

“Our main focus has been on describing key competences, how they are related to Folkbildning and how they can be validated.”

# Folk- bildning

and  
validation of  
key  
competences



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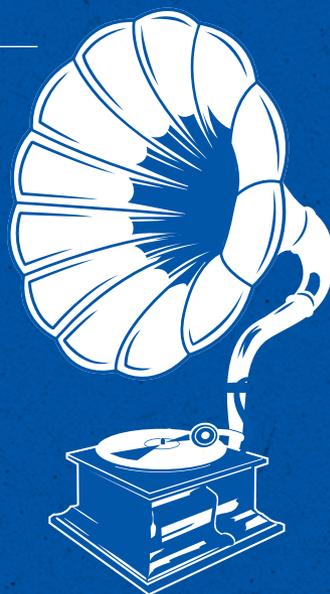
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# INTRO

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**This publication  
focuses on which competences  
can be validated through  
participation in  
non-formal  
adult education.**

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**T**his is a tool for you to use. We want to help you. We worked together as a group constituted and coordinated by NVL to produce this publication.

Our primary target groups are people working in non-formal adult education, and people working with, or interested in, validation.

The word competence is a very complex one. You can understand it in many different ways. Your understanding will affect how you look upon and understand validation. In the end we agreed to use the 8 key competences described and defined by the European Union. We consider these key competences of vital importance in enabling the individual to function in today's society. In our opinion 4 of these competences can be improved considerably by participating in non-formal adult education. In this publication we show you how and why, we provide practical examples and we outline some recommendations. We also ask you some very difficult questions.

#### **THE PAPER**

- aims to increase/further the understanding, status and potential role of non-formal learning and Folkbildning in providing key competences
- underlines the strengths of non-formal adult education in competence development
- discusses opportunities and challenges in validation of competences in non-formal and informal adult education



**We consider these key competences of vital importance in enabling the individual to function in today's society.**

Our main focus has been on describing key competences, how they are related to Folkbildning and how they can be validated. We want this to be a discussion paper, thus we have added study questions after each of the competences described. You are encouraged to use this publication as a study material, for example by discussing one competence at a time to end up with a general discussion of the core findings of the publication. This is in line with the Swedish tradition of study circles. A typical study circle usually meets five times.

We also encourage you to add your comments and ideas using the NVL Validation Network. You can easily get in touch with the network as well as finding a lot more interesting information about validation at [nvl.org/Tema/Aktuellatema/Validering](http://nvl.org/Tema/Aktuellatema/Validering).

This publication can be downloaded free of charge in English or Swedish at [nvl.org/Tema/Aktuellatema/Validering](http://nvl.org/Tema/Aktuellatema/Validering).

*Helsinki 12 October 2015  
Johanni Larjanko*

# SETTING THE SCENE

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**The Nordic tradition of Folkbildning this section helps you to sort out any open questions you may have.**



**S**ociety is full of education for adults. Our current system has grown into the shape we know today during the last 100/150! years. A key role in education in all Nordic societies is played by “Folkbildning”, an umbrella name/concept for several different adult learning traditions. The roots and traditions of Folkbildning stem from the 18th century. The concept is not possible to translate fully using a single phrase. Many have tried, and failed, so we choose to describe some key elements instead.

The core task for non-formal adult education, Folkbildning, is to give people tools to engage in the society and time

in which they live, making each person an active participant and not a passive spectator. A common aim for Folkbildning is to help foster independent citizens living by the rules of a democratic society.

Folkbildning is firmly rooted in what is often called the third sector, or civil society (the other two sectors being the public and the private). Folkbildning is fiercely independent, and by definition not-for-profit.

Folkbildning is based on the voluntary engagement of its participants and their interest in learning together. The competences being developed in Folkbildning are rooted in this engagement through courses, joint practical activities and reflexion.

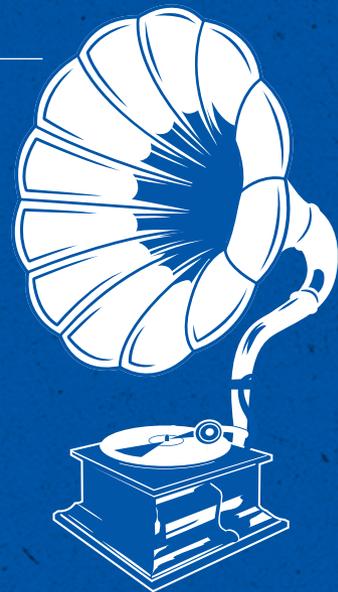
These competences are generally obtained in non-formal (like for example in study circles and/or courses) or informal settings (in volunteer work or through engagement in associations).

# CONTEXT

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In this section we present three different ways of learning, two different strands of non-formal adult education and outline why and how validation and Folkbildning/non formal learning are relevant to each other. We also introduce some challenges.

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# 3 TYPES OF LEARNING

## Non-formal learning:

The learning is intended and the learning situation is organized in order to make the participants learn something. But there is no curriculum and no specific pre-described standards and goals for the learning outcomes, which consequently might diverge quite a bit with respect to character, content and level. Learning programs in Folkbildning typically have this character.

**formal**

## Formal learning:

The learning program is organized and carried out in order to bring the students to meet specifically pre-described standards and goals for the learning outcomes related to a curriculum etc. Typically you'll achieve a kind of diploma.

**non-  
formal**

## Informal learning:

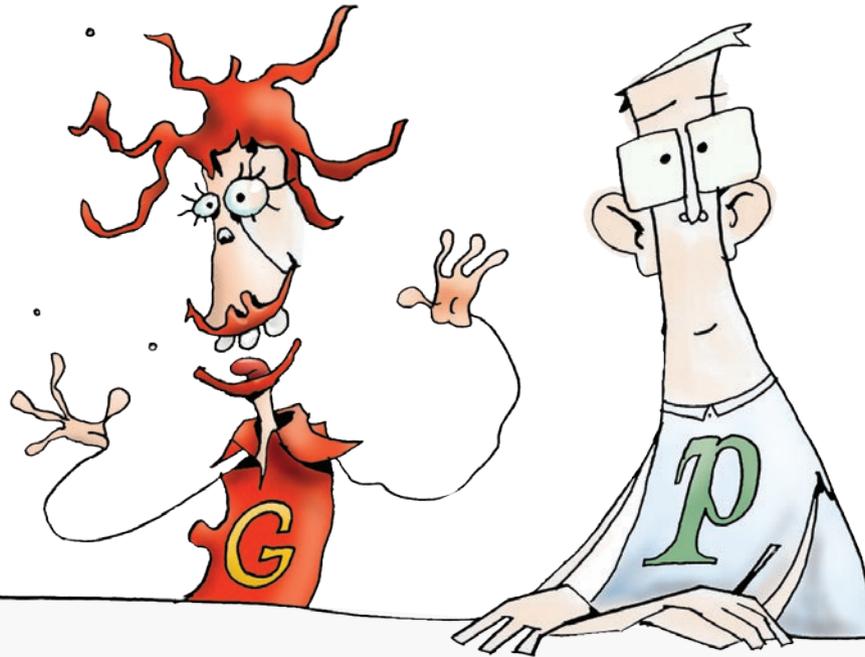
Learning in situations which are not defined nor organized. The learning outcome is a side effect of situations and activities, which are set up for other main purposes – like everyday life and participation in work, community, voluntary Folkbildning-activities etc.

**informal  
learning**

Informal learning can be included/initiated in non formal learning situations by clarification and articulation. Non-formal and informal learning can be “translated” and recognised in relation to formal learning/curriculum by assessment processes.

The differences between the three kinds of learning approaches concern the goals and the organization of the learning context and the way that the individual learn.

There are no principal differences when it comes to the learning outcome (eg. value, character, level, quality).



## THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT NON-FORMAL LEARNING APPROACHES IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES:

**1** The Nordic Folkbildning tradition represents an ambition to form and educate competent citizens and support democracy through non formal learning activities. “Frit og frivilligt (free and voluntary)” are central principles. Voluntary activities and associations are also seen as part of the Folkbildning tradition. Here the learning approach is mainly informal as the learning is not intended, but a side effect of the activities. The Folkbildning position has it’s strongest proponents in the Scandinavian countries.

**2** The second position is a more pragmatic one. According to this position the non-formal approach is seen as the most efficient in order to support learning and employability. There are important benefits for the individual and for society, not least economical. This position is strong in Iceland and Finland. In all the Nordic countries you’ll find both approaches – and very often a mix of them.

# COMPETENCE IS MORE THAN KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

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**The competence concept consists of knowledge and skills but also the ability and commitment to use your knowledge and skills in an appropriate way in known and new situations.**

**O**f course each of the three kinds of learning approaches (formal, non-formal and informal) develops both knowledge, skills, ability and commitment, but the focus differs and each sector has its strengths and roles.

Formal learning is often regarded as most the most credible way of providing professional knowledge and skills.

The special strengths of the non-formal learning set up are based on its more flexible frames, allowing the professionals to meet the individual where he or she is and to tailor the learning program to his or her needs, interests and goals.



From a validation point of view, the special strengths and potentials of Folkbildning and non-formal learning are linked to the commitment and ability aspects of the competence concept.

That's why the non-formal learning approach is often the most efficient in supporting all aspects of individual learning and competence development.

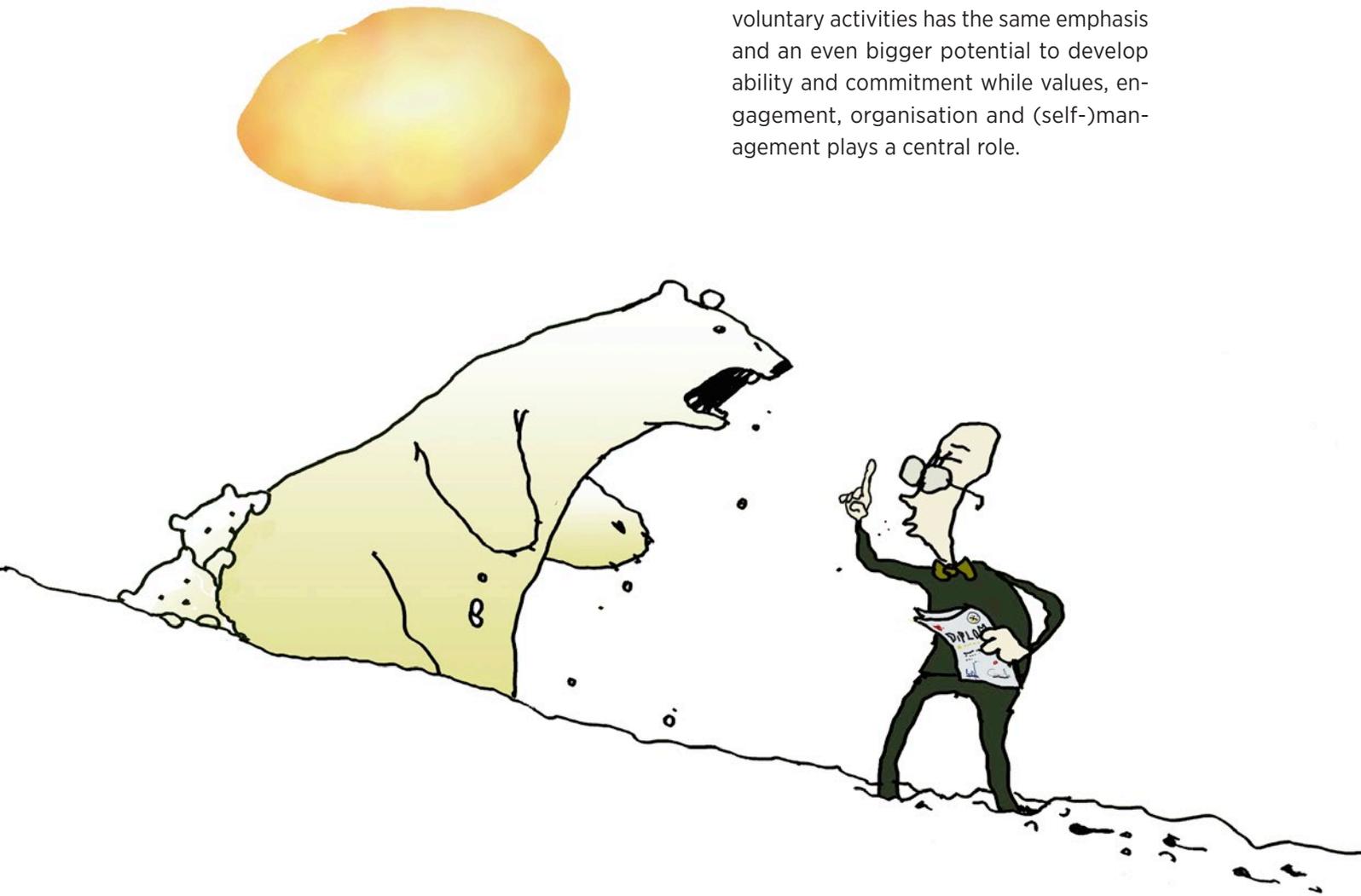
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**The special strengths of the non-formal learning set up are based on its more flexible frames.**

Non-formal and informal learning approaches also have a special potential to support and develop engagement and empowerment – closely connected to the commitment and ability aspects of the competence concept.

This is due to the flexible frames and the individual learning approach but also due to a greater emphasis on engagement, process, practice, dialog, participation and social aspects.

Informal learning within the framework of voluntary activities has the same emphasis and an even bigger potential to develop ability and commitment while values, engagement, organisation and (self-)management plays a central role.



# VALIDATION IMPLIES OPPORTUNITIES AND DILEMMAS FOR THE NON-FORMAL LEARNING SECTOR

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**Folkbildning and non-formal learning have by its nature always been focused on the learning outcome in its own right and what it means to the learners – there is no specific curriculum to follow, no enforced standards, grades or diploma at the end of a course/training/study circle.**

**T**hat's why the concepts of lifelong learning and validation are to a great extent consistent with the way Folkbildning and non-formal learning understands and approaches the concept of learning.

In this way, validation has a potential to put a spotlight on the important role of the Folkbildning and non-formal learning sector in society. Even more, it opens for new opportunities to the participants of the sector.

But, there are also dilemmas linked to validation.

Folkbildning has a formative and value-based agenda and voluntary activities are driven by engagement and interests. These starting points are to a great extent what's making them interesting in a validation perspective. But if the validation perspective becomes dominating it might undermine



From the Folkbildning point of view the strengths and potentials of the validation concept are linked to the lifelong learning thinking and to the recognition of learning and competences gained outside the formaleducational system.

the genuine engagement and the critical potential of Folkbildning.

There is no simple solution to this contradiction. You have to be aware of the dilemma and develop strategies to handle it if you want to deal with validation and the possibilities it implies.

# EU KEY COMPETENCES AND FOLKBILDNING KEY COMPETENCES

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The EU has identified a range of key competences for lifelong learning<sup>1</sup>.

**T**hese general competences are seen as the keys providing the individual access to his or her other knowledge and competences and to benefit from them. The key competences combine knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for personal fulfilment, social integration, active citizenship and employability.

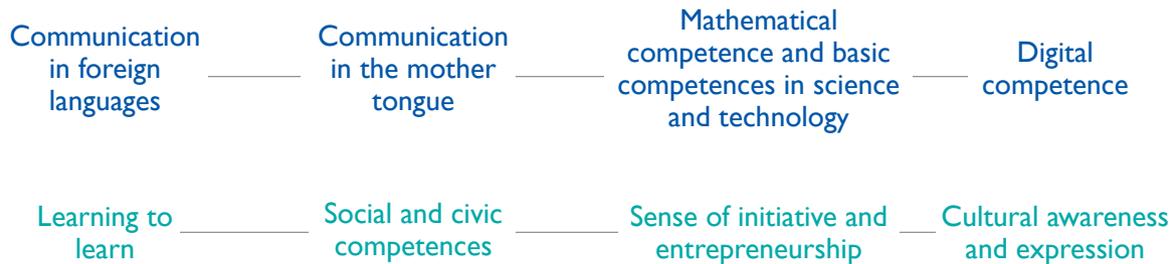
Our analysis of the strengths and potentials of Folkbildning and non-formal learning in the validation field identifies a range of competences which are typically supported and developed through participating in Folkbildning.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/education\\_training\\_youth/lifelong\\_learning/c11090\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm)



## THE EU KEY COMPETENCES ARE:

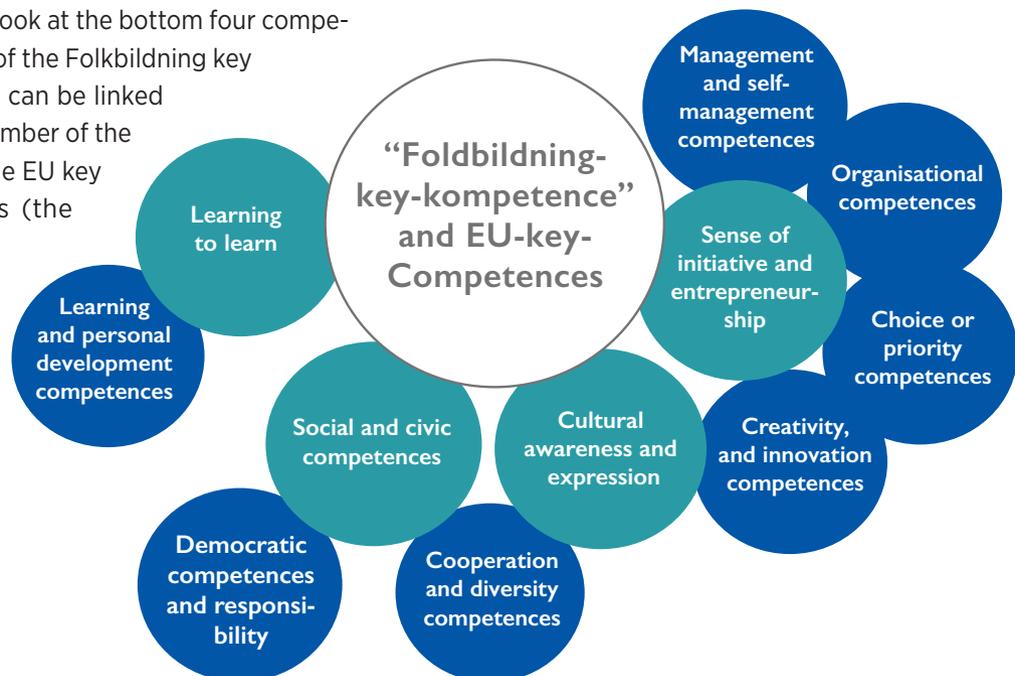


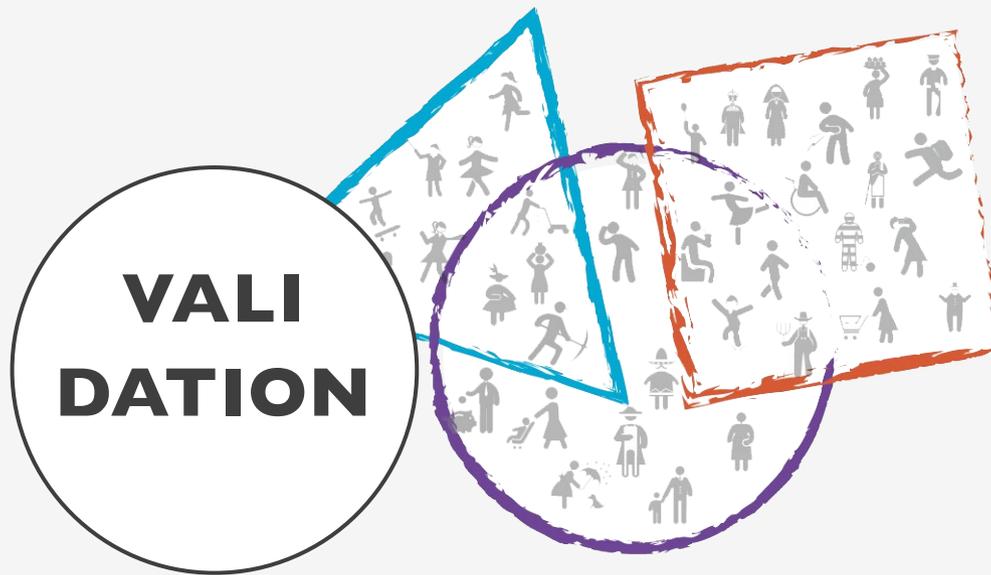
The first four EU-key competences (the blue ones) are related to subjects which are also present at many programs and activities in Folkbildning. But they do not in the same way carry a transversal potential for the whole learning approach. It might be relevant to validate the subject-related key competences also in the context of nonformal and informal learning, but it depends on the specific subject of the program or the activity.

green ones, which are especially connected to the attitude aspect (commitment and ability) of the competence concept (see comparison chart below).

In the following review we define each of the identified Folkbildning key competences and link them to the EU key competences. We also argue why and in what ways Folkbildning is especially well suited to develop and validate these competences.

Let us rather look at the bottom four competences. Each of the Folkbildning key competences can be linked to one or a number of the last four of the EU key competences (the





**T**he concept of validation has several meanings. Here the term is used in a broad sense. It's about making visible, taking care of, documenting, assessing and recognising the competences, which an individual has achieved or developed in many different ways and contexts.

The whole idea of validation is to make learning and competences, gained/achieved outside the formal educational system, more valuable – to the individual, to working life and to society.

That's why it's too narrow to look at validation as a question of measuring and assessing someone against a predefined and set curriculum in order to provide a traditional certificate just using another way than the traditional test.

If you understand validation as a process which helps you to translate/transfer and activate learning and competences

in new contexts the concept must be seen in a broad perspective – including raising awareness, making visible, identifying, documenting, assessing, recognising and certifying competences, achieved outside the formal educational system.

Identification of your competences – including that you become aware of your competences, and / can articulate them – to a great extent help you to transfer and activate the competences in new contexts and to optimize them in known contexts. Here the validation is so to speak carried out by the individual.

Documentation (also) help you making your competences visible in known contexts and translating/transferring them into new contexts. The validation is carried out in writing, by photos/film, products, using e-tools etc....

Assessment also must be seen in a more diverse way – you can be assessed against flexible standards, job standards or a

formal educational curriculum. A job interview is also a kind of assessment.

In the same way recognition of prior learning is not always about getting a certificate or a diploma in the formal educational system – it might be about getting a job or a more attractive job function/a better salary or about being chosen for a trust/honorary position, for example a chairman of a voluntary organisation.

Of course it's an advantage or it can even be necessary to have a certificate in order to be able to transfer your competences into a new context – but it's not always so.

At the same time some important competences – such as social competences – in many ways are problematic to measure against standards. It might be

more relevant to value them in a way which helps the individual him or herself to carry them into new contexts or levels.

Our point is, that when it comes to added value in the perspective of real life the first elements in the valuation process are often quite as relevant as formal assessment and certification. And that assessment against flexible standards or job standards can be quite as relevant as assessment against curriculum.

We claim that non-formal learning has a special potential to work with the first elements in the validation process – raising awareness, making competences visible and putting words to/articulating them. Even when it comes to some kinds of documentation and assessment against flexible standards, e.g. job requirements, non formal learning contexts have an important role to play.

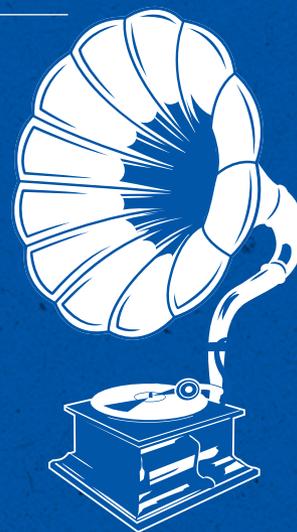


# COMPETENCES

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Where does all this take us?  
Can Folkbildning help  
develop competences,  
can they be validated,  
should they be validated,  
and if so – how?

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## KEY COMPETENCES AND THE ROLE FOLKBILDNING CAN PLAY

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In this section we introduce competences that can be developed through Folkbildning and show which EU key competences they can be linked to. After that we explain why Folkbildning is good at developing each specific competence. Finally we ask you some challenging questions regarding the validation of each competence.



## Management and self management competences

### Definition

To be able and willing to take responsibility for accomplishing a task together with others. To help ensure that we as a group can discuss and reach a common position on our set of goals. To take responsibility for the group (including one self) working together towards a commonly agreed goal. To be able to plan the resources needed (like the amount of time, competence and money) in order to achieve a given goal. To work in an inclusive manner.

### Connected to the EU Key Competences:

- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Social and civic competences
- Learning to learn

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing management and self-management competences?:

Folkbildning is based on the individual's voluntary commitment to working together to increase the knowledge, self esteem and competence within the group. The participant's perspective is central. With respect for individual choice and personalities something common is created. The flat, non-hierarchical structure ensures that anyone in the group can assume the role as a leader.



### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. In what kind of situations are you able to develop these competences in the field of Folkbildning? Give examples.
3. How can you support your peers in developing management or self management competences? Give an example of your activity.
4. For whom can the validation of this competence be relevant?
5. Do you think Folkbildning is good or bad at developing these competences? What does it depend on? Please deliberate.

Folkbildning is action oriented, it requires the participant to take initiatives, to accept and allow for different opinions.

Learning is partly achieved through discussions. This sharpens the analytical abilities of the participants, and helps fostering an environment in which learning to learn is central.



## Creativity, innovation competences

### Definition

To have a sound self esteem and securely rely on one's own competences, allowing one to test new solutions to new and/or old problems. Daring to question established "truths" and working methods. To actively explore new ways of working and thinking. To be a doer, to get things done.

### Connected to the EU Key Competences:

- Sense of initiative
- Cultural awareness and expression

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing creativity and innovation competences?:

Folkbildning is basically process oriented. It is all about people looking for knowledge and ways to develop together. Unlike the formal education system there are seldom clear and pre-defined answers. Participants must find their own answers through discussion and interaction. This is why the pedagogy of Folkbildning is very well suited to stimulate creativity and innovative thinking.



### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. Which tool(s) represented by the cases in our annex (or other tools you know of) can help in the validation of this key competence?
3. Is Folkbildning really as process oriented as we claim in your daily practice as a teacher? If yes, how do you do it, if no, why not?
4. Why and in which contexts are creativity and innovation competences important?
5. Are you working innovatively? How, please explain.
6. What is creative in your daily practice as a teacher? How do you understand being innovative in your context?
7. How are new ideas received and developed in your organisation?
8. How can your organisation strive to develop an (internal) culture encouraging its members to suggest new thoughts and ideas?



## Sense of initiative

### Definition

To be able to analyze the pros and cons of different alternatives. To be able to select and deselect different solutions. To help finding yourself, your own way forward. To understand how a democratic organization is constructed and how it functions. To have enough self-confidence to take a stand for or against an opinion or action.

### Connected to the EU Key Competences:

- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Social and civic competences

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing a sense of initiative and social & civic competences (democratic competences)?:

Participating in Folkbildning is cheap and voluntary. Regardless of your background you participate in Folkbildning on equal terms with everyone else. Participants must show respect for differences and they must be active. Within Folkbildning participants and leaders work together democratically, with ears open for the opinions and thoughts of all in the group. No one will serve you a platter with solutions. Thus the pedagogy of Folkbildning is a good school in/ training course for democracy and participation.



### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. Which tool(s) represented by the cases in our annex (or other tools you know of) can help in the validation of this key competence?
3. How does this idea of showing respect for differences manifest itself at your institution?
4. In what ways are you looking at the bigger picture of things in your teaching?

Learning taking place in voluntary organisations is to a large extent the result of discussions, exchange of experiences and reflection.

Choice competence is embedded in our culture, it is not a profession. While some educational provision may have a very specific and narrow focus Folkbildning is usually more general. Put in another way: Folkbildning usually looks at the bigger picture, starting from a holistic approach. In this is imbued a need to understand both sides, to be able to look at problems from many angles.



## Learning and personal development competences

### Definition

To be open-minded and curious. To be self-motivated in looking for available opportunities for development and improving skills and capabilities. To be able to reflect on one's own learning process and needs. To be able to conduct and aware of the importance of critically assess/thinking. Willingness and ability of self-assessment and to build on own strengths and reflect weaknesses. To be motivated for and aware of the importance of putting new knowledge and skills to practical use and apply them on relevant activities. To be persistent and systematic. To be engaged in lifelong learning.

### Relation to EU key competences

- Learning to learn

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing learning and personal development competences?:

Folkbildning and non-formal learning has a specific potential to support and develop motivation for and engagement in learning.

Folkbildning builds on people's desire for learning or engagement in an activity and therefore meets the curiosity of each individual and their engagement in learning. Non-formal learning in general has the flexibility to find out what motivates the individual and taking this as a starting point, it has a special potential to build on the strengths



### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. Which tool(s) represented by the cases in our annex (or other tools you know of) can help in the validation of this key competence?
3. Which reflections do you have regarding the title: Learning and personal development competences compared with "Learning to learn" in a Folkbildning perspective?
4. Which are the most important triggers when it comes to developing long lasting learning competences?
5. Which role can Folkbildning, non-formal and informal learning play in overcoming resistance and raising motivation for lifelong learning? Provide examples from practice.

and prior learning of each individual, and to take his or her learning style into account. The approach is often to learn theory and practice in close combination/connection so new knowledge and skills are immediately put into practice.

On this basis non formal learning has a specific potential to provide successful learning experiences, which research tells us produces motivation to learn more.



## Organisational competences

### Definition

Knowledge of an organisation's functions and organisational management. Ability to take initiative. Knowledge and management of appropriate and effective decision making. Possession of logistic capacities such as overview, planning and decisiveness. Capability of cooperating internally and externally. Engagement in organisational and activity management.

### Relation to EU key competences

- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Social and civic competences

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing organisational competences?:

Part of Folkbildning are associations, organising activities (eg. amateur theatre, study circles), and they are per se informal training programs for organisational competences. Folkbildning is in general organised in a way that allows you to start as a bystander or a participator and gradually go up "the engagement staircase", taking more and more responsibility. Even the non-for-



### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. Which tool(s) represented by the cases in our annex (or other tools you know of) can help in the validation of this key competence?
3. How do you use the organisational experience and expertise of your learners?
4. Are there ways for your learners to engage in your activities, and become active in your community? If yes, how do you do it, if no, what is stopping you?

mal learning approach in general with its focus on process, practice, participation, cooperation and engagement provides good opportunities to train organisational competences - eg. study circles.



## Democratic competences and responsibility

### Definition

To know about democratic and ethical values and to stand up for them. To be able to think critically and to be aware of the importance of doing/applying it. To be able and committed to affect one's own environment and to be an active citizen. To be able to form views on the basis of values and to take initiatives and cooperate with others in order to influence public opinion. To be able and committed to participate in and contribute to democratic processes and decision making eg. in voluntary organisations. To be able to and committed to taking responsibility for the common interests of a group/ a community/the society.

### Relation to EU key competences:

- Social and civic competences

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing democratic competences and responsibility?:

Folkbildning and non-formal learning gives flexible opportunities to influence and contribute to the content and the planning of the actual activity. The participants can practice being codevelopers and taking responsibility for learning and community. Folkbildning has great potential to develop democratic compe-

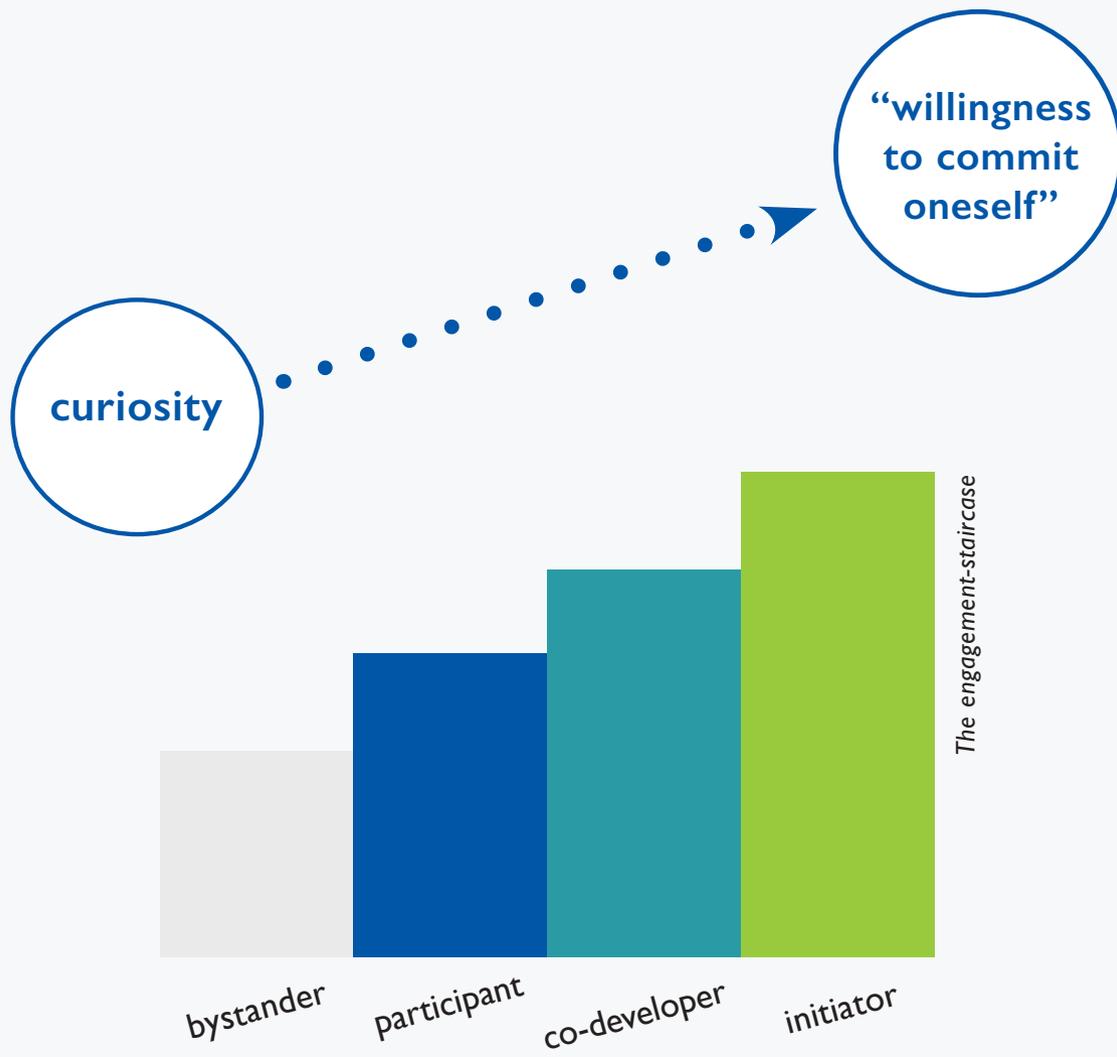


### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. Which tool(s) represented by the cases in our annex (or other tools you know of) can help in the validation of this key competence?
3. How do you engage your learners to influence and contribute to the content and planning of the actual activity?
4. Do you have ethical and democratic guidelines for your institution? If yes, do you use them, if no, why not?

tences and responsibility due to the possibilities of growing/transforming your engagement from participation to be "willing to commit yourself." It's a flexible framework providing opportunities to take initiatives and to develop something quite new in cooperation with others. See the engagement-staircase. An arena open to all.

# WHY IS FOLKBILDNING GOOD AT VALIDATING DEMOCRATIC, ORGANISATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT COMPETENCES?



Source: <http://borgerlyst.dk/category/english/>



## Cooperation and diversity competences

### Definition

To be able and committed to work as a part of a group/team and to make the cooperation working. To be open-minded, empathetic and trusting. To take responsibility for solving common tasks. To be able and committed to negotiating, listening, reading body language, etc.

To be able and open to communicate and cooperate with different people and to see and use differences as a resource. To know about and be able to understand the values of other cultural and social groups and to relate your own background to other cultural and social contexts.

### Relation to EU key competences:

- Social and civic competences
- Cultural awareness and expression

### Why is Folkbildning and non-formal learning good at developing cooperation and diversity competences?:

Folkbildning focuses on learning processes and is participant driven. That's why it has emphasis on dialogue, participation and social interaction in the group. This in turn offers ample opportunities to practice communication, negotiation and cooperation. Activities and locations in which this is visible include study circles, folk high schools and voluntary activities. When it comes to diver-



### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How and to what extent can this key competence be validated in an adequate manner? (levels of raising awareness, clarification, assess against flexible standards, certification).
2. Which tool(s) represented by the cases in our annex (or other tools you know of) can help in the validation of this key competence?
3. Do you agree that Folkbildning has a special potential to develop cooperation competences? Elaborate your answer.
4. Do you have examples from practice or ideas about how Folkbildning can further diversity competences?

sity competences Folkbildning also has a great potential due to the same reasons. In spite of the potential, we see some problems. Folkbildning has through its history, funding conditions etc. and even ideology had a tendency to form groups of participants with a similar background. This can be either similar views on life, but also when it comes to eg. level of education and living conditions. Overcoming this calls for conscious efforts.

# OUTRO

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Recognition of prior learning (RPL) has proven to be a valuable tool to meet educational targets and support personal growth and career management skills.

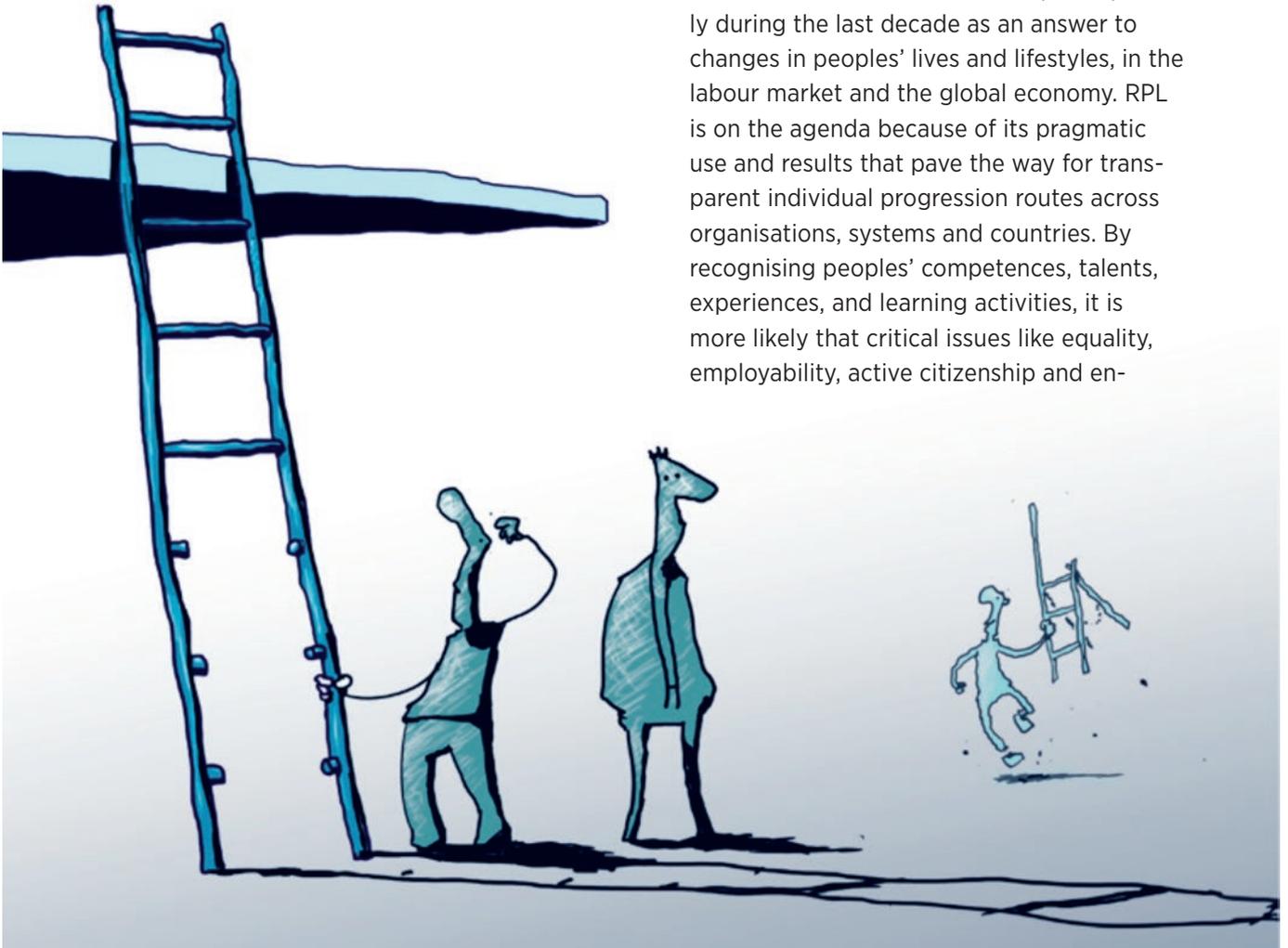
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**RPL has developed rapidly during the last decade**

**T**hrough the whole validation-process important democratic values are stressed and even embedded in the lifelong learning systems e.g. open collaboration, dialogue and access to learning. These values are considered key issues in the Nordic countries and on/at European level and they address concepts like participation, responsibility, equality, the balance between duties and rights and acknowledgement of diverse cultures. RPL has developed rapidly during the last decade as an answer to changes in peoples' lives and lifestyles, in the labour market and the global economy. RPL is on the agenda because of its pragmatic use and results that pave the way for transparent individual progression routes across organisations, systems and countries. By recognising peoples' competences, talents, experiences, and learning activities, it is more likely that critical issues like equality, employability, active citizenship and en-



gagement in democratic processes can be improved. This is beneficial for the individual and for society.

Lifelong learning is a direct response to all these challenges and has brought about an explosion in the availability of a diverse range of formal and non-formal learning opportunities. The ideology of the RPL methods and processes have predominantly been tried out/applied within the formal educational system and also to some extent against occupational standards, but to a lesser degree within the non-formal and informal education. More innovative validation processes are needed where “one size for all” does not apply. This report advocates that the overall emphasis on mapping and measuring peoples’ skills and competences can cause too rigid an approach to the development of important key values in everyday life. This is particularly relevant when working on the lower levels of the NQF/EQF (National Qualification Framework/European Qualification Framework), in which motivational factors and self-confidence need to be (constantly worked on)/furthered/further developed. Extended and standardised validation processes can turn into an obstacle in itself and more flexible methods need to be stressed/emphasized, and developed further. Comprehensive validating frameworks and quality cycles may become a hindrance and widen the gap between those who have and those who have not.

In this report we have argued that the adult educational providers in the Nordic countries

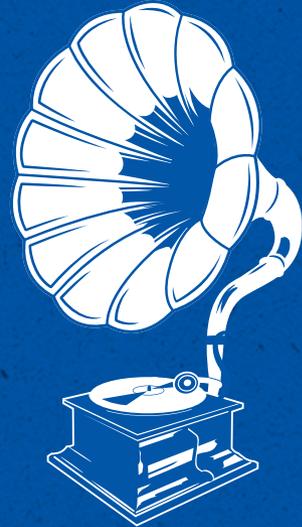


**More innovative validation processes are needed where “one size for all” does not apply.**

are one of the main players to serve and reach out to individuals who can benefit from the RPL process. The various systems of adult education are diverse, easily accessible and situated in local communities. The role of the lifelong learning sector is to be flexible, work closely with its clients in their environment and provide open access to different groups, being e.g. marginalised and/or isolated groups. It is fair to say that the opportunities, benefits and processes of RPL are not commonly known among these users. At the same time RPL is driven forward by those stakeholders interested in and most willing to participate/contribute. In order to work towards more inclusion and non-discrimination of participants studying on the lower levels of the NQF/EQF, more flexible approaches are needed when identifying, mapping out and assessing competences. And there has to be space for surprises, new knowledge and new, unforeseen competences to emerge, develop and be accredited.

The adult educational providers have a role to play in furthering various means of teaching, discussing, raising awareness, motivating and encouraging participation by strengthening their networks and tools as well as by making democratic key values more visible in the learning process.

# ANNEXES



Validation  
– Examples from the third sector

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**Realkompetansevurdering**

**PKD**

**Min Kompetencemappe**

**IPA  
REVOW**



Raising awareness    Clarification    Documentation

Assessment flexible standards    Assessment job-profiles    Assessment educational curriculum

## Validation, key competences and folkbildning – Case studies

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These cases have been collected and selected as good examples of how validation can be done in Folkbildning in a useful way. Please read through the descriptions, check out the links, and then use this information for a discussion on what of the key competences can and should be validated using each case.

### FINLAND

#### Open badges

Virtual Open badges are an innovative digital way of acknowledging achievement, knowledge, skills and attitudes. OK Study Centre with its member NGOs are developing this new way to recognize and show competencies in non governmental and volunteering field. Badges are issued from different courses and (in future) active participation in volunteering field. Open Badges are build in Open Badge Factory and showed via Open Badge Passport OK Study Centre is participating in a Nordic project Open badges for adult educators which has made a badge for adult educators, see more detailed project decription <https://openbadge.wordpress.com>

#### Links:

OK Study Centre  
<http://ok-opintokeskus.fi/en/node/255>

Open Badge Factory  
<https://openbadgefactory.com>

Open Badge Passport

<https://openbadgepassport.com/fi>

### DENMARK

#### The Competence Game

This game is about general key competences (social, organizational, self-managing, creative-innovative, intercultural, communicative, learning and democratic competences). The game helps the players to understand the concept and the value of key competences. The task of the players is to be hired for a specific job by help of the competence cards in hand. The cards can also be used as a helping tool for clarification of prior learning.

Download cards and instructions

in English:  
[www.dfs.dk/media/489484/the-competence-game-spilleregler-engelsk.pdf](http://www.dfs.dk/media/489484/the-competence-game-spilleregler-engelsk.pdf)

In Danish:

[www.dfs.dk/nyheder/2015/kompetencer-i-spil](http://www.dfs.dk/nyheder/2015/kompetencer-i-spil)

(If you want to translate the cards into other languages you are welcome – please contact [dfs@dfs.dk](mailto:dfs@dfs.dk))

A web-tool for self-evaluation of key competences in the third sector. There are three versions for use in non-formal adult education, voluntary activities and associations (eg. sports). The tool helps you to identify and put words to your key competences, gained in third sector. Sections about context, subject and key competences: social, organizational, self-managing, creative-innovative, intercultural, communicative, learning and democratic competences. The tool is closely connected to The Competence Game, which can be used for raising awareness, clarification and dialog as preparation for using the web-tool.

*Links*

[www.folkeoplysningskompetencer.dk](http://www.folkeoplysningskompetencer.dk)

My Competence Portfolio is the Danish Ministry of Education's tool for clarification, overview and documentation of education and prior learning. The portfolio covers educational background, job experience, spare time experience and a section for self evaluation of general, subject-related and language competences.

*Links*

<https://minkompetencemappe.dk>

Chose Danish or English version at the bottom of the site.

## ICELAND

**PA Project: Creation of a Recognition System of Non-formal and Informal learning on Upper secondary level.**

This project was funded by the EU and addressed many sectors within the formal school system and on the labour market. A total of 52 validation projects were supposed to take place over 3 years; 40 against existing curricula, 6 against specific job criteria, and 6 based on criteria of basic . The project did contribute to the improvements of employability of low-qualified workforce in Iceland by increasing the effectiveness of adult education and strengthen the validation process.

*Links*

[www.frae.is](http://www.frae.is)

## VOW and RE-VOW

In these two EU Leonardo projects VOW and REVOW experiments have been tried out to recognise non-formal and informal learning against criteria defined by the stakeholders on the labour market. These projects focused on the banking sector, health and administration and did strengthen the validation cycle. The standards were linked to the EQF/NQF developmental model.

*Links*

<http://revow.eu>

## NORWAY

### Personlig kompetansedokument – PKD.

A Personal Document of Competence is a document developed by Voksenopplæringsforbundet together with several voluntary associations. It is being used to help individuals see their own competences, formal and non-formal.

#### *Links*

[www2.vofo.no/pkd](http://www2.vofo.no/pkd)

## SWEDEN

### Studieförbundens validering av generella kompetenser för arbetslivet

This project has developed 40 evaluation modules. Each module consists of a learning outcome describing the competence to be validated. The OCN-method is used for quality assurance.

A validation usually consists of self evaluation, moderated group exercises and a final individual in-depth conversation between the validator and the person to be validated. The raw material is collected and archived in an openly accessible database. This is useful for the person validated as it allows him/her to obtain a competence certificate.

#### *Links*

[www.validering.nu](http://www.validering.nu)

## EU key competences – What are they about

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### Learning to learn

- how to organise your own learning
- to be able to deal with obstacles
- being responsible for your own learning
- to evaluate/assess the outcomes of your learning

### Communication in foreign languages

- the ability to express yourself and understand a foreign language according to your needs
- a positive attitude towards cultural differences and diversity

### Communication in the mother tongue

- the ability to express thoughts, feelings and facts in words (oral/written)
- to be able to interact linguistically in an appropriate way

### Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology

- the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes to deal with problems and challenges in everyday life
- the ability and willingness to use knowledge to explain the natural world, to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions

### Digital competence

- is about the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology
- basic skills to use computers and internet

### Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence

- the ability to communicate in an appropriate way with friends, family and colleagues
- to be able to deal with people from all kinds of different backgrounds
- to be able to deal with conflicts in a constructive way
- knowledge of what is going on in your village, city, country, Europe and the world
- knowledge of concepts/ideas on democracy/citizenship/civil rights
- your participation in civil life

### Cultural expression

- to appreciate the importance of creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions
- everything connected with media, music, performing arts, literature and visual arts

### Entrepreneurship

- the ability to turn ideas into action
- to be creative and innovative
- to dare to take risks
- project management



[www.nvl.org](http://www.nvl.org)