offered a proposal for complementary training (up to 50 hours within the RVCC process or when exceed this limit a partial certification is granted to the candidate and he is guided to finish his/her studies in an Adult's Education and Training Course or in a Modular Training Course based in the same Units of Competences and in the same Competences Standards) that is deemed to be essential in order to fill the identified competence gaps, before being able to proceed to obtain certification of education years 4, 6, 9 or 12 or a professional certification. As already mentioned, alternatively, they may be guided towards other solutions if their skill gaps justify longer training. In these cases, adults are steered towards short- term training actions or courses for adults, particularly Adult Education and Training Courses (*Cursos de Educação e Formação de Adultos*, Cursos EFA).

If the candidate is found to have the necessary competences, he/she is granted a certificate, which is recognised for all legal intents and purposes, by the education and vocational training systems, and on the labour market. The conclusion of the RVCC process can result in a career progression, in an educational and/or vocational training progression, and in a better employment situation.

The national RVCC system allows people who need to develop their vocational competences further to devise personal training plans. It helps to steer them to take up the right training path to get the competences they lack. These paths may include continuing training units carried out by accredited providers, depending on the competences required, and/or more tailored training paths, such as work- based training or self-directed learning.

Centres are set up on the initiative of public and private sector bodies that have strong links and intervention dynamics in the community, region and nationally. Consolidation of these partnerships and network relationships is vital to the life of the Centres because they facilitate



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the delivery of their activities and services. Furthermore, inter-centre relationships are important as they help to shape a specialised response network for workforce development.

By 2011, more than 1.000.000 adults have applied to a New Opportunities Centre and more than 400.000 have achieved a full certification, mainly in the educational component. Every individual record of each candidate is saved in an integrated Information System managed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour (the *Sistema de Informação e Gestão da Oferta Educativa e Formativa*), which allows also the issuance of the official certificates and diplomas.

Recently, the European Commission, the UNESCO and the OECD have been recognizing the New Opportunities Initiative as one of the best practices to be followed by other Member-States in the field of education and training public policies. In the latest Inventory produced by the CEDEFOP on the VNFIL topic, Portugal is presented together with other Northern European Countries and France has one of the highest-developed RPL systems so far in Europe.

### **15.3 Romania**

Romania was the first country in Central and Eastern Europe to start developing competency-based occupational standards for being used as foundation for new vocational education and training programmes and for improved assessment and certification practices, within the framework of the education reform launched in 1994 and funded jointly by EU, World Bank and Romanian Government. The negotiations on EU membership and then the full membership from the 1st of January 2007 accelerated the development of lifelong learning schemes.

The occupational standards are already the reference points for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The key development is the Order No. 3329/81/2005, which was issued by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity in 2005. The Order establishes the procedures for the evaluation and certification of informal and non-formal learning. The Rules of this Order outline that any individual, young or old, should be able to access an evaluation that is based on the occupational standards, carried out in assessment centres. If they are successful at demonstrating the skills and competences that meet the occupational standards, they receive an official certificate. The certificates are issued by the National Authority for Qualifications, NAQ (former National Adult Training Board).

The certificates are an integral element of the Romanian National Adult Training and Learning system, which encompasses three key elements:

- Process of assessment of competences against endorsed national standards (National Standards)





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- Offers recognition for non-formally and informally acquired skills, knowledge and competences (Assessment)
- Provides recognition with national certification process (Certification).

The certification is a collaborative process between the NAQ and recognised Assessment Centres. Certificates are issued by the NAQ and delivered by Assessment Centres to customers of the on their successful completion of the assessment process. A number of major companies (e.g. McDonalds Romania, The National Company for Radio-Communications) have been significantly engaged in both the development and piloting of the system.

The Assessment Centres are accredited by NAQ.

For accreditation, all Centres must meet the following eight quality requirements

1. Records Management
2. Appeals Process
3. Materials Development
4. Access Arrangements
5. Assessment Processes
6. Information Distribution
7. Facilities and Personnel
8. Up-to-date knowledge & expertise in the occupations being assessed

The assessment process has several different components. It starts off with an enquiry from a candidate, review of available information between the candidate and assessor and is followed by the candidate's preparation for the enrolment. The process then continues with an agreement on the assessment plan. This agreement is made between the applicant and the assessor, and includes information on the actual assessment procedure.

The results of the assessment are recorded, and they include information on whether the individual meets all the occupation requirements or whether she/he needs to undertake training or develop specific competence areas.

The actual assessment procedure is followed by a process of internal verification, and an opportunity for the applicant to appeal against the decision.

### ***15.4 Norway***

Norway approached the validation of non-formal and informal learning long ago, one policy paper on this subject being issued in 1985. From 1999 to 2002, The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) set up a project for developing a system for formal validation of non-formal, informal and formal learning at all levels of education and training, from





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primary school to higher education. The procedures and legal framework for the validation of non-formal and informal learning vary between levels of education and training, and sometimes also between education and training, but has not the same intensity for all relevant situations.

The transition between different education levels is eased by using validation processes. In Norway, the formal entrance requirements to each study level are designed so as to be open to applicants from a variety of backgrounds. In addition, access is possible by means of validation of non-formal and informal learning. Exemption from whole or parts of study programmes is routinely practiced in higher education on the basis of formal qualifications, but less systematically so when it comes to non-formal and informal qualifications.

The most extensive use of validation of non-formal and informal learning is found in upper secondary education where this procedure is well established for adult students in every county.

The procedures of validation of non-formal and informal learning follow the same general stages as those described in European documents, including the provision of high quality information and guidance to all relevant target groups at the preparatory stage. The national curriculum for the relevant programme is used as reference for assessment and validation. Documenting competence for the purposes of validating informal and non-formal learning involves many different sectors, as this documentation may be produced in different learning environments: in the work place, at home or in the third sector. The Norwegian wage agreement between the social partners encourages enterprises to have systems for documenting employees' competence as a means of visualizing workplace learning. The professionalization of assessors is the responsibility of the education sector, and at the primary and secondary levels this is followed up by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training or local educational authorities or institutions.

Norway is developing a NQF. In this context, validation of non-formal and informal learning as a part of the formal education system is seen to be formally unproblematic, since it relates to criteria in the formal system, which will automatically be related to certain levels in the framework. The development of learning outcomes required in the implementation of the NQF provides an excellent tool for improved practice in the validation of non-formal and informal learning at all levels of education and training.

In 2009, MoER assigned the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning, Vox, to map the status of implementation of RPL at the national level, initiate activities to strengthen coordination between all stakeholders, and improve quality assurance in the provision of RPL at the



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different levels of education and training. The work was coordinated and supervised by a reference group consisting of all relevant stakeholders. Vox will initiate certain actions to enhance the overall use of validation of non-formal and informal learning in all sectors in Norway. These actions will seek to address the main challenges; to better reach out with information about the system and its possibilities to the citizens, to enhance quality development in the established provision, to inspire work places and third sector organisations to make learning outcomes from these arenas visible by initiating documenting processes, and to enhance cooperation and coordination between the different stakeholders by networking and dialogue. Vox has made a website for validation introducing the different stakeholders' roles from a national perspective, and continues to cooperate with these stakeholders to work further on information issues.

### **15.5 Conclusions and Recommendations**

The discussions held during the mission with NAVETQ staff, with the representatives of MoLSAEO and NES, with an important training provider (Wifi Albania) emphasised a lot of interest and commitment for implementation of RPL. It is very important to involve in the design and implementation process also the representatives of employers organisations and trade unions, because they will be very important agents of change in the process of shifting from traditional certification of formal learning to the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning.

Creating a successful model depends of active and effective involvement of the main stakeholders, each assuming the responsibility of playing the right role defined in accordance with own needs and expectations.

RPL mechanism cannot be work result of one single organisation, as there is not only one user and beneficiary of RPL:

- The national authorities MoES, MoLSAEO would act as guarantors of quality process, fair treatment of candidates, and impartial negotiators between all parties (employers, assessment centres
- NAVETQ and NES share the responsibility for offering counselling and advice, and providing the mechanisms for quality assurance. NAVETQ keeping stock of qualifications and NES keeping evidence of the labour market data.
- Private training providers are expected to contribute to the setting of high standards of performance in assessment process so that assessment not to be compromised by hidden interests.
- Public training providers are important implementation organisations expected to act as a network of assessment centres and to share their experience for a harmonised model of RPL across the country, offering opportunities for assessment and further professional development to all categories of individuals.



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- Employers and trade unions should contribute to the development of occupational standards and qualifications. They are expected to contribute to the selection of the most relevant sectors and qualifications for the pilot implementation of RPL. They should be also involved in recommending good professionals who might become assessors.

### Annex 1.1

#### Occupations proposed to be included in the pilot implementation of RPL

The table below synthesises the recommendations for sectors, qualification/occupations and possible host organisation for pilot implementation.

Sector	Occupation/qualification	Host organisation (Assessment centre)	Comments / Explanation
Agriculture / Food processing	Food processing specialists  (level 3 with elements of level 4, i.e. front line management)		Agriculture is still the main source of employment and income in rural areas and there is a strong labour market demand for implementation specialists for agri-food processing (post secondary VET level). (From <i>Feasibility Study - Expansion of Post-Secondary Vocational Education and Training in Albania</i> )
Tourism/ services	Cook (level 3)/ Cook assistant (level 3)	To be decided – a Private VE school can be a good idea, i.e. Harry Fultz)	Firstly the tourism sector has high potential and perspectives in Albania. Cook is one of the most relevant occupation in the sector and cooks' performance has a strong impact on the quality of services and on increasing attractiveness towards all types of tourists.  Information provided by NES shows that many returning migrants have work already work experience in cooking,
	Waiter/ Bartender  (level 3)	To be decided	Same as previous



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Construction and Metal construction	Bricklayer/mason/plasterer (level 3)	WIFI + one training centre (to be chosen from the 10 training centres of NES)	<p>The Skills Needs Analysis 2012 reports that the construction sector does not face a serious skills shortage (18.5%) of the existing employees. On the contrary, the SNA 2012 also noticed that the demand for implementing specialists and technicians are significant higher (26%).</p> <p>Information from NES shoes that among the most common work experience of job seekers (local ones and returning migrants) construction works are on top.</p> <p>RPL would be very useful for NES in matching the qualifications of job seekers with companies' requirements in a field with high offer of skills acquired in non-formal learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- job seekers in offering them the opportunity to get recognition for their work experience acquired, and</li> <li>- giving them the legal basis for being employed with full rights as skilled workers i</li> <li>- identifying the skills and knowledge gaps</li> <li>- encouraging the participation in further training for filling these gaps.</li> </ul>
	Welder (level 3)	WIFI Albania	<p>The experience of WIFI Albania in making an initial assessment of the trainees in order to enrol them to the adequate programme and to calibrate the training according to the existing knowledge and skills would be beneficial for the project.</p> <p>The expressed interest of WIFI for participating in pilot implementation of RPL is encouraging and gives certitude they will invest effort for the success of the</p>



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			<p>project.</p> <p>WIFI can provide a good example for the full cycle: assessment – recognition of existing skills and knowledge – identification of skill gaps – enrolment for further training for filling the skill gaps – assessment – certification.</p>
Processing industry / Textile	Textile worker (level 3) (to be decided in consultation with industry representatives)		<p>It is an industry sector with a high potential for employment - the manufacturing industries employ at least 60,000 persons, the <b>majority of whom are women</b>. (SNA 2012)</p> <p>Nevertheless NES data emphasise that many returning migrants have work experience in textile industry but not formal recognition</p>





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### **ANNEX 2**

#### **Guidelines for the Development of Competence Based Occupational Standards in Albania**



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## **Guidelines for the Development of Competence Based Occupational Standards in Albania**



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### 0. Introduction

This document is based on the information and recommendations presented in the *Methodological Frame for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Mechanism in Albania*<sup>8</sup>, under the scope of the Component 3 of the IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania, funded by the European Union and implemented by ILO.

Here is mentioned that setting up the preconditions for RPL implementation in Albania consist of the following steps: review of existing description of qualifications, development of occupational standards, establishment of assessment methods and development of assessment instruments, selection and training of assessors.

Developing of occupational standards is an important step in the implementation of RPL system in Albania as a reference framework of knowledge, skills and attitudes which can be assessed and certified individually.

RPL mechanisms can't work without occupational standards, because they are the referential to the assessment.

Albania needs to implement RPL mechanisms, because there are many benefits for the individuals, likely: eliminates duplication of learning, increases self-esteem and self-confidence, validates learning through work and life experiences, identifies areas requiring further studies or training, gains and understanding of personal strengths and professional aspirations, encourages learners to pursue education, increases access, may shorten the time to complete a learning cycle and provides career development

Based on these guidelines, two occupational standards in the textile industry will be developed under the IPA 2010 Project on HRD: the **Production Technician in Garment Industry**; the **Industry (Line) Quality Controller**. The methodology holds forth giving a lead that may be improved further.

These guidelines should help the experts in the industry to develop competence-based occupational standards. These guidelines will form the basis for developing recognition of prior learning mechanisms in Albania. In this respect we advance a simple occupational standard pattern, easy to be applied, that can be adopted by the partners and afterwards further developed.

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<sup>8</sup> Frame Methodology for implementing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Mechanisms in Albania by Elisabeta Mitroi, September 2013



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Based on the occupational standards developed in the scope of this IPA project, assessment tools should be set up and used for the assessment of competencies acquired under non-formal and informal contexts.

### 11.1.1.

#### 1. Concepts definition

The following concepts are related to the development of occupational standards, including (but not limited to) the *CEDEFOP terminology* (*European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training*):

*Attitude* – a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person or situation. Attitude influences an individual's choice of action and responses to challenges, incentives and rewards (together called *stimuli*)

*Competence* – proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

*Context* – specifications of the various circumstances in which the performance criteria are to be applied;

*Duty* – a working targeted process, continually or seasonally performed involving knowledge, capacities and specialized attitudes aim oriented.

*Job description* – a list that person might use for a general tasks, or functions, and responsibilities of a position. It may often include to whom the position reports, specifications such as the qualifications or skills needed by the person in the job, or a salary range. Job descriptions are usually narrative, but some may instead comprise a simple list of competencies; for instance, strategic human resource planning methodologies may be used to develop a competency architecture for an organization, from which job descriptions are built as a shortlist of competencies.

*Occupation* – an activity serving as one's regular employment, bearer of income (money, products or services performed).

*Performance criteria* - descriptions of the critical components of successful performance. With regard to the skills, these criteria describe what a person should be able to do. With regard to knowledge, these criteria describe what knowledge a person should be able to demonstrate. With regard to attitude, these criteria describe what type of behaviour should be demonstrated.



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The presence of these performance criteria enables an objective judgement to be made about whether or not the persons have achieved the competence;

Skill – ability to perform tasks and solve problems

Task – basic constitutive part of the working process, constituent of duty, in which is divided with and run effectively.

Tools– machines, devices, equipment used in the exercise of occupations;

Occupational standard – normative deed that describes activities and tasks specific to occupations under an occupational area and qualitative benchmarks related with their successful implementation according to labour market requirements.

### **2. Occupational standards**

Before starting the development process, it is important to define what an occupational standard is.

Occupational standards specify what a person should know and do, in order to perform efficiently and effectively in the workplace. Occupational standards are statements of competences required in the workplace.

It is called “Occupational” because they describe what is done in the workplace – they are about job roles and job activities.

It is called “Standards” because they are based on an agreed minimum best practice and take into account all statutory requirements.

This guide intends to approach the occupational standards description in terms of competences. It was decided that the occupational standards should be described in terms of competences to ensure a better link with the labour market.

The (professional) competence is the ability to apply, transfer and combine knowledge, skills and attitudes in various working situations and environments, in order to perform professional tasks, according to the quality level specified by the occupational standard.

The specified quality level is described by the performance indicators.





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The occupational standard will serve as reference in the process of recognition of prior learning.

The certificate obtained upon the successful completion of an assessment process will include the list of competences acquired.

*Occupational standards define the main roles and responsibilities within an area of work. They provide a clear description of what an employee needs to do to perform his/her job successfully. Occupational standards consist of a detailed breakdown of the tasks, i.e. knowledge, attitudes and skills needed for effective performance within a job role, including any statutory or legal responsibilities.*

In many countries, it is a core task of Sector Committees to develop, verify and validate the occupational standards.

Sector Committees are social dialogue structures organized at the level of the existing sectors of activity within a country.

Only one sector committee may be set up for one sector of activity.

As currently there are no Sector Committees established and functioning in Albania, the verification and validation of occupational standards will be performed by ad-hoc structures constituted for different purposes as the preparation of the occupational standards for RPL.

### 3. Objectives of developing occupational standards

The objective of developing occupational standards is to provide a basis for a coherent and transparent national qualifications framework for both initial and continuing vocational training. Since the country is in the process of developing further its Albanian Qualification Framework (AQF), it cannot stand away from the trend of developing and using occupational standards as a national reference. Thus, occupational standards developed in close cooperation



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with the industry experts in Albania can become a basis for the vocational qualifications embedded in the AQF.

Qualifications Standards can be developed directly from the corresponding Occupational standards, making them broader, and relevant for both labour market dynamics and education and training system's organisation.

To ensure the link between qualifications and labour market there is need to develop occupational standards that describe job requirements emphasizing the competences required.

For a more clear analysis of the workplace, these guidelines are aiming at to use the DACUM method elements.

DACUM method (is an acronym for developing curriculum) provides a picture of what worker does in terms of duties, tasks, knowledge, skills, traits and in some cases the tools the workers uses. Using this method for developing of occupational standards it will be easier to develop a qualification.

Occupational standards can be used to:

- Form the basis of job descriptions
- Assist in recruitment
- Develop or evaluate a staff appraisal system
- Develop a framework for training and developing staff
- Set up quality management system
- Assessment
- Development of qualifications

### **4. Characteristics of the process of occupational standards development**

#### **A linear process**

The process, though described in clear defined steps, has an iterative character. Review of structure and content are key steps, time should be taken to reflect on the results achieved to avoid re-doing work that does not deliver the required outcome.

#### **A development process of limited choice**

Although format specifications and descriptions of elements of the occupational standard are prescribed, the choice of language will directly affect the understanding of the users.

Sector experts, writing teams, should be aware that they can describe their finding in their own words but that they have to use plain unambiguous language which does not lead to



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misunderstanding. Creativity is sometimes required, but the expert should remain within the parameters defined by the guidelines.

### **A result obtained through consensus and cooperation**

The overall process of developing an occupational standard involves a group of stakeholders with possibly different interests in the process. Employers might want to incorporate data that is only relevant for their specific business needs. Technicians (the holders of the occupation) might only want to put emphasis on technical aspects of the occupation.

The expert's task is to ensure that the development of the occupational standard should continue or revive the communication within the platform on which the involved parties came to an agreement on the occupational standards as an outcome of the discussions held and the methodologies applied.

## **5. The Occupational Standards Stakeholders**

The institutions/persons involved in the elaboration, verification and validation of occupational standards for Albania can be the following ones:

- Social partners' representatives (employer's and worker's organisations)
- Relevant industries/companies
- National Agency for VET and Qualifications (NAVETQ)
- National Employment Service (NES)
- Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY)
- Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Enterprise (MoEDTE)
- Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES)
- Universities / VET providers
- Experts

## **6. Specialists involved in the drafting process of occupational standards**

A specialist involved in the elaboration of occupational standards should know the occupation very well in order to be considered as an "expert" on the respective field. He/she has to be a good practitioner or a supervisor in the occupation for which the standard is developed. The



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specialist needs to have consistent practical knowledge and skills related with collection and data processing as concerns the content of occupation he/she is checking, and also the methodology for the elaboration of occupational standards in force. All specialists involved in the process should point to their abilities for analysis and synthesis, to make context suitable for different activities, to have an efficient communication with various category of specialists or representatives of authorities.

Also, they should give proof of austerity, a good capacity of focussing, accountability and professionalism in all actions performed. We don't have to overlook that knowledge of labour psychology, economic trends or education and professional training is needed.

Taking into account the several requirements mentioned above, it is suggested to work in a group of 5-7 specialists for the development of one occupational standard. The working group can consist of practitioners of the occupation from several departments related to that occupation.

The working group may include the following:

- **One facilitator** whose responsibility is to ensure the coherence and efficiency of a working meeting.  
The facilitator should actively facilitate the working meeting, especially the process by which each participant turns into a contributor to the meeting.  
The facilitator should have at least 2-year experience with group dynamics. The facilitator should be the person who filters information and guides discussions so that the work of the occupational standard authors is facilitated.
- **One occupational standard writer**, whose responsibility is to write down the information provided by the specialists under the facilitator guidance as per agreed format.  
The occupational standard writer should have good knowledge of literary Albanian language. He/she can be somebody from human resources, teacher for vocational school or a supervisor on higher level than the said specialists.
- **Two good practitioners** of this occupation with, at least, 7 years experience
- **Two supervisors** with, at least, 5 years experience

It is advised that these 2 practitioners and supervisors do not belong to the same company in order for the standard to be as comprehensive as possible.

### 7. Specialists involved in the verification/validation process of occupational standards



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Validation of occupational standards will be accomplished by a committee or a commission established at a national level. Commission may consist of a representative of Employers' organisations, Trade Unions, MoSWY, MoEDTE, MoES, other ministries involved in a sectoral basis, and their implementing agencies. Professional associations may be involved also.

The verification of the occupational standards needs to have the agreement and involvement of the social partners.

Under the verification process, the relevance of the occupational standard contents should be followed.

Under the validation, the compliance with the established format should be followed (by the legislation in force).

Verification and validation are the final activities in the occupational standard development process. They are considered quality assurance actions which should guarantee high quality results and the fact that the organisations in charge with occupational standards assume full responsibility for the content of the standards.

The purpose of the verification is to confirm that the occupational standards comply with the specifications required, describing both the technical content and the methodological aspects, such as:

- a. The occupation is fully covered
- b. Duties, work tasks and competences are correctly defined and described
- c. Knowledge, skills and attitudes are correctly identified
- d. The overall description of the occupation is relevant
- e. The documents are presented in the proper format.

The purpose of the validation is to establish whether the occupational standard reflects adequately the competences required by the labour market.

In order to confirm that competences are adequately reflected, the validation focuses on the following questions:

- Does the standard describe what it intended to describe?
- Is the description valid, namely does it reflect reality?





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Verification and validation are performed only by experts specifically appointed for such purposes by a relevant organisation in the field of occupational standards.

It would be preferable that the experts involved in the verification and validation of occupational standards come from other companies than those involved in developing the standards. A verification form and a validation form are presented in Annexes 2 and 3.

We suggest that the verification panel should include: a practitioner of the occupation, a representative of the employers' association, a representative of textile industry trade unions, a representative of VET providers and a representative of NAVETQ.

We suggest that the validation panel should at least include a representative of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, a representative of the Ministry of Education and Sport, a representative of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Enterprise.

As specified from the very beginning, this guide will be used to pilot the development of two occupational standards in the textile industry.

### 8. Drafting process of occupational standards

In generic terms, a qualification covers several occupations. To obtain the relevant qualifications for the system, it is need a clear description of occupations contained within them. Occupational standards reflect the reality of the labour market and help to establish the level of qualification in the future.

Based on the **Methodological Guidelines on the Development of the Vocational Qualifications Descriptors in Albania** together with **Guidelines for Developing Competence Based Occupational Standards**, it is clear that we have a complete scheme about how to describe and define qualifications in Albania:



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### Occupational standard – Vocational Qualifications List - Qualification – Level descriptors

For the development of occupational standards, it is necessary to collect information about labour market summarized in the content of the standard.

The method of developing occupational standards is presented further in these Guidelines.

Based on the new occupations identified and based on development of occupational standards, the Vocational Qualifications Lists can be updated.

The method for development of qualifications and level descriptors is presented in The Methodological Guidelines on the Development of the Vocational Qualifications Descriptors in Albania.

The occupational standard development includes the following activities

8. Collect information on the occupation and how it is in practice
9. Identify duties and tasks based on the information collected
10. Determine the (specific) competences and units of competences
11. Describe the competences in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes
12. Establish performance criteria
13. List contexts and tools, materials, machinery, technical documentation, working conditions

#### *A. Collecting the information as concerns an occupation*

The most usual methods for collecting of information:

- Observations
- Study of jobs description
- Individual interviews
- Group interviews/workshops



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- Questionnaires
- Analysis of existent standards

### Observation

It supposes displacements/visits to working organisations where a certain occupation is performed in order to notice the practical approach in which the individuals fulfil their working activities. Direct observation is the research method used to collect primary data as concerns persons, objects, activities, phenomena under real working conditions.

Direct observation is performed where the activity takes place.

To provide a fair and comprehensive image of the occupation it is essential to gather consistent, diverse and real information and to consider all contexts in which the respective occupation is practiced at national level, not only within one company or limited geographical area.

Focus on the following:

1. Major responsibility at the workplace (the most important activity, which gives the job title)
2. Main activities observed (duties)
3. Tasks related to each activity
4. Activity frequency and duration
5. Comments on activity performance (the comments may be made by the observer, by the workers or by their supervisors)

### Study of jobs description

It is a preliminary form of collecting the information, and a more complex method should be applied after (for example: group interview). Job description is the document that points out duties and responsibilities to be taken by the job holder, working conditions, performance standards, and methods of rewarding, as well as personal features of the employee for the fulfilment of job requirements.

Several job descriptions for the same job (position) in various companies should be analysed in the information gathering process.



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### Individual interviews

It supposes free talks to the specialists, practitioners in an occupation who know closely almost performed activities.

The expert in the development of an occupational standard requires for a specialist, in his capacity of a practitioner of an occupation to describe a relevant working situation that have certain significance for him and have led to a positive or negative result.

Individual interviews should have the same structure for one occupation, regardless the number of people interviewed.

A possible interview grid could include the following:

- Please specify what activities you currently undertake at your workplace.
- Please list the most important activities at your workplace.
- What is the outcome of the activities listed above (product or service)?
- With whom do you work when performing these activities?
- Who makes decisions in unpredictable situations?
- What theoretical knowledge do you need to perform the activities listed above?

### Group interviews/workshops

This includes focus interviews to a group of 6-8 persons involved in the performance of the certain occupation. There are questions coming to the light that have as a result a detailed identification of the main elements referring to an effective performance of such occupation.

It is advisable to gather in a group, different practitioners from different enterprises of different sizes in order to give more comprehensive instances about occupation under discussion.

The strength of this method is that the interviewer can obtain diversified information in a very short period of time. However, care should be taken not to get the discussion out of control.

### Questionnaire



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It is required written answers to a certain number of questions put by the experts during the elaboration of occupational standard. The questionnaire has a well-defined form and it has been previously tested and distributed to a representative test sample of minimum 10 persons. The results of the sample are low as a result of its distribution by mail or e-mail, regularly.

### Analysis of existent standards

Already existing foreign standards should be submitted to analysis.

The methods and techniques selected for information collecting in an occupation should meet the type of activity.

Based on gathered information, it will come down to the elaboration of occupational standard.

### *B. Identify duties and tasks based on the information collected*

It is suggested to consider the following definitions in order to properly identify duties and tasks:

*Duty* – the obligation to perform something, to be responsible or accountable for something, to accept and bear any possible consequences.

*Task* – an activity that needs to be accomplished within a defined period of time or by a deadline.

Any company is set up for a purpose and it has a mission to accomplish. In order to accomplish its mission, the company needs people who know exactly what they should do. This is how the jobs (positions) within a company are designed.

Duty and tasks are used to describe accurately and in detail a job.

The task is the smallest individual working unit and is the action to be performed to achieve a related objective.





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Task performance without establishing the adequate competences is not possible; similarly, in order to set a task, one needs to determine the duties.

Competence, in this context, is the ability to make decisions, within defined limits, to accomplish the task (using knowledge, skills and attitudes).

The duty is the obligation to perform the task allocated; failure to perform leads to appropriate sanctions.

### *C. Determine the specific competences/units of competences*

The occupational standard indicates the specific competences-work related tasks. In order to perform certain duties at the workplace, a worker needs certain competences; just the same, in order to acquire specific competences, a learner must perform certain work tasks which are relevant for the occupation.

Specific competences include knowledge, skills and attitudes applicable to a certain occupation.

Usually, a duty includes 2 or more tasks. A unit of competences may include one or several duties/ one or several competences (tasks).

An occupational standard may include at list two units of competences.

The standard format proposed by this guide starts with the identification and definition of competences, based on a duty and tasks.

The task, in our case, is similar to a competence; therefore it is described in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude and performance criteria.

In turn, tasks/competences shall be grouped in units of competence, according to their common characteristics.

### *D. Describe the competences in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes*

In practical terms, a competence defines an important activity leading to a concrete outcome, which can be assessed. In order to perform this important activity we need certain knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The knowledge is identified by the question: What should they know to perform such a task? (e.g., technological procedures, characteristics of equipment and materials used, notions of mechanics, chemistry, specific legislation, environmental protection regulations).

The skills are identified by the question: What should they be able to do? (e.g., ability to use tools and equipment, ability to identify flaws).



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Attitudes are identified by the question: How should they perform in their work tasks? (e.g., carefully, responsibly, thoroughly, professionally, meticulously).

### E. Establish performance criteria

Performance criteria are defined for the activity outcomes and performance.

Performance criteria include information on the qualitative benchmark, regulations, aspects and variables a person should take into consideration to achieve the expected outcomes in various work situations.

The performance criteria should be sufficiently detailed to allow any person to understand the quality level required for the performance of the activity described by the competence.

### F. Listing of context and tools, materials, machinery, technical documentation, working conditions

This information are required to be known in order to provide a clearer picture about occupations necessary for both assessors and training developers.

An occupational standard model proposed in these guidelines will be piloted – ***Production technician in Garment Production***. Following the piloting of this model, stakeholders will decide if it meets their needs and approach. Afterwards, Albania can decide on the right model to be nationally accepted.

For an accurate data collection, the working group members should travel to the company to observe workers performing the selected occupations. This is advisable as it is very important for the elaboration process to directly observe an occupation.

Before travelling to a company, all members of the working group should study existing job description and standards<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> For a clear image of the occupation in the European context can be studied ESCO platform ([www.escoportal.eu](http://www.escoportal.eu)).



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Over the visit to the company and the direct observation of the workers in the selected occupation, the working group members may ask questions to the workers or their supervisors, under the guide of the facilitator.

The writer will notice, in the first phase, then all the information will be structured together with facilitator and working group members.

Questions can be addressed to people while working or at the end of a work process.

If possible it can also be organised a group interview with practitioners of a selected occupation or their supervisors.

Later on, to clarify specific issues, the group members can ask questions by email, phone or using questionnaire.

Meanwhile, the person responsible for drafting the occupation standard, take notes about the most relevant issues, namely the main ideas and most important actions to be performed in the selected occupation.

Based on these main ideas/issues synthesized during the visit and using the experience of all working group members, the drafting process of occupational standards shall start, following the below mentioned steps:

1. Setting task and duties
2. Setting specific competencies/units of competences
3. Setting knowledge, skills and attitude for each competence
4. Setting performance criteria
5. Listing context and tools, materials, machinery and so on
6. Elaborating a short description of the selected occupation

The occupational standard should be completed according to the model presented in Annex 1.

An occupational standard includes 7 basic components:

- name of occupational standard
  - occupation code
  - data concerning the occupational standard authors
  - data concerning the occupational standard's verification and validation team
  - time limit of occupational standard
  - general description of the occupation
  - frame format of the occupational standard (content)
-



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*Name of occupational standard* answers to the description made in the existing National List of Occupations.

*Occupation code* is that mentioned in the National List of Occupations,

*Data concerning the occupational standard authors:* it is mentioned name, surname, work place and the position of persons who participated in the elaboration of occupational standard.

*Data concerning the occupational standard verifying and validation team:* it is mentioned name, surname, work place and the position of persons who participated in the verifying and validation of occupational standard.

*Time limit of occupational standard:* it is mentioned the period of time subject to review.



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### **ANNEX 3**

#### **Occupational Standard: Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing**





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### Occupation standard: Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing

#### Occupation code.....

**Development team:** The team for setting the occupational standard is composed of Mikaela Keits – Responsible for the moderation of team work, International consultant; Roland Bagaviki – Responsible for the drafting of the materials, Local consultant; Eriola Shingjergji- Responsible for supporting the process, Local Consultant; Industry Expert Teams: **OMEGA** company (Lindita Legisi-owner, Mirela Ramaliu – Production Technician); **Toni's group** company (Florian Zekja-owner, Mynyre Hyka – Production Technician).

#### *Verification and validation team.....*

**The validity of the standard:** The validity of the standard will be for a period of 10 years starting from September 2014.

**Requirements:** Garment production technician should have completed the secondary education (preferably vocational education and training or general education). He/she must have a minimum of 2 years' experience in manufacturing.

#### *General description of the occupation*

Production Technician in garment is a professional figure that ensures the smooth running of the apparel production process up to the moment that it leaves the factory according to customer requirements. To perform his duties he/she collaborates with workers (seamstresses, machinery operators), quality controllers and production manager. He/she is responsible for the realization of the product technically from beginning to end. Production Technician must have 2 years previous experience in the production of all stages from the sample disaggregation, sewing, ironing and finishing. Production technician should have a good understanding of the different types of fabrics, accessories, sewing technology and garment production process. He/she must have good communication skills, ability to organise work and human resources and capacity to build a collaborative work environment by respecting the rights of workers.

#### *Context and tools*

Work in the textile factory starts at 7:00 am and ends at 3:30 pm for the production technician. He/she stays on the job for 8 hours and 30 minutes. Production technician works 8 hours and makes a break for 30 minutes starting at 10:30 to 11:00 am.

The production technician works only one shift during the day. He/she comes to work at 6:45 am and after deciding on the system card, enter the factory and goes into the changing room to



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get ready for work. The technician wears the uniform and gets ready to start with work 7:00 pm after the bell rings the job starts. Production technician finishes work at 3:30 pm when the bell rings for the end of production. Then goes to and comes from the factory changed by inserting the card into the system again.

### **Materials (Raw materials, auxiliary materials and accessories)**

The materials are composed of raw materials, accessories and auxiliary materials:

1. Raw material: textile cloth and lining
2. Accessories: Button, zipper, rivets, metal fitting, labels
3. Auxiliary materials: thread, sampler

### **Machinery**

Production technician should recognize the types of *machinery* and *auxiliary tools* in the production processes.

Machinery is classified according to the production processes and department units as follows:

**Cutting Department Unit:** Manual cutting machine, semi-automatic cutting machine and automatic cutting machine

**Unit Department of Sewing and Finishing:** Sewing machinery, ironing machinery, hole machine, etc.

**Auxiliary tools:** desks for production, meter, scissors, notebook, pencil

**Technical documentation:** All garment companies have shared these documents:

1. Technical Tab
2. Production Plan
3. Notebook on the technical specifications of each model
4. The list of workers line with respective processes

**Ergonomic working conditions:** garment companies should have sufficient lighting, the constant temperature in the working environment during all seasons, well ventilated work environment and good work bench positioning

TASKS/duties					
PREPARING THE SAMPLE FOR THE PRODUCTION PROCESSES		KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ATTITUDES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<b>Task 1</b> Sampler Development	<u>Competence 1</u> Disaggregates the sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well the types of production processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to interpret the technical tab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates ability</li> <li>Reacts cautions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disaggregates the sample according to the technical tab</li> </ul>
	<u>Competence 2</u> Controls the sample on paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well the parameters of sewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to interpret the sampler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pays attention to details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completes the sampler according to the size required</li> </ul>
	<u>Competence 3</u> Builds the prototype in pieces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the characteristics of the cloth</li> <li>To know each machine processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To adjust the machine based on the type of the cloth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To act with confidentiality</li> <li>Be good observer</li> <li>Behave in a responsible manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selects the elements of the machine in compliance with the cloth' characteristics</li> </ul>
	<u>Competence 4</u> Irons the prototype	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the ironing techniques</li> <li>To know the ironing machine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to determine the proper gradation</li> <li>To be able to use the ironing machine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reacts careful</li> <li>Act in a accuracy manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ironing of the prototype according to the label of the textile composition</li> </ul>

	<b><u>Competence 5</u></b> Checks before sending the prototype to the production line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the technical language of the manufacture process</li> <li>To know the customer's language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to identify discrepancies between the sample and the technical tab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates rigorously</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Checks the prototype compliance to the technical tab and sample</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS</b>		<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b>
<b><u>Task 2</u></b> Identification of the steps and needs for the development of the production process	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b> Outlines the steps of the production process (production plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the sequence of the production work processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide a chain of production process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To act with confidentiality</li> <li>Acts efficient</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizes the continuation of production processes by avoiding returning back to work</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b> Selects the appropriate machinery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well the productivity and the use of any machine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To adjust the process according to the machinery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To act with confidentiality</li> <li>Acts efficient</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selects the right machine according to production process</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 3</u></b> Calculates the time for every production process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the difficulty level of each production process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To calculate the right time for every production process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To act with confidentiality</li> <li>Act in accuracy manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calculates the total time of the manufacturing process for the optimum efficiency</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 4</u></b></p> <p>Give the work to each employee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know well the details of the process</li> <li>• To know well the skills of each employee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish the link between production steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts with fairness</li> <li>• Uses the right style of communications</li> <li>• To act with confidentiality</li> <li>• Demonstrates accuracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocates everybody's work process according to workers' abilities for maximum productivity</li> </ul>
<b>SUPPORTING THE WORKERS TO PERFORM THEIR JOB</b>		<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b>
<p><b><u>Task 3</u></b></p> <p>Manages the processes in manufacturing</p>	<p><b><u>Competence 1</u></b></p> <p>Directs workers in manufacturing processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the production processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to explain every detail of the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses the right style of communication</li> <li>• Focused on tasks</li> <li>• Demonstrates accuracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures that the employee understands the task assigned</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 2</u></b></p> <p>Oversees the performance of production processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the sequence of processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify in time any potential problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates good observation</li> <li>• To be attentive to details</li> <li>• Focused on tasks</li> <li>• Using resources well and adequately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures consistency of processes without interruption</li> </ul>



APPLYING THE QUALITY STANDARD OF CUSTOMER		KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ATTITUDE	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<b><u>Task 4</u></b> Ensures the quality of production	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b> Oversees the quality of each process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the parameters of the quality required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to recognize potential problems fault</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good observer, rigorous</li> <li>Reacts careful</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy</li> <li>to be attentive to details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures a maximum quality of the final product</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b> Solve problems arising during the production process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize all problems arising during production processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be able to find the right way of solving of the problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses resources well</li> <li>Acts perceptive</li> <li>Reacts intuitive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solves problems quickly and accurately</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 3</u></b> Controls the quality of the product parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the quality details of each process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be able to distinguish defects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates rigorously</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy</li> <li>Acts with awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controls the quality of the parts of the product in a selective manner three times a day</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 4</u></b></p> <p>Intervenes in the production process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify well all phases of the production process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify problems arising during the production process</li> <li>To find appropriate solutions to problems arising during the production process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses intuition</li> <li>Has and uses a lot of resources</li> <li>Keeps a sharp observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modifies the production process to ensure the required quality</li> </ul>
<p><b>COMMUNICATING AND WORKING AS AT TEAM DURING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS</b></p>		<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b>
<p><b><u>Task 5</u></b></p> <p>Working in group</p>	<p><b><u>Competence 1</u></b></p> <p>Defines the duties of each person in the group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize the duties of workers and quality controllers</li> <li>To recognize the skills of line's workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to distinguish tasks of workers and quality controllers</li> <li>Ability to distinguish the skills of line's workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses the right style of communication</li> <li>Demonstrates confidence and accuracy</li> <li>Acts with fairness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determines the capabilities of employees by each in accordance with the processes of production</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 2</u></b> Defines the reporting line of each person in the group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize the duties of workers and quality controllers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguish between the group reporting line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates confidence &amp; accuracy</li> <li>Acts with fairness</li> <li>Uses the right style of communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes reporting line in accordance with the continuity of production processes</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 3</u></b></p> <p>Cooperate with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recognize the duties of workers and quality controllers</li> <li>• To recognize the skills of line workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to transmit information and feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborates effectively with others</li> <li>• Uses the right style of communication</li> <li>• Acts with fairness</li> <li>• Demonstrates flexibility in wor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperates with and respects others</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESPECTING THE RULES OF TECHNICAL SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION DURING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS</b></p>		<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b>
<p><b><u>Task 6</u></b></p> <p>Follows technical safety and health rules and regulation at work place</p>	<p><b><u>Competence 1</u></b></p> <p>Identifies safety rules and health at work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recognize the rules of technical safety and health at work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to interpret the rules of technical safety and health at work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates accuracy</li> <li>• Is alerted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguishes rules of technical safety and health at work according to specific tasks</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 2</u></b></p> <p>Follows the rules of technical safety and health at work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the rules of technical safety and health at work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to apply the rules of technical safety and health at work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates rigorously</li> <li>• Keeps a careful watch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respects the rules of technical safety and health at work according to specific tasks</li> </ul>

<b><u>Task 7</u></b>  Implements environmental protection rules	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b>  Identifies environmental protection rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aware of environmental protection rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to interpret the rules of environmental protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is alerted</li> <li>Act in accurate manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishes environmental protection rules according to specific tasks</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b>  Follows the rules of environmental protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize environmental protection rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to apply the rules of environmental protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates rigorously</li> <li>Keeps a careful watch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respects the rules of environmental protection under the specific tasks</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGING RECORDS</b>		<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b>
<b><u>Task 8</u></b>  Use of documentation	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b>  Prepares documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have information data sheets, production plans, and workers' skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to complete required documentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates confidence</li> <li>Demonstrates a clear and focused way of approaching</li> <li>Acts with fairness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completes clean and clear documentation</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b>  Organizes documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be aware of documentation archiving rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to organize documentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keeps a focused and careful watch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizes the documents or easy usage</li> </ul>

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES NECESSARY FOR THE PRODUCTION PROCESS		KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ATTITUDE	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<b><u>Task 9</u></b> Self-development	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b>  Assesses oneself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize well tasks and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To distinguish the skills gaps for the tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an objective and critical eye</li> <li>Acts with fairness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies skills gaps</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b>  Identifies training needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize well tasks and own skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to determine specific training needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an objective and critical eye</li> <li>Acts with fairness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies training needs by skill gaps</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 3</u></b>  Determines methods of professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To recognize the methods of professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify methods of professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a focused and precise way of working</li> <li>Demonstrates proactivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines methods to the needs of professional development training</li> </ul>



## **ANNEX 4**

### **Occupational Standard: Quality Controller in the Leather Shoes Manufacturing**

## **Occupation standard: Quality Controller in the Production of Leather Shoes**

### **Occupation code.....**

**Development team:** The team for setting the occupational standard is composed of Mikaela Keits – Responsible for the moderation of team work, International consultant; Roland Bagaviki – Responsible for the drafting of the materials, Local consultant; Eriola Shingjergji- Responsible for supporting the process, Local Consultant; Industry Expert Teams: **FITAL** Company (Skënder Pashaj – Owner, Manjola Nurcelli – Quality Controller), **DONIANNA** Company (Alma Çaushti – Production Manager, Natasha Pambuku – Quality Controller).

### **Verification and validation team.....**

**The validity of the standard:** The validity of the standard will be for a period of 10 years starting from September 2014.

**Requirements:** Quality Controller should have completed the secondary education (preferably vocational education and training or general education). He/she must have a minimum of 2 years' experience in manufacturing.

### **General description of the occupation**

Quality Controller in the production of leather shoes is a professional figure that ensures the production quality of shoes according to customer requirements. To perform his duties he/she collaborates with workers (cutting, sewing and finishing), line manager, department manager and production manager.

He / she is responsible to control the production process from raw material to final product. Quality Controller in the production of leather shoes controls the quality of leather, cutting, sewing, assembling and final product realization. He / she must have at least 2 years previous experience in production of all phases from receipt of the leather, cutting the components of the shoe, sewing, assembling, packaging and up to the final product.

Quality Controller in the production of leather shoes should have a good understanding of the different types of leather and their uses, accessories, sewing technology and footwear production process. He/she must have good communication skills, be patient and build a collaborative work environment by respecting the rights of workers.

### **Context and tools**

Work in the footwear factory starts at 7:00 am and ends at 3:30 pm for the quality controller. He/she stays on the job for 8 hours and 30 minutes. Quality controller works 8 hours and makes a break for 30 minutes starting at 11:00 to 11:30 am.

The quality controller works only one shift during the day. He/she comes to work at 6:45 am and after deciding on the system card, enter the factory and goes into the changing room to get ready for work. The quality controller wears the uniform and gets ready to start with work 7:00 pm after the bell rings the job starts. Quality controller finishes work at 3:30 pm when the bell rings for the end of production. Then goes to and comes from the factory changed by inserting the card into the system again.

### **Materials (Raw materials, auxiliary materials and accessories)**

The materials are composed of raw materials, accessories and auxiliary materials:

1. Raw material: Leather, cloth and synthetic lining
2. Accessories: Button, zipper, rivets, metal fitting, labels, lacing
3. Auxiliary materials: thread, sample

### **Machinery**

Quality controller should recognize the types of *machinery* and *auxiliary tools* in the production processes.

**Machinery** is classified according to the production processes and department units as follows:

1. **Cutting Department Unit:** Cutting machines
2. **Unit Department of Sewing:** Sewing machines, scraping machine, punch machine, heel machine, zigzag machine.
3. **Unit Department Assembling and Finishing:** Lasting machine, pulling over machine, abrasion machine, oven machine, refrigerator machine, leather cleaning machine, coating machine, polishing machine, washing machine (athletic and cloth shoes).
4. **Auxiliary tools:** Desks for production, conveyer

**Technical documentation:** All footwear companies have shared these documents:

1. Technical Tab
2. Production Plan
3. Notebook on the technical specifications of each model
4. The list of workers line with respective processes

**Ergonomic working conditions:** Footwear companies should have sufficient lighting, the constant temperature in the working environment during all seasons, well ventilated work environment and good work bench positioning

TASKS/duties					
ENSURING THE USE OF LEATHER PRODUCTIVITY		KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ATTITUDE	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<b><u>Task 1</u></b>  Checks the quality of the leather	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b>  Takes possession of the leather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well the types and characteristics of the leather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to interpret technical tab of the leather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>Acts with care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes possession of the leather respecting technical tab</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b>  Verifies leather tonality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well colours and nuance according to the type of the leather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to distinguish types of the colours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates attention to colours nuance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the leather according to the sampler</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 3</u></b>  Checks the leather structure and defects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the composition of the leather</li> <li>To know the types of defects in the leather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to distinguish leather components</li> <li>To be able to distinguish types of the leather defects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acts with confidence</li> <li>Demonstrates good observer abilities</li> <li>Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the leather according to the technical standards (leather usage)</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 4</u></b>  Controls the leather thickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the leather usage according to the leather thickness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to measure the thickness of the leather with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acts with care</li> <li>Has a focused and precise way of working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the proper leather thickness according to technical standards</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the usage of apparatus (measure leather thickness)</li> </ul>	apparatus (measure leather thickness) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to use apparatus (measure leather thickness)</li> </ul>		
<b><u>Task 2</u></b> Checks the quality in the cutting process	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b> Checks the usage productivity of the leather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the type of leather used for the main parts of the shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to use the leather space efficiently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an organized way of working</li> <li>Demonstrates efficiency, accuracy and creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the leather efficiently according to the sampler</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 2</u></b> Takes possession of the testing sampler of upper shoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well the elements of testing sampler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to interpret the technical tab of the testing sampler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>Acts with care</li> <li>Demonstrates high observability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes possession of the original and testing sampler respecting the technical tab</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 3</u></b> Observe the process of cutting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know well the flow of work</li> <li>To know the technology of the leather cutting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to devote attention to detail during the cutting process</li> <li>To be able to communicate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses the right communication style</li> <li>Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>Demonstrates high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the process implementation of cutting according to the flow of work while respecting technical tab</li> </ul>



			well with employees	observability	
	<b><u>Competence 4</u></b> Checks each shoe parts after cutting (by employees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the components of the shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to distinguish defects during the cutting process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates high observability</li> <li>Acts with care</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy and patience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that cutting pieces are in accordance with technical tab and the sampler</li> </ul>
	<b><u>Competence 5</u></b> Perform simple repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the components of the shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to distinguish defects and fixed them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates high observability</li> <li>Acts with care</li> <li>Demonstrates accuracy and patience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the repaired parts are conform to the standards</li> </ul>
<b>ENSURING QUALITY PRODUCT</b>		<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ATTITUDE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</b>
<b><u>Task 3</u></b> Verify the quality of sewing	<b><u>Competence 1</u></b> Takes possession of testing sampler of the upper shoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the sewing technology of the upper shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to distinguish sewing of the upper shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates high observability</li> <li>Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>Acts with care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the sewing of the upper shoe is according to the standard of the customer</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 2</u></b></p> <p>Checks the compliance of the shoe upper elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the sewing flow of the elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to verify the proper selection of elements for each shoe upper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts with care</li> <li>• Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the components of the upper shoe are grouped according to technical tab</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 3</u></b></p> <p>Ensures the proper use of the needle and the thread</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the types of needles and their uses</li> <li>• To know the types of threads and their uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to identify the proper use of needle and thread</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates high observability</li> <li>• Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>• Acts with care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure proper use of a needle according to the leather thickness and style</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 4</u></b></p> <p>Observe the process of sewing: step seam, consistency of color, etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know types of sewing and their uses</li> <li>• To know the types of stitching during the sewing process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to find defects during the production process of scraping, drawing, stitching, sewing, sewing deviation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts with fairness</li> <li>• Demonstrates high observability</li> <li>• Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>• Acts with, care</li> <li>• Uses the right communication style</li> <li>• Demonstrates strictness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that stitching and sewing are according to the drawing</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 5</u></b></p> <p>Verify the final sewing of the upper shoe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the types of defects during the sewing of show upper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to distinguish the types of defects during the sewing of shoe upper</li> <li>To be able to work in group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an attentive attitude</li> <li>Acts with care</li> <li>Uses the right communication style</li> <li>Demonstrates strictness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes note on the defects if there are any during the sewing of the upper shoe compliant to the original sampling</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Task 4</u></b></p> <p>Checks shoe assembly processes (upper with outsole, lining and in sock)</p>	<p><b><u>Competence 1</u></b></p> <p>Takes possession of the original sampler and testing sampler (upper with outsole, insock and lining)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the technology of the shoe assembling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to disaggregate the sampler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates strictness and an attentive attitude</li> <li>Acts with care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asses the compliance of the original sampler with testing sampler</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 2</u></b></p> <p>Verify the shoe components before assembling (upper with outsole, insock and lining)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know the shoe elements (upper with outsole, lining and insock)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to distinguish defects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates strictness and an attentive attitude</li> <li>Acts with care</li> <li>Uses the right communication style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that processes before assembling is done according to the technical tab</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 3</u></b></p> <p>Observe the assembling process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the types of shoe assembling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to distinguish defects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates strictness</li> <li>• Acts with care</li> <li>• Uses a precise way of working</li> <li>• Uses the right communication style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that assembling process is according to the customer standard</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Task 5</u></b></p> <p>Checks the final product</p>	<p><b><u>Competence 1</u></b></p> <p>Verifies the compliance of the colours per pair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know well the colours of product per pair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to distinguish colours per pair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates accuracy and fairness</li> <li>• Uses the attention for details ability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the compliance of the colours per pair according to the sampler</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 2</u></b></p> <p>Check the flexibility of the shoe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know well the flexibility of the shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to distinguish the elasticity of the shoe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a precise way of working</li> <li>• Uses the right communication style</li> <li>• Acts with fairness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that shoe elasticity is according to the production standards</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Competence 3</u></b></p> <p>Proves the quality of stitching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the types of adhesives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to distinguish the proper adhesive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a precise way of working</li> <li>• Uses the right communication style</li> <li>• Demonstrates a responsible attitude</li> <li>• Acts with fairness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes note of the defects during stitching according to the production standards</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 4</u></b></p> <p>Verifies the compliance of the shoes per pair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the defects during the assembling processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to distinguish details of shoes per pair (Height, lacing, sizes of shoes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a precise way of working</li> <li>• Demonstrates a responsible attitude</li> <li>• Acts with fairness</li> <li>• Uses the attention for details ability</li> <li>• Acts with patience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure compliance of the shoes per pair according to the sampler</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Competence 5</u></b></p> <p>Check the processes of packaging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To know the flow of work during packaging process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to distinguish proper defects at final product</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a precise way of working</li> <li>• Uses the right communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes note of the defects of shoes and packaging according to the ordering requirements</li> </ul>



				style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts responsible and with fairness</li> <li>• Demonstrates an attentive way of working</li> <li>• Acts with patience</li> </ul>	
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## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

### **ANNEX 5**

#### **Concept Note “Training Programme for Assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Processes in Albania**



## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

### **CONCEPT NOTE**

#### **Training Programme for**

#### **Assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Processes in Albania**

##### **Background information on the project/ RPL output**

The ILO-EU IPA 2010 project on Human Resources Development in Albania, funded by the European Union is implemented by the International Labour Organization, under the leadership of the Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe (DWT/CO-Budapest, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY), the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) and their implementing agencies.

The overall objective of the Project is to improve labour market functioning and the quality of human capital, while the specific objectives cover the improvement of the capacity of labour market institutions, mainly the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) and National Employment Service (NES) as well as development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Lifelong Learning (LLL) systems in Albania.

Under Component 3, technical assistance is required regarding the establishment of the Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms (RPL) in Albania. So far, a frame methodology on the RPL has been developed by the Project and validated by the Beneficiary, 5 qualifications have been identified as more relevant, and among them the textile sector has been selected to pilot the RPL mechanism. For this purpose, two Occupational Standards have been prepared and the related assessment tools have been produced.

##### **Expected results**

- To assist MoSWY in the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms, under the scope of Component 3 of the project related to the VET Reform and taking into consideration the new National Strategy for the Employment and Skills 2014-2020 and its Action Plan.
- Prepare the necessary materials for the training of the assessors for the piloting of RPL mechanisms to the occupation of Production Technician in Garment production, in close cooperation with the NAVETQ, MoSWY, and industry experts.



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- Adapt the assessment tools for the piloting of the RPL mechanism to the occupation of Production Technician in Garment production, based, on the existing frame methodology and on the needs of the labour market in terms of recognition and certification of competences, in close cooperation with NAVETQ and industry experts.
- Provide training for the assessors for the piloting of the RPL mechanism in the textile sector based on the existing frame methodology and respective Occupational Standards and Assessment tools.

### Objectives of the training

Upon completion of the course, the participants will be able to:

- Perform an assessment process;
- Guide the candidate throughout the assessment process;
- Manage assessment-related documents;
- Develop assessment instruments, based on the occupational standard;
- Be aware of the importance of the process of assessment of professional competences;
- Understand how an assessment centre operates.

### Training Participants

Participants in this course will work together to pilot the first process of assessment of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts in Albania.

The course targets professionals who intend to become Assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Process, but also stakeholders, both from the public and private entities who are willing to be involved in the implementation and management of the RPL system in Albania.

Number of trained participants: 17 people

Profile of participants: public servants from NAVETQ and MoSWY, experts from the VET system, representatives of employers and trade unions from the textile industry and professionals from textile industry enterprises.

### Profile of assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Processes for the Occupation of Production Technician in Garment

#### Job Description:

Plan, design and evaluate the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning processes, including mentoring and career guidance of the candidates.



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### **Main duties:**

- Identifies and establishes assessment components of the context in relation to: the purpose of the assessment, the number of candidates, the venue, the number of units of competence for which the assessment is performed, etc.
- Establishes assessment methods according to recommendations in the occupational standard and from the associated set of assessment tools.
- Develops or adapts assessment tools so that they are accessible in format, language, way of administration.
- Adapts assessment methods and types of tests to the requirements of the candidates with special needs.
- Identifies situations that may provide additional evidence when competence does not arise explicitly in work activities.
- Identifies criteria against which candidates results will be examined.
- Shows candidates the requirements set from the occupational standards for which the assessment is made and explains the assessment methods.
- Organizes the assessment process in terms of venue, development program, the instruments used, resources needed, etc.
- Applies methods and assessment tools without discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates.
- Shows candidates the assessment results and analyzes each of their performances.
- Advises candidates about the possibility of getting a job based on the results obtained from the assessment.
- Identifies additional training requirements for candidates who have not achieved satisfactory results.
- Referrers candidates who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the assessment to the possibility of appeal and reassessment.

### **Work context**

- The assessor performs most of his/her activities in VET institutions (training centres/ vocational schools and assessment centres), public or private.
- The assessor has total freedom regarding the organization of the assessment process, under the limits of the methodological documents adopted.
- The assessor has discretion in the choice of methods, tools and samples used in the assessment process, according to the candidates profiles.

### **Knowledge and skills**

Knowledge regarding:

- HR and staffing
- Psychology
- Customer service
- Albanian language
- Education and training
- Legislation and government

Types of skills:





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- Problem-solving skills
- Social skills
- Recording skills

### **Cognitive aptitude**

- General learning ability
- Verbal ability
- Numerical ability
- Spatial ability
- Ability to shape perception
- Reporting skills
- Quickness in reactions
- Decisional capacity

### **Sensory aptitude**

- Auditory acuity
- Close visual acuity
- Clarity in speech

### **Sources of professional satisfaction**

- Recognition
- Social status
- Variety of tasks
- Responsibility
- Activity
- Authority, leadership
- Job stability
- Promotion
- Teamwork
- Practices and policies of the institution.

### **Personal skills of the Assessor**

The role of Assessor of professional competencies can be performed successfully by people who have learned to be conscientious, who manifest fairness, seriousness, and scrupulousness. Behaviours are directed towards clearly defined goals, thoroughness and rigor in performing the duties through the awareness of rules is manifested throughout the process. A professional assessor shows the ability to maintain emotional balance in stressful situations without extreme manifestations that are inconsistent with the situation. He/she shows the ability to judge things and act independently, uninfluenced by others, under conditions of complete impartiality.



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### Requirements for the selection process to become assessor (participant in the training) :

- Good understanding of competence-based system for assessing skills and knowledge
- Experience in on-the-job training and evaluation of training results, particularly in textile industry
- Strong background in textile industry (at least 5 years)
- Experience in managing job interviews (at least 10 interviews)
- Recent work experience in managing employees (workers and/or technicians) in textile industry (at least 3 years)
- Experience in recruiting personnel (skilled workers and technicians) in textile industry
- Experience in delivering training
- Experience in evaluating people
- Please note that it is necessary to be met at least two requirements.

### Duration of the training

3,5 training days and half a day for wrap-up, conclusions, assessment of the training action.

(Total - 4 training days).

### Training plan

#### Day I

- Opening remarks, introduction, presentation of participants
- Conceptual definitions

The RPL is a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard. RPL is usually associated with (but not limited to) the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

#### *Lunch break*

- Principles of RPL; RPL system should be underpinned by quality assurance. RPL processes are centred on individuals. Individual's enrolment for RPL must be voluntary. The privacy of individuals should be respected. Equal access and fair treatment should be guaranteed.

#### - Main features of RPL

RPL is referenced to the national standards (occupational standards, training standards, learning outcomes defined for each qualification etc.).

The recognition cannot be given by comparing two individuals; one is more knowledgeable or much skilful than the other. The knowledge, skills and competences of a person should be compared with the competences defined for an occupation or with the learning outcomes of a qualification as these have been agreed with the stakeholders at the national level.



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### Day II

- Stages in the RPL process (assessment of professional competences): enrolment of the candidate, self-assessment of the candidate, establishment of assessment plan, assessment process/gathering evidence, assessment decision, advice, guidance.
- Presentation of methods and assessment tools (direct observation, written test, portfolio and third party reports)

#### *Lunch break*

- Development of assessment instruments based on occupational standard  
Discussing and improving the assessment tools developed for occupation of Production Technician in Garment Production
- Strengths and weaknesses of each assessment instrument

### Day III

- Important aspects taken into account during the assessment tools elaboration  
Explanation and exercises about connection between the information contained in occupational standard and assessment tools.
- Applying assessment tools in RPL process (simulation exercises)

#### *Lunch break*

- Assessment process (simulation exercises)
- Assessment dossier made by assessor (simulation exercises)

### Day IV

- The operation of an assessment centre/ institutional arrangements
- Assessors (profile, roles and responsibilities, training and certification of assessors)
- Legal provisions on Recognition of RPL in Albania

#### *Lunch break*

- Conclusions, Recommendations
- Assessment of the training action

#### **Training methods to be used during the training**

- Exposure
- Explanation
- Conversation
- Brainstorming
- Speech
- Questioning



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- Demonstration
- Simulation exercises
- Individual and group exercises
- Debate
- Examples of good practice

### Training materials

- PowerPoint presentation
- Laptop
- Beamer
- Screen
- Flipchart

### Training Documents

#### *Specific references to Albania:*

- Frame methodology for implementing RPL processes in Albania
- Guidelines to develop Occupational Standards
- Occupational Standards for Production Technician in Garment Production
- Assessment instruments for Production Technician in Garment Production

#### *Generic references:*

- European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning (CEDEFOP, 2010)
- European Inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning (CEDEFOP, 2012)
- Glossary - Quality in education and training, 2011
- European Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012)
- Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning: Country Practices. (Patrick Werquin, OECD, 2010)
- Accreditation of prior learning as a lever for lifelong learning: lessons learnt from the New Opportunities Initiative, Portugal (Roberto Carneiro et al., UCP, 2011)

### Trainer's reference

**Mikaela KETS** is an international expert with a rich experience in the development and implementation of non-formal and informal learning system. She is a graduate of masters in "Politics and management education"



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## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

Mikaela KETS has worked in countries such as: Moldova, Serbia, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia where she redeveloped methodologies for recognition for prior learning, occupational standards, assessment tools and guidelines.

She trained experts to develop occupational standards, to provide training and to assess competencies.

Also, she participated like expert or/and coordinator in all type of projects, like: Phare, Twinning, ESF, LdV, LLL, ILO and ETF projects.

Mikaela KETS is very active and involved in professional organizations at European level (cluster member “Recognition of learning outcomes”)



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## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### **ANNEX 6**

#### **Assessment Tools**





**ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

**Annex 6.1**

**Registration sheet**

**To participate in the assessment of professional competencies for the  
occupation.....**

Ms / Mrs .

ID \_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_/\_

Born in \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ district \_\_\_\_\_

**Workplace**

Institution	_____
Department	_____
Position	_____ :
.....	
Telephone: .....	E-mail: .....

**Mail address**

--

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### Annex 6.2

*Occupation: Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing*

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

Candidate's name and surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's self- assessment	Assessor's assessment
------------------------------------	--------------------------

**I am able to:**

Interpret and disaggregate the technical tab		
Control samples		
Identify discrepancies between the sample and the technical tab		
Adjust the production process according to the type of the machinery		
Calculate the right time for every production process		
Explain to workers every detail of the production process		
Distinguish and solve problems and technical defects during production		
Allocate work to workers according to their abilities		
Report and inform my superior and workers accurately on the progress of the production process		
Complete technical documentation accurately and properly		
Apply the rules of technical safety and environment protection at work		
Identify and determine my training needs		

**I know:**

	Candidate's self-assessment	Assessor's assessment
The technical production processes		
The sequence of the production processes		
Technical language (terms)		
Characteristics of the cloth		
Types and work processes of each machinery		



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The quality controller's tasks		
The content of the production plan		

**I have valid testimonials of my competences:**

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

**Other (attach materials or documents that you believe would testify your achievements and professional performance).**

Diplomas received or courses completed:

The candidate is recommended to participate in the assessment of the following units of competence:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Candidate's signature

.....

Analised by assessor

.....

Date:.....



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### Annex 6.3

#### 6.3.1

WRITTEN TEST
Candidate's Sheets

Full name \_\_\_\_\_

Available time: 90 Minutes

Date\_3.11.2014\_\_\_\_\_

#### Unit of Competence 1, Questions:

1. **Question:** What do we refer to while building the production sample?
2. What is the difference between sewing tricot textile and sewing thin textile (such as silk)?

#### Unit of Competence 2, Questions:

3. Choose an item of clothing (shirt, trousers, work jacket) and describe the sequence of work needed to produce it.
4. Name the machines in the photo and describe their functions.

#### Unit of Competence 3, Questions:

5. Provide at least three examples to show how you can support the worker to increase the production efficiency.
6. What is the "cloth marking" used for in the work proces?

#### Unit of Competence 4, Questions:

7. What do you do when there are out- of -standard items during the production process?
8. What are the causes leading to out-of-standard items (mention at least 2)

#### Unit of Competence 5, Questions:

9. List three of the technical safety rules to be applied during the production process.
10. List at least two environment protection rules to be applied during the production process.



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### Unit of Competence 6, Questions:

11. List at least two of the main documents to be used by a production technician.

12. What is the technical tab used for?

*To be completed after the written test is checked!!!!*

The result table – Unit of Competence 1,2,3,4,5,6					
Question no.	Result		Question no.	Result	
	Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate		Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate
1			7		
2			8		
3			9		
4			10		
5			11		
6			12		
<b>TOTAL</b>					

Candidate's Signature\_\_\_\_\_



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### 6.3.2

<b>WRITTEN TEST</b>
<b>THE ASSESSOR'S FORM</b>

Candidate's full name .....

Title of the Unit of Competence	Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate	Acquired Competences	
			YES	NO
1. PREPARING WORK FOR THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (5 Points)				
<b>Question:</b> What do we refer to while building the production sample?  <b>Answer:</b>  We refer to the technical tab and the customer's sample.	2			
<b>Question:</b> What is the difference between sewing tricot textile and sewing thin textile (silk)?  <b>Answer:</b>  We use different size threads, different scarring of the sewing machine, different seam step.	3			
2. ORGANISING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (6 Points)				
<b>Question:</b> Choose an item of clothing (shirt, trousers, work jacket) and describe the sequence of work needed to produce it.	3			





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Title of the Unit of Competence	Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate	Acquired Competences	
			YES	NO
<p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p><b>Shirt:</b> starching, ironing, preparation of the collar, preparation of the shirt body, sewing up the pocket(s), sewing the collar and shirt together, preparation of the sleeve, preparation of the cuff, sewing the cuff and the sleeve together, full assembly, opening up holes, sewing up buttons, sewing up the hem.</p> <p><b>Trousers:</b> preparation of pockets, sewing using the three-needle machine (syzator) preparation of the "sallki" with the zipper, sticking, finalisation of the trouser leg, waistband, etc.</p> <p><b>Jacket:</b> starching, ironing, preparation of the collar, preparation of the jacket body, sewing up pockets, sewing up the collar with the jacket body, preparation of the sleeve, full assembly, opening up holes, sewing up buttons (sewing up the zipper), sewing up the sleeve hem and "kolan".</p>				
<p><b>Question:</b> Name the machines in the photo and describe their functions.</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>(5 photos) of:</p> <p>The "travet" machine – for reinforcement  The linear machine – straight sewing  3 needle machine - suzator  5 fold machine – 5 fold suzator  The machine for copertures – for knitting  The machine braçe – to unite trouser</p>	3			



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Title of the Unit of Competence	Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate	Acquired Competences	
			YES	NO
parts The hole and button machines				
<b>3. SUPPORTING THE WORKERS TO PERFORM THEIR JOBS (3 Points)</b>				
<b>Question:</b> Provide at least three examples to show how you can support the worker to increase the production efficiency.  <b>Answer:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Moral support and motivation</li> <li>- Appraisal of existing skills</li> <li>- Provision of professional support (guidance on process delivery)</li> <li>- Support offering technical assistance (to repair or replace machines, etc.).</li> </ul>	2			
<b>Question:</b> What is the "cloth marking" used for in the work process?  <b>Answer:</b> <p>To accurately unite one component part of the object to another (of the item of clothing).</p>	1			
<b>4. APPLYING THE QUALITY STANDARD OF THE CUSTOMER (3 Points)</b>				
<b>Question:</b> What do you do when there are out- of -standard items during the production process?  <b>Answer:</b> <p>We identify the cause of the problem and provide immediate solution.</p>	2			



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Title of the Unit of Competence	Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate	Acquired Competences	
			YES	NO
<b>Question:</b> What are the causes leading to out-of- standard items (mention at least 2)?  <b>Answer:</b> - Textile defect - Machinery defect - Lack of attention - Defects from the cutting section	1			
<b>RESPECTING THE RULES OF TECHNICAL SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION DURING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (4 Points)</b>				
<b>Question:</b> List 3 of the technical safety rules to be applied during the production process.  <b>Answer:</b> - Wearing the work uniform - Keeping your hair tied up - Keeping necessary distance from the machine mobile parts - Switching off machinery before leaving the work post - Putting auxiliary work tools in the right place.	3			
<b>Question:</b> List at least 2 environment protection rules to be applied during the production process.	1			



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Title of the Unit of Competence	Maximum Points	Points Received by the Candidate	Acquired Competences	
			YES	NO
<b>Answer:</b>  - For white textiles, putting a piece of cloth in the sewing machine to absorb the leaking oil. - Cleaning up air machines every day (compressed). - Throwing rubbish in the right place. - Covering the machine after daily cleaning.				
<b>MANAGING RECORDS (2 Points)</b>				
<b>Question:</b> List at least 2 of the main documents to be used by a production technician.  <b>Answer:</b> Technical tab, the sheet of new orders, notebook	1			
<b>Question:</b> What is the technical tab used for?  <b>Answer:</b>  The technical tab describes characteristics and parameters of the customer's sample.	1			
<b>TOTAL Unit of Competence</b>				

Assessor \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### Annex 6.4

#### DIRECT OBSERVATION FORM

Full name .....

Title of the Unit of Competence	Observed elements **	Maximum points	Points received by the candidate	Unit of Competence Acquired		Comments
				Yes	No	
<b>1. PREPARING WORK FOR THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (19 points)</b>	Builds the sample according to the technical tab and to the client's sample.	12				
	Selects the elements of the machine in compliance with the cloth.	7				
<b>2. ORGANISING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (22 points)</b>	Selects the right machine according to the production plan.	7				
	Calculates the total time of the manufacturing process according to the technical tab.	7				



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Title of the Unit of Competence	Observed elements **	Maximum points	Points received by the candidate	Unit of Competence Acquired		Comments
	Allocates everybody's work process according to workers' abilities for maximum productivity.	8				
<b>3. SUPPORTING THE WORKERS TO PERFORM THEIR JOB (11 points)</b>	Ensures that the employee understands the task assigned.	5				
	Ensures consistency of processes without interruption.	6				
<b>4. APPLYING THE QUALITY STANDARD OF THE CUSTOMER (11 points)</b>	Solves problems quickly and accurately.	7				
	Controls the quality of the parts of the product in a selective manner three times a day.	4				
<b>5. RESPECTING THE RULES OF</b>	Respects the rules of technical safety	2				





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Title of the Unit of Competence	Observed elements **	Maximum points	Points received by the candidate	Unit of Competence Acquired		Comments
<b>TECHNICAL SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION DURING THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (4 points)</b>	according to specific tasks  Respects the rules of environmental protection under the specific tasks.	2				
<b>6. MANAGING RECORDS (7 points)</b>	Completes clean and clear documentation.  Organizes the documents for easy usage	5  2				
<b>TOTAL</b>						

**\*\*Observed elements:** activities, competence-related outcomes and attitudes under observation.

Assessor.....

Signature.....

Date.....



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### Annex 6.5

#### 6.5.1

#### The Candidate's Form

### PORTFOLIO

Full name.....

**Requirements:** *During the assessment process you have to present the following:  
goods/services/pieces of work completed before the assessment;  
audio-visual recordings, testimonials, certificates received upon completion of training  
courses, diplomas from different competitions, etc.  
(Validity of photos, within the 3 last years)*

**Put an X in the list of documents submitted:**

1. CV
2. School diploma
3. Previous testimonials, certificates
4. Photos
5. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate' signature\_\_\_\_\_



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### 6.5.2

#### The Form for the Assessor

#### PORTFOLIO

Full name \_\_\_\_\_

**Requirements:** *During the assessment process you have to present the following:  
goods/services/pieces of work completed before the assessment;  
audio-visual recordings, testimonials, certificates received upon completion of training  
courses, diplomas from different competitions, etc.  
(Validity of photos, within the 3 last years)*

**Put an X in the list of documents submitted by the candidate:**

List of articles in the Portfolio	Comments by the assessor
CV	
School diploma	
Previous testimonials, certificates	



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Photos	

Assessor.....

Signature.....

Date.....



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### Annex 6.6

#### 6.6.1

#### Rapporteur Form

#### THIRD PARTY REPORT

Developed by .....  
in my capacity as ..... at .....on the  
activities performed by.....

Please tick the appropriate field:

No	Unit of competences	Appraisal		
		Yes	No	I do not know
1	<i>ITEMS SUBJECT TO DIRECT OBSERVATION with knowledge and skills for each competence</i>			
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
n				

Signature and stamp (as appropriate).....

Phone number.....

Other identification data.....



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### 6.6.2

#### Assessor Form

#### THIRD PARTY REPORT

Developed by .....  
in my capacity as ..... at .....on the  
activities performed by.....

Please tick the appropriate field:

No	Unit of competences	Appraisal	
		Yes	No
1	<i>ITEMS SUBJECT TO DIRECT OBSERVATION with knowledge and skills for each competence</i>		
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
n			
Score grid: each answer Yes scores .... points			
Score scale: appraisals "Yes"			

Assessor .....

Signature .....

Date .....

#### Note on Third party reports

*Appraisal supported by prior evaluations made by colleagues, supervisors, beneficiaries, collaborators etc., used as additional assessment method, associated with the portfolio. The reports may be requested both by the candidate and by the assessor.*

*This instrument includes 2 forms: one form for the third party reporting on the candidate and the assessor's form, including the assessor's appraisal/judgment on the answers provided by the reporting third party.*

*It is recommended that the same items selected for the direct observation should be followed. Thus, we may verify both the candidate's competence and the honesty of the reporting party.*

*As this assessment instrument is highly subjective, it is necessary to have as much identification data on the reporting party as possible. It is highly important that this instrument should be reliable.*





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*Third party reports as assessment instruments are usually applied towards the end of the assessment process.*

*The assessor reads carefully the form filled in by the reporting party and, based on the results obtained by the candidate during previous assessment stages, the assessor reaches appraisal conclusions which will be indicated in the assessor's form.*



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## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

### **ANNEX 7**

#### **Concept Note "Piloting stage for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Process in Albania"**



## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

### **CONCEPT NOTE**

#### **Piloting stage for the Recognition of Informal and Non-formal Learning Processes in Albania**

##### **Background information on the project/ RPL output**

The ILO-EU IPA 2010 project on Human Resources Development in Albania, funded by the European Union is implemented by the International Labour Organization, under the leadership of the Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe (DWT/CO-Budapest, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY), the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) and their implementing agencies.

The overall objective of the Project is to improve labour market functioning and the quality of human capital, while the specific objectives cover the improvement of the capacity of labour market institutions, mainly the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) and National Employment Service (NES) as well as development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Lifelong Learning (LLL) systems in Albania.

Under Component 3, technical assistance is required regarding the establishment of the Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanisms (RPL) in Albania. So far, a frame methodology on the RPL has been developed by the Project and validated by the Beneficiary, 5 qualifications have been identified as more relevant, and among them the textile sector has been selected to pilot the RPL mechanism. For this purpose, two Occupational Standards have been prepared, the related assessment tools have been produced and 10 assessors have been trained in order to prepare the piloting stage.

##### **Expected results**

- Materials for piloting the RPL mechanisms for the occupation of Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing prepared and submitted to the Project team until November 21st.
- RPL piloting for the occupation of Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing, including coaching of the assessors completed.



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- A report on the piloting, including further recommendations on the RPL implementation in Albania at the system level prepared.
- A comprehensive package with all related documents and materials for the RPL mechanisms pilot and further implementation by NAVETQ is prepared.

### **Objectives of the pilot stage**

At the end of the pilot stage the assessor will be able to:

- Organise and carry out an assessment process;
- Guide/advice the candidates during the assessment process;
- Manage and organise the documentation/materials produced during the assessment process;
- Provide feedback during the assessment process;
- Make a transparent and fair decision on the certification of competences according to the occupational standards;
- Provide concrete proposals and further recommendations for continuous improving and adapting the assessment system to the realities of the Albanian context, including other economic sectors/qualifications.

### **Guidance/Counselling of assessors during the pilot stage**

Although the assessors' training included many practical exercises on the development and implementation of assessment instruments, especially for direct observation, we still believe it is absolutely necessary that Albania should pilot this assessment process, because only when it is applied in real time the practitioners may notice certain aspects which should be discussed and clarified before being introduced in future legislation.

Throughout the piloting process the candidates will benefit from assistance, guidance and counselling provided both by the international expert, Mikaela KETS, and by the project team experts.

The assessors, (participants in the training course) will be grouped in panels made of 3 members, as follows: a representative of garment manufacturing companies, a representative of the education and training system and a representative of NAVETQ.

There will be 4 Assessment Panels.

The members of the project team will provide support and guidance to all assessors/candidates throughout the assessment process.

At the end of each day the assessors will be given feedback and guidance/counselling. The discussions will also include an analysis of the steps to be covered on the following day.

### **Conclusions**

There will be:

- 4 Assessment panels, including 2 assessors plus 1 coach from NAVETQ,



## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

- 10 candidates assessed in two stages
- Technical Support from ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project ((Maria do Carmo Comes, Team Leader and VET Expert; Mikaela Kets International Expert for RPL; Eriola Shingjergji, Local Expert; Mira Agolli, Interpreter) ,

### **Assessor's role**

1. The assessor has the responsibility to be knowledgeable of the occupational standard in place for the occupation object to assessment, of the assessment steps and of the specific assessment instruments.
2. The assessor shall agree with the candidate on the assessment methods used in the assessment process.
3. The assessor shall promote the concept of lifelong self-assessment and self-development both for recognised competences and for competences which have not been yet recognised.
4. The assessor shall build an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in the relationship with the candidate.
5. The assessor shall indicate both the legal framework applicable to the assessment process and its limitations.
6. The assessor shall indicate the candidate the assessment methods specific to each occupation, showing both the benefits and the limitations of each method.
7. The assessor shall apply the assessment methods and shall use the relevant instruments for the methods agreed upon, according to the instructions.
8. The assessor shall apply only those assessment instruments which are relevant for the assessment methods agreed upon with the candidate.
9. The assessor shall be responsible for the fair implementation of the assessment instruments and for the entire assessment process.
10. The assessor has the professional obligation to certify only the competences of the candidates who prove they have the necessary experience and knowledge for the occupation for which they are assessed, by providing adequate and valid evidence.

### **Candidate's role**

1. The candidate registers voluntarily in the assessment process.
2. The candidate shall demonstrate commitment and be motivated throughout the assessment process.
3. The candidate shall observe the assessment plan agreed upon with the assessor.
4. The candidate shall inform the assessor on the unpredictable situations occurred during the assessment process.
5. The candidate shall present all evidence that enable the assessment of competences.



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6. The candidate shall have the right to lodge a complaint against the assessment decision to the technical support team provided by ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project, [gomesm@ilo.org](mailto:gomesm@ilo.org).

### **Work context and materials**

Both the candidate and the assessor shall observe the stages of the assessment process:

1. Candidate registration for the assessment of competence;
2. The candidate is supported to perform self-assessment;
3. Decision on the units of competence for which the candidate wants to be assessed;
4. Candidate preparation for assessment;
5. Planning and organisation of the assessment process;
6. Evidence of competence is collected;
7. Analysis of evidence and decision on competence;
8. Registration and reporting on assessment results;
9. Issuance of certificate of competence.

### **Assessor-candidate relationship**

The meeting between the assessor and the person to be assessed should take place in a proper environment which fosters the cooperation between them. The purpose of this meeting is to create the necessary connection between the candidate and the assessor so that to ensure the adequate implementation of the assessment process and to build mutual trust.

The assessor should:

- Be focused and impartial in his/her assessment;
- Be cooperative and knowledgeable of body language ;
- Obtain information on the candidates;
- Explain the confidentiality of the assessment process;
- Encourage the candidate to ask for clarifications.

The assessors should have the following information on the candidate: data on education and professional background, workplace, position or role through a registration sheet, self-assessment instrument and portfolio. The assessor should encourage the candidate to ask questions, so that they may clarify all aspects related to the assessment process.

The assessor should clearly explain to the candidate that the role of the assessor is to help the candidate produce evidence of competence.





## **ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania**

### **Duration of the piloting stage in the field**

First Stage: 3 – 7 November –assessment (not including preparatory days)

Second Stage: 12-28 November 2014, TBC

### **Work plan**

In the period prior to the pilot stage the project team will meet the candidates to guide and support them in the assessment process.

For a more efficient use of time, the candidates will also fill out the self-assessment instrument during this period.

Program for first stage 3 – 7 November

### **Monday, 3 November**

At the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, Large Meeting Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor.

### ***Objectives:***

- Presentation of the pilot
- Instructions on the piloting process to participants
- Tasks to be assigned to assessors, candidates
- Carry out the written test and candidates portfolio assessment

#### **9.00** *Welcome and Opening*

Ms. Eriola Shingjergji, Local Expert, ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on HRD in Albania

#### **9.10** *Presentation of the pilot process and instructions to the assessors*

Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert, ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on HRD in Albania

#### **10.15** *Registration of the candidates*

Ms. Eriola Shingjergji, Local Expert

#### **10.30** *Introduction between the candidates and assessors and discussion on self-assessment*

Group A, B, C, D of assessors and respective candidates

#### **11.00** *Introduction of the written test to candidates*

Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

#### **11.30** *Carrying out of the written test*

All candidates

#### **13.00** *Correcting of the written test*

All assessors



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

13.00 *Instructions for the direct observation assessment to candidates*

Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

13.30 *Discussion and assessment of the candidates' portfolio, written test results*

Assessors and candidates

14.15 *Wrap-up and instructions for the direct observation*

Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

### **Tuesday, 4 November**

At Factory Toni's Group Tirana (*Address: Lagja 5 Maji, Tirana*)

#### **Objectives:**

- Carry out the direct observation assessment of the candidate
- Monitoring and coaching of the assessors
- Feedback from all participants

**13.00** *Direct Observation assessment*

Group B: Ms. Silva Nini & Ms. Ermira Shehi, Ms. Ilda Sylari, Assessment Experts  
Support Experts NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji  
Coach Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

**14.30** *Feedback to candidate on the assessment results*

Group B

**14.45** *Discussion of the assessment results with the candidate*

Group B, candidate

**15.00** *Evaluation of the overall assessment piloting by the candidate*

Candidate

**15.15** *Feedback for the performance of the assessors*

Coach Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert  
Support Experts, NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji

### **Wednesday, 5 November**

At Factory Toni's Group Peqin (*Address: Zona Industriale, Peqin*)

#### **Objectives:**

- Carry out the direct observation assessment of the candidates
- Monitoring and coaching of the assessors
- Feedback from all participants



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

### **12.00** *Direct Observation assessment*

Group C: Mr. Ermir Kasmi, Ms. Alma Lama, Assessment Experts  
Support Experts NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji  
Coach Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

### **13.30** *Feedback to candidate on the assessment results*

Group C

### **13.45** *Discussion of the assessment results with the candidate*

Group C, candidate

### **14.00** *Evaluation of the overall assessment piloting by the candidate*

Candidate

### **14.15** *Feedback for the performance of the assessors*

Coach Mikaela Kets, International Expert  
Support Experts, NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji

### **Thursday, 6 November**

At Factory Symbol (Address: Prane Qendres Konkord, Tirana)

### **Objectives:**

- Carry out the direct observation assessment of the candidate
- Monitoring and coaching of the assessors
- Feedback from all participants

### **14.00** *Direct Observation assessment*

Group D: Ms. Dhurata Ylli, Ms. Engjellushe Skifteri, Assessment Experts  
Support Experts NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji  
Coach Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

### **15.30** *Feedback to candidate on the assessment results*

Group D

### **15.45** *Discussion of the assessment results with the candidate*

Group D, candidate

### **16.00** *Evaluation of the overall assessment piloting by the candidate*

Candidate

### **16.15** *Feedback for the performance of the assessors*

Coach Mikaela Kets, International Expert  
Support Experts, NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji



## ILO-EU IPA 2010 Project on Human Resources Development in Albania

**Friday, 7 November**

At Factory Omega, Delta Tirana (Address: *Prane ish Frigoriferit, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Omega, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Delta*)

### **Objectives:**

- Carry out the direct observation assessment of the candidates
- Monitoring and coaching of the assessors
- Feedback from all participants

#### **10.30** *Direct Observation assessment*

Group A: Mr. Florian Zekja, Ms. Rudina Mita, Assessment Experts  
Support Experts NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji  
Coach Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

#### **12.00** *Feedback to candidate 1 on the assessment results* Group D

#### **12.45** *Discussion of the assessment results with the candidate 1* Group D, candidate

#### **13.00** *Evaluation of the overall assessment piloting by the candidate 1* Candidate

### **Break**

#### **14.00** *Direct Observation assessment*

Group A: Mr. Florian Zekja, Ms. Rudina Mita, Assessment Experts  
Support Experts NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji  
Coach Ms. Mikaela Kets, International Expert

#### **15.30** *Feedback to candidate 2 on the assessment results* Group D

#### **15.45** *Discussion of the assessment results with the candidate 2* Group D, candidate

#### **16.00** *Evaluation of the overall assessment piloting by the candidate 2* Candidate

#### **16.15** *Feedback for the performance of the assessors* Coach Mikaela Kets, International Expert Support Experts, NAVETQ, Ms. Eriola Shingjergji

### **Resources**

- A room for the written test and meetings between candidates and assessors



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- Access to companies in the field to perform direct observation in real time
- Materials related to the piloting stage (assessment tools, occupational standard, candidates information).

### Recommendations

- In order not to interrupt the production process in the company, it is preferable to evaluate people who are already working in this occupation – Line Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing.
- It is also preferable that the evaluation committee will observe them working in real time, during the performance of their daily activities.

### Coach's reference

**Mikaela KETS** is an international expert with a rich experience in the development and implementation of non-formal and informal learning system.

She is a graduate of masters in “Politics and management education”

Mikaela KETS has worked in countries such as: Moldova, Serbia, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia where she redeveloped methodologies for recognition for prior learning, occupational standards, assessment tools and guidelines.

She trained and coach experts to develop occupational standards and to implement RPL/VNFIL system.

Also, she participated like expert or/and coordinator in all type of projects, like: Phare, Twinning, ESF, LdV, LLL, ILO and ETF projects.

Mikaela KETS is very active and involved in professional organizations at European level (cluster member “Recognition of learning outcomes”)



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### **ANNEX 8**

#### **Evaluation Forms**





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### Annex 8.1

#### FILLED EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FROM 12 TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

The objective of this questionnaire is to provide information on the quality of the training action, its methodologies, contents and relevance. The results are only used by the trainer for the purpose of assessing this training action.

#### 1. Assessing the training action: Training the Assessors for the Recognition of Informal and Non-Formal Learning

##### Profession of Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing

Please insert an X in the cell that you feel that reflects better your position on the different topics:

	Null	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Organization of the action contents				X	XXXXX X	XXXXX
Trainer performance					XXXX	XXXXX XX
Trainer knowledge on the training topics					XXXXX XXX	XXX
Balancing between theoretical and practical components				XXX	XXXX	XXXX
Materials used during the action				XXXX	XXXXX X	XXX
Exercises					XXXXX X	XXXXX XX
Explanation Techniques					XXXXX	XXXXXX X
Logistics and training conditions					XXXX	XXXXX XXX
Relevance of the training action for the future job				X	XXX	XXXX XXXX



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### 2. Strong and weak points

Please list what were the two major strong points and the two major weak points of the training:

Strong Points	Weak Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainer's performance.</li> <li>• Very good organization.</li> <li>• Explanation techniques.</li> <li>• Trainer knowledge on the training topics.</li> <li>• Total engagement of participants and organizers.</li> <li>• Very important topic.</li> <li>• Explanation techniques.</li> <li>• Excellent and patient communication with the participants.</li> <li>• High level of the expert's expertise.</li> <li>• Exercises in the company.</li> <li>• Balancing between theoretical and practical components.</li> <li>• Relevance of the training action for the future job.</li> <li>• It is an important field for our work.</li> <li>• The direct observation is very important.</li> <li>• The necessity of informal and non-formal assessment.</li> <li>• Very good cooperation between the trainers, the companies and institutions.</li> <li>• The organization of the training.</li> <li>• The importance of the direct observation.</li> <li>• Performance of the trainer.</li> <li>• Logistics and training conditions.</li> <li>• Relevance of the training for my work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation from major Façon companies.</li> <li>• Participation from non- Façon companies.</li> <li>• I don't think that there are weak points.</li> <li>• Balancing between theoretical and practical components.</li> <li>• No weak points for me.</li> <li>• Balancing between theoretical and practical components.</li> <li>• The long duration of the training.</li> </ul>

**Thank you for the cooperation!**



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### Annex 8.2

#### SURVEY ON PILOTING PROCESS FOR THE ASSESSOR

The objective of this survey is to provide information on the quality of the piloting process, its methodologies, contents and relevance. The results taken by direct interviews are used by the project team for future improvements of the assessment process

#### 3. Assessing the piloting process action for the implementation of Recognition of Informal and Non-Formal Learning in Albania

##### Profession of Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing

Please insert an X in the cell that you feel that reflects better your position on the different topics:

	Null	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Transparency of assessment process					XX	XXXXX XXXXX
Organisation of assessment process				X	X	XXXXX XXXXX
Relevance of assessment competences in real time and real work conditions					XXX	XXXXX XXXX
Collaboration between assessor and candidate				X	XXX	XXXXX XXX

#### 4. Strong and weak points

Please list the two major strong points and the two major weak points of the piloting process.

Strong Points	Weak Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The direct observation is an efficient assessment method</li> <li>The assessment team composition</li> <li>Various skills level of the candidates</li> <li>Good cooperation with the companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The occupational standard should contain more tasks on the cutting process</li> <li>One of the candidates had not completed secondary education.</li> <li>The selected machineries photos should be more generic.</li> </ul>

Thank you for the cooperation!



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### Annex 8.3

#### SURVEY ON PILOTING PROCESS FOR THE 5 CANDIDATES

The objective of this survey is to provide information on the quality of the piloting process, its methodologies, contents and relevance. The results taken by direct interviews are used by the project team for future improvements of the assessment process.

#### Assessing the piloting process action for the implementation of Recognition of Informal and Non-Formal Learning in Albania

##### Profession of Production Technician in Garment Manufacturing

1. You were presented and explained the content of the occupational standard prior to assessment.  
Yes 5                      No 0
2. The assessment methods have been established with your consent.  
Yes 5                      No 0
3. The assessors have provided assistance and advice during the performance of the entire evaluation process.  
Yes 5                      No 0
4. It was insured permanent access to all the materials and resources necessary to accomplish the evaluation.  
Yes 5                      No 0
5. The assessors provided objectivity in judging evidence of your competences.  
Yes 4                      No 1
6. You consider that the assessment methods chosen lead to demonstration of your knowledge and skills, according with the occupational standard  
Yes 5                      No 0
7. Please list two strong points and two weak points of the assessment process:



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Strong Points	Weak Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First time that it takes place in Albania.</li><li>• Very useful process.</li><li>• Tasks in the occupational standards are very realistic.</li><li>• Assessors are very helpful and professional.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More experience is needed with the process for the candidate to demonstrate the skills.</li><li>• The pictures featured in the written test are not found in all companies.</li><li>• It is better to do the assessment it after work hours.</li><li>• The assessors should observe more.</li></ul>

**Thank you for your collaboration!**