



The Austrian system and why and how it was developed (and how it is still being developed)

Webinar 1: Why validation and recognition of prior informal and non-formal learning? October 2020, Barbara Birke

WHY RPL in Austria ...?

- At European level
 - COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning 2012/C 398/01
- At national level in Austria
 - 2011: Austrian Lifelong Learning Strategy “LLL:2020”: *‘...acquired skills and competences, **regardless of where they were acquired**, be recognised and certified, thus placing **non-formal** and **informal** education processes on an equal level with formal education processes.’*
 - 2017: National strategy on the social dimension of higher education. Refers to LLL:2020 strategy
 - Very strong social selection on access to HE and low numbers of people with academic degrees
 - Very strong vocational education sector -> highly qualified people who might strive for academic qualification

WHY was it difficult to get started?



- Different legal provisions in Austria for different sectors, eg:
 - No RPL of non-formal and informal learning at public universities
 - RPL at Universities of Applied Sciences /Fachhochschulen (since 1994)
 - Little experience with RPL, little knowledge on procedures
 - Little/no trust in RPL
- ⇒ AQ Austria was commissioned by the Ministry to start the RPL process in Austria and to support and promote the implementation process

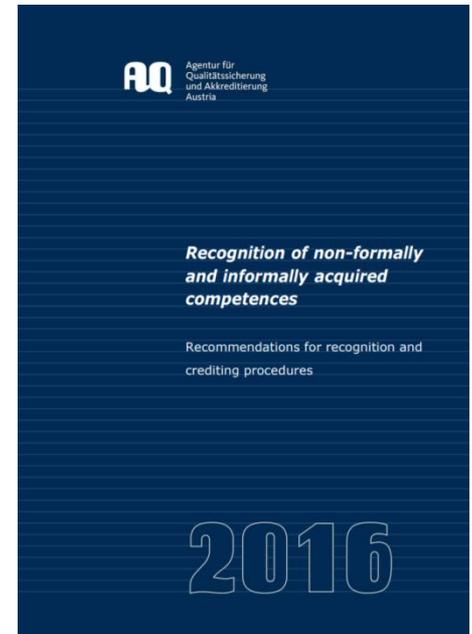
WHY AQ Austria....?

- AQ Austria works cross sectoral (public & private universities, UAS/Fachhochschulen, teacher training colleges,...)
- As an QA Agency our focus is on quality assured processes
- RPL as criterion within the accreditation procedure
- Biggest challenge: to build trust in **quality** of RPL and its procedures

WHY did we do it the way we did?



- Project groups with HEIs (starting in 2015, open end...) in order to **develop applicable recommendations for RPL procedures together**
- ... and with experts in the field of RPL from experienced EU countries (FIN, Germany, Ireland,...) in order to **learn from their experiences**
- Close contact to the Ministry in order to **move the legal basis for RPL forward**
- Support provided by the Ministry in order to **motivate HEIs to implement RPL**
- Permanent activities by AQ Austria in order to **support HEIs and promote the implementation of RPL**



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WHY do Austrian HEIs implement RPL?



- "Our students already bring along various competences. We need RPL because **time and skills of our students are important to us.**"
Susanna Boldrino FH Campus Wien, University of Applied Sciences
- "As a university, we want to contribute to the implementation of quality-assured procedures and processes for the recognition of prior learning and thus **contribute to quality-assured permeability.**
- As an expert, I would like to use my knowledge in the field of validation of non-formal and informal learning to develop ways and opportunities to **counteract current and expected unemployment** and to give people new perspectives for the job market through open access and recognition of their skills.

Christina Paulus, BOKU, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna

Why contact us?



- For any further questions but also if you have relevant information for us.....
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