

# Recognition of Prior Learning in Practice



## The objective of the project

...was to encourage, through structured **peer learning**, the participating countries/institutions to develop quality assured and consistent processes to **recognise non-formal and informal learning** that suit the conditions of the participating countries/institutions.

Focus on **Higher Education**

# Participants: authorities, ministries and HEI:s in 5 countries and EURASHE



Swedish Council for  
Higher Education



QQI

Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and Qualifications Ireland



IRISH  
UNIVERSITIES  
ASSOCIATION



CIT CORK  
INSTITUTE OF  
TECHNOLOGY  
ITÍUID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA CHORCAÍ



MTU

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan  
Munster Technological University



BRIATHAR DÉ HO LÓCHRANN  
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MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE  
COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL



Government of Iceland

Ministry of Education, Science and Culture



rannís



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS



LISTAHÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS

Iceland University of the Arts



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Ministry of Science and  
Education



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COLLEGE



EURASHE

European Association of Institutions in Higher Education



Government Offices of Sweden



GÖTEBORGS  
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Swedish Council for  
Higher Education



KTH  
VETENSKAP  
OCH KONST



BOKU



Agentur für  
Qualitätssicherung  
und Akkreditierung  
Austria



FH  
CAMPUS  
WIEN  
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



die pädagogische  
hochschule  
oberösterreich

## The RPL in practice project

- EU funded "Support to the implementation of the EHEA reforms"  
Erasmus + - Key action 3: Support for policy reforms.
- Contract period April 15, 2019 – April 14, 2021

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/607050-EPP-1-2018-1-SE-EPPKA3-BOLOGNA>

Project website: <https://www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice>

Nobody should be required to study  
something that they already know

## Definitions

These are the [definitions of RPL and Validation](#) in **the Council recommendation** on validation of non-formal and informal learning from 2012

**RPL** is defined as

*The validation of learning outcomes, whether **from formal education or non-formal or informal learning**, acquired before requesting validation.*

And **Validation** is *the definition of the actual **process** that you do to recognize the learning achieved.*

# Validation of non-formal and informal learning - the four phases of validation

The European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning  
[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073_en.pdf)

The process consists of the four phases:

Identification

Documentation

Assessment

Certification





# Introduction to the group discussions, the self-assessment template

## Part 2. Self-assessment template – to be filled in parallel to working with an RPL case

| 1. Identification  | Short description | Crucial points for successful implementation  | Challenges  | Links to examples   |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|
| <p>Has the purpose of the validation and the different phases of the process been clearly defined and communicated to the candidate?</p> |                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear information and support to candidates.</li> <li>- Clear role definitions and responsibilities.</li> <li>- Clear definitions of how validation can be used.</li> <li>- Clear information about the process and what kind of information the candidate has to present.</li> <li>- Guidance/mentoring to candidates.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The candidates' understanding of their responsibility and the effort they must put into the process – including the reflection on their learning.</li> </ul> | <p><a href="https://www.cit.ie/rpl">https://www.cit.ie/rpl</a><br/> <a href="https://www.cit.ie/rpl/bookaworkshop">https://www.cit.ie/rpl/bookaworkshop</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.kth.se/en/studies/master/recognition-of-prior-learning-1.786469">https://www.kth.se/en/studies/master/recognition-of-prior-learning-1.786469</a></p>  |
| <p>Which tools and procedures support identification?</p>  |                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidelines</li> <li>- Easy access to information on Learning Outcomes on programme and course level linked to a qualification framework.</li> <li>- Templates and forms.</li> <li>- Examples</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poorly constructed Learning Outcomes.</li> <li>- Know when all the relevant evidence is identified.</li> </ul>   | <p><a href="https://www.cit.ie/courses/findacourse">https://www.cit.ie/courses/findacourse</a><br/> <a href="https://www.cit.ie/rpl/usefulforms">https://www.cit.ie/rpl/usefulforms</a><br/> <a href="http://courses.cit.ie">http://courses.cit.ie</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.algebra.hr/visokouciliste/en/studij/">https://www.algebra.hr/visokouciliste/en/studij/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.studera.nu/startpage/road-to-studies/admission-to-university-studies/prior-learning-and-exemptions/">https://www.studera.nu/startpage/road-to-studies/admission-to-university-studies/prior-learning-and-exemptions/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.kth.se/utbildning">https://www.kth.se/utbildning</a></p> |



# Conclusions

Important components when working with validation at HEI:s:

- Clear learning outcomes for courses and programmes
- A commitment to validation within the entire HEI
- Clear information to those whose knowledge is to be validated
- Transparent processes at the HEI
- Countries' national legislation does not create obstacles
- A model for financing is in place

## Recommendations-Ministries/national authorities

- Initiate a **discussion** with national authorities, quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions, which can **facilitate** cooperation, networking and peer-learning.
- Provide necessary **frameworks** for HEIs to work with RPL.
  - Legal provisions need to be in place.
  - A functional qualifications framework facilitates the implementation of RPL.
  - Consider how additional costs for RPL should be covered.
- If needed, revisit the **Council Recommendation**

## Recommendations-Higher Education Institutions

- Use the information and the tools which are already there, get inspiration from what has been done earlier.
- Learn from **previous experience** – save and use previous decisions to improve and quality assure practice.
- Make use of **the self-assessment template** developed within this project.
- Revisit the **learning outcomes** of courses and programmes with validation in mind and **reference** them clearly to a qualification's framework.
- Initiate an internal discussion to involve **all staff categories** in RPL, from senior management to faculty to student counselling and administration.
- Continuous peer learning and **cooperation** with other HEIs, nationally and/or internationally

## Recommendations-European level – EU commission and BFUG

- Continue support peer-learning on a European level
- Make sure that peer-learning projects involve different actors



**The European RPL  
network**

**“I expected to get cookbooks...Now I know that if we were “given” best practices examples ready for “policy copying” at the very beginning, we would have skipped discussions on the RPL concepts, deep analysis and real understanding of the national contexts...We would have gotten tools but would potentially skipped acquiring skills and understanding to develop them by ourselves.”**

## Resources

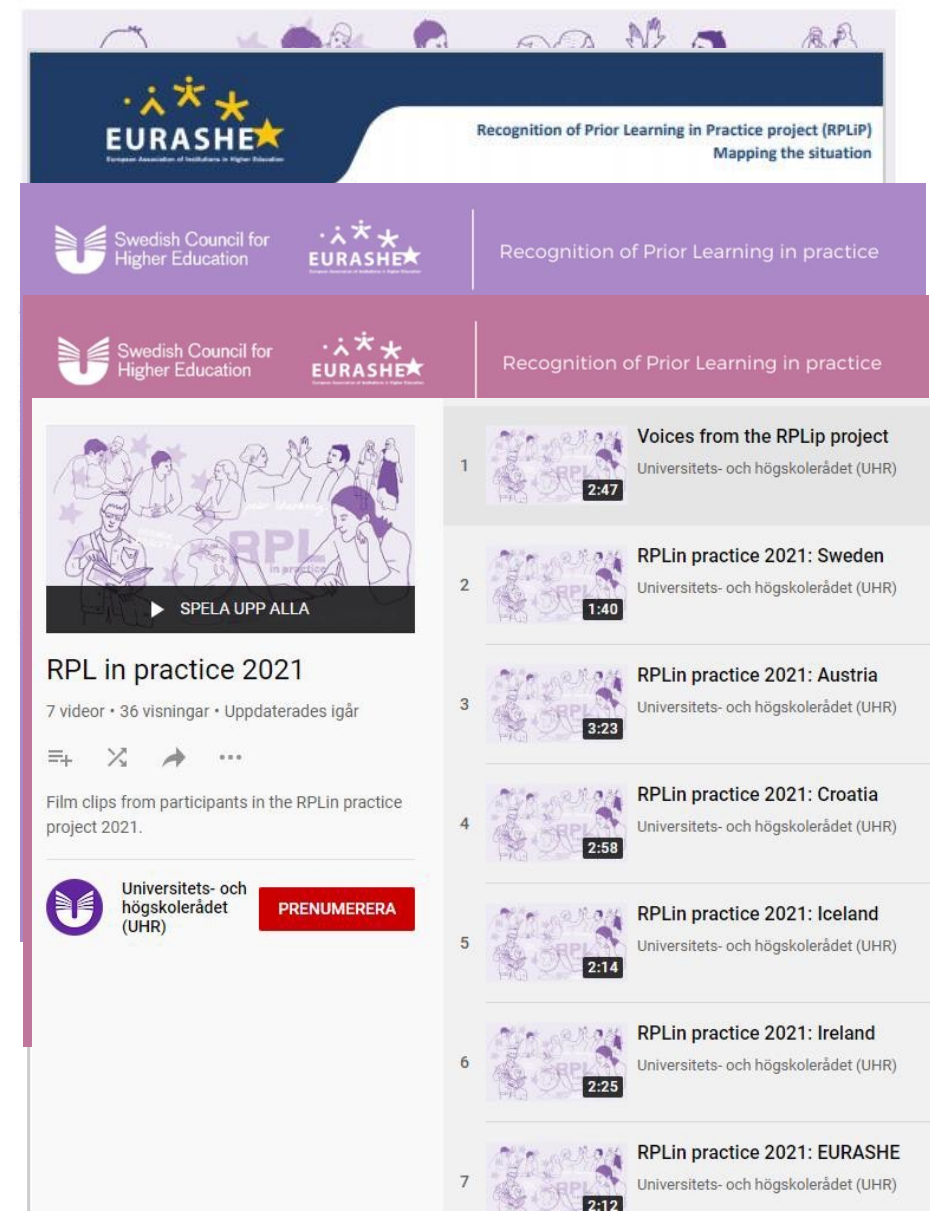
- RPL information [leaflet](#) on basic facts of validation
- Tested [self-assessment template](#)
- Report, Mapping Institutional Experiences of Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education
- Presentations and films from seminars
- Film clips with project participants
- [RPL in Practice Final report](#)

Project website: <https://www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice>

## Validation of non-formal and informal learning in higher education

## The four phases of validation

RPL in practice. Self-assessment template – The four phases of validation



The screenshot shows a YouTube playlist interface. At the top, there is a banner for the 'Recognition of Prior Learning in Practice project (RPLip) Mapping the situation' with the EURASHE logo. Below the banner are two navigation tabs: 'Recognition of Prior Learning in practice' (selected) and 'Recognition of Prior Learning in practice'. The main content area displays a video player for 'RPL in practice 2021' with a 'SPELA UPP ALLA' button. Below the player, the video title 'RPL in practice 2021' is shown along with '7 videor • 36 visningar • Uppdaterades igår'. A list of video clips follows, each with a thumbnail, a number, a title, and a duration:

| Number | Title  | Duration |
|--------|--|----------|
| 1      | Voices from the RPLip project<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR) | 2:47     |
| 2      | RPLin practice 2021: Sweden<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)   | 1:40     |
| 3      | RPLin practice 2021: Austria<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)  | 3:23     |
| 4      | RPLin practice 2021: Croatia<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)  | 2:58     |
| 5      | RPLin practice 2021: Iceland<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)  | 2:14     |
| 6      | RPLin practice 2021: Ireland<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)  | 2:25     |
| 7      | RPLin practice 2021: EURASHE<br>Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)  | 2:12     |





# Thank you!

[www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice](http://www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice)

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