



Overall
Comparative
Implementation
Strategy
of the project
NON-FOR-LESL
and MyKey



www.nonforlesl.eu
www.my-key.online

IMPRINT

Project Leadership

Prof. Dr. Dirk Lange
Insitut für Didaktik der Demokratie (IDD)
Leibniz Universität Hannover
Insitut für Politische Wissenschaft

Project Management

Christoph Wolf

Authors

Elza Gheorghiu
Oana Mihoci

Layout

Mareike Heldt

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PARTNERS



Institut für
Didaktik der Demokratie

Institut für Didaktik der Demokratie
Leibniz Universität Hannover
Institut für Politische Wissenschaft
Germany



Pixel Associazione Culturale
Italy



Euroed Foundation
Romania



Ingenious Knowledge
Germany



Emphasys Centre
Cyprus



Platon Schools
Greece

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INTRODUCTION

The present document outlines the details for developing the implementation strategy of the Non-FOR-LESL tool & method. The document provides all the necessary information and supporting materials for schools and policy-makers to implement an innovative method and an open education resource (OER) tool – MyKey - addressing the issue of early school leaving (ESL) in their educational context. The strategy describes the needs, objectives and the approach/steps used by the NON-FOR-LESL Partnership for the validation of non- formal/informal learning, as well as the way the open resource tool help students, teachers, educationalists and policy-makers to achieve this aim. This document will be used by the Project Partners and other interested stakeholders for dissemination, exploitation and sustainability purposes.

1 | RATIONALE

This section provides the rationale for the implementation of NON-FOR-LESL in the context of Europe 2020 strategy.



I honestly state that I don't regret the time invested in the activities we organised or in which I got involved during high school. I don't regret that I chose to invest in self-development. Unfortunately, I have never been appreciated for this. In fact, I never expected to be. For me, the most important thing was to discover another world, to meet people I had something to learn from, to break out of my shell and overcome shyness, in other words to discover myself. Dear students, it is not a bad thing to learn everything that is in the school curriculum, but think of what it is really useful in life and strikes a chord in you - be open to the world round you!

D.G.- former highschool student, participant in the Multiplier Event



It is widely acknowledged that Europe's future depends on its youth. Through its Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU aims to support young people better and to enable them to develop their talents fully for their own development as well as for their economy and society's benefit. According to the European Commission Staff Working Paper on Reducing Early School Leaving (2013): "reducing ESL to less than 10% by 2020 is a headline target for achieving a number of key objectives in the Europe 2020 strategy and one of the five benchmarks of the strategic framework for European cooperation in

education and training (ET 2020). Europe 2020 highlights three mutually reinforcing priorities: ‘smart growth’ based on knowledge and innovation, ‘sustainable growth’ promoting a greener economy and ‘inclusive growth’ fostering high employment and social cohesion. High rates of ESL are detrimental to the objective of making lifelong learning a reality and a constraint to smart and inclusive growth in Europe”.

In order to provide effective early intervention to support children, school has to enable everyone’s equal access to quality education, which helps people develop all their aptitudes and skills in order to achieve their potential as human beings and members of society. This was clearly stated by Delors Commission (UNESCO, 1996): “Education is at the heart of both personal and community development; its mission is to enable each of us, without exception, to develop all our talents to the full and to realize our creative potential, including responsibility for our own lives and achievement of our personal aims.” The validation of learning outcomes, namely knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning can play an important role in enhancing employability and increasing motivation for lifelong learning, particularly in the case of the socio-economically disadvantaged or the low qualified citizens. The European Council’s recommendation (2012/C 398/01) from December 2012 urges member states to proceed with the validation of non-formal and informal learning as this type of learning is seen to play an important role in enhancing employability. At the same time, it increases motivation for long-life learning (LLL), particularly in the case of socio-economically disadvantaged or low-qualified people. Validation of non-formal and informal learning means, to begin with, making individuals’ diverse and rich learning framework visible. This learning frequently takes place outside formal education and training – at home or through leisure time activities – and is frequently overlooked and ignored. Secondly, validation means attributing value to individuals’ learning, irrespective of the context in which this learning took place. Going through validation helps a learner to use the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning for future learning or employment opportunities. The process must generate trust, notably by demonstrating that the requirements of reliability, validity and quality assurance have been met. Visibility and value will always have to be taken into account when designing validation arrangements. According to the OECD (2010), validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning can create four types of benefits:

- Economic benefits by reducing direct and opportunity costs of formal learning and by allowing human capital to be used productively;
- Educational benefits that can support LLL and career development;
- Social benefits by improving equity and strengthening access to both further education and labour market for disadvantaged groups;
- Psychological benefits by making individuals aware of their capabilities and acknowledging/ improving their self-esteem.

The NON-FOR-LESL project comes to fill the gap that appears to exist in relation to practical measures taken at school level-intervention that are linked to students' assessment procedures. The European Commission within the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2 - Strategic Partnership, funds the European project NON-FOR-LESL (Non-Formal-Learning Can Prevent Early School Leaving). The NON-FOR-LESL European project aims at preventing early school leaving through the recognition of non-formal learning and the production of a tool for the validation of the skills acquired through non-formal educational paths (www.non4lesl.eu).

The Project focuses on the relation that seems to be developing between students' overall school performance and traditional assessment procedures that influences the decision of students labelled as students at "risk" and/or "low achievers" to leave school earlier. School failure, as reported by traditional assessment tools, often affects students' perception of themselves resulting in their common characteristics, such as a growing sense of alienation from school, disruptive behaviour, high level of absenteeism, lack of confidence and self-esteem. All these, in the end, demotivate students at risk and can cause their dropping out of school.

The NON-FOR-LESL project developed and pilot-tested a new innovative multidimensional method – MyKey- www.my-key.online - an OER validation tool which can be used in addition to the assessment procedures. The NON-FOR-LESL approach is based on a holistic view of students' learning, drawn away from subject boundaries, presents, and validates skills, knowledge and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning related to the key competences and transversal skills as described by the EU and in accordance with the EQF.

MyKey - www.my-key.online - incorporates aspects of an 'e-portfolio' providing students with the opportunity to showcase their progress and achievement towards a specific learning outcome by presenting evidence of their work in and out of school, while being engaged in a continuous reflection process on their own learning, as well as on their personal, academic and career development planning.

2 | NON-FOR-LESL PROJECT AND METHOD

This and the following chapters – after outlining the rationale of the project, the national and European contexts and the actors and beneficiaries involved – gives you a more concrete idea of MyKey, the ideas and concepts it is based on and how to implement it in schools effectively.

“ Member States should ensure within validation arrangements ‘information and guidance on the benefits of, and opportunities for validation, as well as on the relevant procedures, are available to individuals and organisations’ and ‘the validation of non-formal and informal learning is supported by appropriate guidance and counselling and is readily accessible.

(Council of EU, 2012, p. 3, points 3b and 3e)



The NON-FOR-LESL project developed an innovative method, which can be used in addition to the official assessment procedures that will contribute to the efforts being taken to prevent ESL and improve students’ performance in formal education. MyKey is a multi-dimensional electronic evaluation tool with aspects of an ‘e-portfolio’ - a collection of students’ work designed to display their progress and achievement towards a specific learning outcome by presenting artefact evidence of their work in and out of school. In doing so, the students are engaged in a continuous reflection process towards their own learning, the progress of their achievement of knowledge, various competences and skills as well as their personal, academic and career development planning. The basic ideas behind MyKey, developed within the NON-FOR-LESL project (www.non4lesl.eu), are the following:

- Recognition of knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning. Those skills are usually underestimated, although they can play a crucial role in each student CV when applying for an internship, choosing a school, entering the world of work, etc.
- This recognition is possible thanks to the intervention of “formal” evaluators, namely teachers usually involved in assessing the skills acquired through formal learning;
- In order to allow teachers to officially validate the skills acquired through extracurricular activities and to make possible a formal comparison between formal, non-formal and informal learning, it has been necessary to find a common element or rather a direct link amongst different educational paths. The tool relies on the key competences to identify the common link in the strategic competences acquired through formal, non-formal, and informal learning.

The 8 key competences are at the centre of the matrix created by the partnership at the beginning of the project: Framework for the recognition and validation of Non-formal learning within students' assessment procedure in schools. The matrix is focused on a formal comparison between formal and informal learning and highlights links between extracurricular activities and formal school subjects, by:

- Mapping out all types of non-formal and informal learning that is gained in the extra-curricular activities that students are involved in and out of school
- Identifying the key competences gained by each students through extracurricular activities
- Identifying the relation of the learning gained with the eight key competences and the subjects taught at school
- Designing the award system for introducing the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning into the official school assessment procedure.

This enables an official validation of the skills acquired through hobbies and personal interests. The eight competences are:

- Communication in the mother tongue;
- Communication in foreign languages;
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
- Digital competence;
- Learning to learn;
- Social and civic competences;
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
- Cultural awareness and expression.

MyKey is structured in such a way as to accommodate all types of skills, knowledge and competences gained through non-formal and informal extracurricular activities.

3 | THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The process of validating the non-formal and informal learning using MyKey (www.my-key.online) involves the following steps: identification, documentation, assessment and certification.

- Identification of the learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning by the students who create an account on MyKey, www.my-key.online. This is the stage when the students, with the help of the electronic tool, identify their key competences acquired through practising different types of extracurricular activities. The students need to identify the key competences related to the non-formal activities and one or more school subjects, which could be influenced by the respective activities, and competences.
- Documentation of the learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning: This involves the provision of evidence of the learning outcomes acquired, carried out through the 'building' of a portfolio, with documents and/or activities samples that support their learning achievements. At this stage of the tool, the students present concrete evidence of their work in and out of school, while being engaged in a continuous process of reflecting on their own learning as well as their personal, academic and career development planning.
- Assessment of the learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning is the stage when the teachers evaluate the student's portfolio and evidences, but also the students learning outcomes in relation with specific school subjects. The assessment tool is designed to capture and assess the learning process specific to each individual and the context in which this learning took place.
- Certification of the learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning, the key competences acquired and the school subjects engaged. Once the validation has been undertaken by the assigned teachers, skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning are officially recognized. At this final phase MyKey generates a certificate with the key competences, the activities undertaken and school subjects engaged, which values the learning process (as identified, documented and assessed).

The steps described above are now possible thanks to the availability of MyKey, which can be used by both students and teachers. The tool, based on students' learning needs and interests and going beyond school subject boundaries, can be used in addition to the formal assessment procedures, thus contributing to the efforts for reducing early school leaving and improving students' performance in schools.

The steps for the students using the tool:

- Create their own profile and their own avatar;
- Choose an extra-curricular activity belonging to non-formal or informal learning;
- Link the activity chosen with a specific key competence;
- Link the activity chosen with a specific “formal” school subject;
- Upload a certain type of evidence (certificate, picture, etc.) attesting the competences acquired;
- Students’ revise of their e-portfolio after the teachers’ final review .

After undertaking those steps, the recognition of informal learning – through reference to the key competences – is possible and needs the intervention of an assigned teacher who is involved in the NON-FOR-LESL project. The assigned teachers can carry out their validation activity directly on the tool. In particular, they are asked to:

- Investigate, check and validate the link done by the students between the extracurricular activity and one of the 8 key competences;
- Investigate, check and validate the link done by the students between the extracurricular activity and the “formal” school subject;
- Investigate, check and evaluate the certificates uploaded by the students as proof of the fact that they effectively carried out the mentioned extracurricular activity. The evaluation process should be consistent with the procedure defined by each school: the range goes from simply accepting or denying the uploaded link to a 3-step evaluation model (self-evaluation, presentation, evaluation by teachers).

Once the assigned teachers have undertaken the validation, the skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning are officially recognized. Students can now receive the certificate attesting the acquisition of those skills. The certificates will represent a kind of “parallel curriculum vitae” – attesting students’ competence in art, digital technology, communication, etc. – to be used while finding a job, applying for an internship, etc. But, most of all, thanks to the recognition of those skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning, students who meet serious difficulties in formal learning will feel their extracurricular activities are valued and as a result their motivation not to leave school will increase. Indeed, the recognition of skills acquired through extracurricular activities has an extremely positive effect on students’ self-esteem and, hence, on students’ motivation.

MyKey was designed as an easy-to use tool both for the students and for the teachers or school administrators. In order to support the users of this open educational resource, the tool comes with a package of supporting materials and guidelines, which enable its smooth implementation:

- Step-by-step guide for the use of the MyKey tool (Annex 1): This document is addressed to all students who would like to obtain an official recognition for those competences and knowledge acquired outside the official learning channels (e.g. the classroom). This recognition is possible thanks to the open educational resource validation tool MyKey, developed within the NONFORLESL Erasmus+ project and described in these pages.
- Information Pack for the use of “MyKey” Tool (Annex 2): This document addresses all teachers who would like to use the MyKey tool in order to have a complete picture of their student’s profile. By getting involved in this project, the teachers will be offered tools, which will enable them to discover their student’s valuable performance, not only at school, but also outside it. Thus, students will know they are appreciated and valued, which undoubtedly will enhance their motivation to learn and consequently will increase self-esteem and school performance.
- Guide for School Administrators (Annex 3): This document has been conceived in order to help school staff with administrating MyKey Tool. In achieving the objectives of validating the non-formal and informal learning, school staff has a crucial role in assisting both teachers and students involved in the online tool MyKey.

4 | IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The implementation of MyKey itself takes just several days. The steps for using the tool are:

- Promoting the NON-FOR-LESL ideas and principles
- Getting familiar with the key competences, MyKey and its benefits (site)
- Identifying the group of students and their needs
- Assigning a group of teachers who will be responsible for the implementation of MyKey tool
- Meetings with students to guide them on how to create their portfolio:
- Signing up: create a username and a password
- Creating their avatar
- Identifying activities and matching them to the Key competences
- Uploading the evidence of their extracurricular activities
- Teachers check/monitor students completing their e-portfolio
- Students' revise of their e-portfolio
- Teachers' final review
- Issue of the certificates
- Special certificate event- celebrating the completion of the e-portfolio

Tips from the project experience: The test runs we did and the feedback we got from schools and teachers support the conclusion to use MyKey at least for three to five months so students have time to develop their activities and hence their skills, knowledge and competences. Students will not come up with news regarding their activities every week. They can have something to add every two or three months in most cases. The certificate will include the academic year it is related to; therefore, we suggest using it for one academic year. After that students can – with the support of a teacher – reflect on it and start a new one. With this method students are able to accumulate a collection of parallel CV's, which display developments of several key competences. The tool can be used from three months to four years depending on the purpose of the implementation: from three months (highlighting students' interests) to four years (students' progress/ development throughout the four years of high school).

Estimated resources for implementation of Non-For-Lesl Method

A successful implementation depends on time, human and technical resources. At the same time, the time effort depends on the complexity of the evaluation system introduced by your school. The graph below shows the time effort for the easiest method of evaluation (see handbooks for teachers and administrators for more information).

Required Human Resources

Role	Duration	Time Effort	Estimated Total
Teacher	3 - 12 months	1 - 2 hours/week	12 - 50 hours for 3 - 12 months
Administrator	3 - 12 months	2 hours/week in the beginning, afterwards 0,5 hours/month	4 - 8 hours for 3 - 12 months
		4,5 hours/week in the beginning, afterwards 1,5 hours/week	16 - 55 hours for 3 - 12 months

Required Tools and other Ressources

Computers

Students can use MyKey from any computer, including their own at home. Nonetheless at least 10 computers should be available at your school. First, some students do not have computers at home. Furthermore, it is useful to discuss aspects with students face to face. This can be done best in front of the computer by going through MyKey together.

IT Requirements (Hardware & Software)

It is important to have the internet browsers in your school up to date. If not you will most probably get problems in displaying www.my-key.online.

5 | NATIONAL CONTEXTS - tasks and potentials for change

The NON –FOR- LESL project debuted with solid research on the current situation in each partner country in order to identify the needs and directions in dealing with the recognition and validation of students' competences and knowledge gained through non-formal and informal learning. The following data is based on the research report whose aim was to design and develop a relevant instrument meant to help educators and students to valorise the extracurricular learning assets in the school context:

Participants' initial expectations: The NON-FOR-LESL project aims to give solutions to ESL focusing on measures taken for intervention at the school level (empowerment and motivation, personalised learning, student focused measures, extra-curricular activities) and prevention (MyKey tool can be used with students at risk in order to motivate them complete their studies). The project research investigated students' and teachers' perception on ESL phenomenon in connection with the use of extracurricular activities in students' school assessment. The questionnaires carried out on students and teachers in schools in the partner countries revealed that our participant's expectations were low. All respondents agreed that the validation of learning outcomes, namely knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning might play a role in enhancing students' motivation. In all partner countries, the questionnaires identified a few common benefits of the validation of skills acquired through informal/non-formal learning: improvement in students' general performance and change in students' image.

The needs identified in the national report and in the evaluation report of the products:

- Need to diversify the assessment system. The questionnaires revealed that the assessment scene was dominated by summative evaluation of learner achievement until recently. However, the report identified a few alternative ways of assessing students, which take into account students' needs, interests, and learning styles. In addition, they indicate successful performance, highlight positive traits, and provide formative rather than summative evaluation.
- Raise awareness/share knowledge about non-formal/ informal learning and its role in students' development
- Need to value non-formal and informal learning
- Need to validate non-formal and informal learning

- Need for adequate tools to validate non-formal and informal learning
- Support/promote the idea of validation of non-formal/ informal learning
- Need for change: “Resistance to change” is usually one of the main risks that innovative and challenging projects and procedures need to face in order to be successfully implemented. It is widely acknowledged that new approaches can only succeed and be sustained if all agents involved are not only fully informed, but have a common understanding and a shared vision to change things for the better. In order to be able to implement the project fully several changes will need to be made as presented below:
 1. Changes for students: Students will have to take an active role in monitoring their own progress and learning both in the academic and non-formal sphere of learning. As members of the school community and members of the society they live in, they have to become active citizens with responsibilities, obligations and rights. Students have to take an active role in their learning and in building up their careers. With the use of MyKey, they will monitor their learning; they will look to provide evidence of their achievements and will be able to present themselves to the others.
 2. Changes for teachers: Teachers will have to become facilitators and mentors when implementing the NON-FOR-LESL project and the MyKey tool. Their role will be related to support the students to collect, categorise and monitor their learning in and out of school while providing evidence to prove that they have acquired a specific skill or set of competences. Teachers’ role will also be to evaluate this learning and validate it based on the framework designed as part of the project. Their role is also to encourage and motivate students, who are on the point of leaving school early, to gain their self-esteem and self-confidence.
 3. Changes for school systems: Schools have to adopt the existing procedures in order to accommodate the new demands of the MyKey tool and process regarding the assessment of students. In the initial questionnaires, the students proposed to evaluate their skills and knowledge acquired in extra-curricular activities as part of their official school assessment. In this way both the assessment procedure and the official certificates will have to be modified at the end of the term or at the end of the academic year. Another way will be to use the MyKey certificate as a separate but official certificate.
 4. Changes in the school culture: The recognition and validation of non-formal learning through the procedure proposed by the NON-FOR-LESL project and MyKey is highly based on all stakeholders’ recognition of its value and impact. All partners (students, teachers, head teachers, parents, inspectors, community, etc.) will have to be informed about the importance of this

type of learning which can add to students' overall performance and profiles. In doing so, school and subject boundaries will be changed as learning is not restricted to the boundaries of a classroom or a school. According to Junker (2013) 'learning can happen anywhere, anytime ...'. Through the process of recognition and validation and the creation of students' NON-FORMAL LEARNING CERTIFICATE (MyKey) teachers' and students; relationships will be improved, as teachers will get to know the 'real' personalities of their students, their interests and talents, which are often not known, as schools provide only a few opportunities to be revealed.

The laws and the school regulations and needs for change: Although non-formal and informal learning are considered to play an important role in one's development, they not fully recognised or validated in formal education in any of the partner countries in spite of the steps that have been taken in this direction in the past years. There is no comprehensive system or framework of validation of non-formal and informal learning but the project research has identified the need for the development of such a system in all countries.

- **Germany:** In Germany, the validation of non-formal and informal learning results is still in the stage of development. Until this very day, the experts have not published recommendations for the classification of competences from non-formal and informal learning. Therefore, this topic has not officially been dealt with in schools yet. With regard to implementation, Germany can show little results. A working group prepares all relevant decisions for the development and implementation of the German Qualification Framework (DQR), which will involve all relevant stakeholders from general and vocational education, from social and economic organisations as well as higher education. Different working groups of experts are currently discussing the conditions for the classification/allocation. One condition is for example the validation of learning results from non-formal and informal settings. The DQR, however, was introduced in Mai 2013, until now only formal qualifications can be allocated, those, which are regulated by the German federal law or by the law of the respective State (Land).
- **Greece:** In Greece, with the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework all forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning "at all levels are interrelated, their results are recognized and are classified at levels taking into account the levels of the European Framework." With the enactment of the law 3879/2010 on „Development of Lifelong Learning“, the National Qualifications Framework is being instituted for the first time in Greece. Specifically, the new law establishes an entity in the Ministry of Education that oversees the whole process. This entity is called (E.O.PPE.P) and its main purpose is the creation and development of NQF and the referencing of it with the EQF (European Qualifications Framework-EQF). In the responsibilities of (E.O.PPE.P) it is to undertake the assignment of qualifications, ie the knowledge, skills and abilities that citizens acquire through formal education, non-formal education (IEK-Vocational Training Institutes,

KEK-Vocational Training Centres, Centres KEME-Post-secondary Education, CSP-Free Workshops Studies, etc.) and informal learning (work experience, experiential learning), at the levels of NQF. The ultimate goal is the identification and certification of these qualifications in a uniform manner and in connection with the European Qualifications Framework. The National Qualifications Framework includes eight reference levels, covering the entire range of qualifications from compulsory education up to higher education. The novelty is that beyond the classical educational path, qualifications that have been acquired by non-formal education (eg initial and continuing vocational training) and informal learning (eg professional experience) are recognized as well.

- **Cyprus:** Since 2010, significant steps have been taken in Cyprus in relation to the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Public authorities seem to recognise the importance of validation and the development of supportive structures is foreseen, while specific measures mostly regarding vocational/occupational qualifications are already being implemented. At the same time, an important development occurred in 2013. The cabinet of Ministers approved the establishment of an interdepartmental Committee (hereafter the 'Committee'), which has the task to develop and see to the implementation (by 2018) of a comprehensive action plan for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, in line with the Council Recommendation of 20.12.12 for the validation of the non-formal and informal learning. As there is no comprehensive framework yet, practices in place are fragmented and limited. Where in place, validation does not cover all stages, as they are identified in the Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, nor is the same terminology used. Current practices mostly concern assessment and certification, where recognition of prior work experience may be taken into consideration, and do not explicitly regard the identification, assessment, certification and validation of learning acquired from any learning path. Due to the economic crisis, significant efforts are made for job placing and training unemployed Cypriots and EU nationals, to fill vacancies and/or replace labour from third countries, but without a specific system of validation of non-formal and informal learning. Validation mostly takes place through the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) run by the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) but there is no national legislative framework or system in place for the validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- **Italy:** The education system in Italy is organised according to the principles of subsidiarity and of autonomy of schools. The State has exclusive legislative competence on general issues on education, on minimum standards to be guaranteed throughout the country and on the fundamental principles that Regions should comply with within their competences. Regions share their legislative competences with the State on all education issues except for vocational education and training on which they have exclusive legislative competence. Schools are autonomous as for didactic, organisation, research, and development activities. The recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in Italy is an old issue. Stakeholders and policy makers have been trying many paths in order to find a common and nationally valid solution. Unfortunately, until 2012 every

attempt crashed against the rigidity of national rules (legal value of national qualifications) and the difficulties due to multilevel organisation of the Italian education system management (national level for school and university, regional level for vocational training with overlapping responsibilities, see the introduction). Nevertheless, many experiments and proposals come from the regional and sectorial level causing the co-existence of many validation systems with only local recognition. Among these the most successful and widely used solution is the “Libretto formativo personale” (Personal Training Portfolio), introduced by the Emilia-Romagna Regional Government and largely imitated by other authorities. This tool foresees the collection of the professional and training history of the individual, by one hand, and the gathering of the certifications, by the other hand. The general approach to validation in Italy until 2012 can be considered mostly bottom-up but, as a new trend in the last two years, the bottom-up experiences started to methodologically converge. The points of convergence are absolutely consistent with the indications suggested by the CEDEFOP Guidelines for validation of non-formal and informal learning, even if this consistency is not always explicit but often due to a spontaneous imitation effect”. The legislation introduced since 2012 at central level confirms this tendency:

1. The National Law 92/2012 (reform of the Labour market) allowed the institution of a national system of competence certification and validation of non-formal and informal learning.
 2. The national Legislative Decree 13/20136 established the “Definition of general rules and basic level of performance for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and minimum service standards of the national system of competences certification”. This Decree foresees an implementation phase of 18 months and that every qualification, fully or partially, can be accessible by formal training or validation of non-formal or informal learning.
 3. Still on 2012 Italy approved the EQF National Referencing Report that has been presented to EQF AG on May 2013. This is the starting point for the creation of a National Qualification Network to which all the authorities must refer.
- Romania: Although the role that informal and non-formal learning has in one’s development is recognised little progress has been made in this respect in spite of a growing interest from civil society in informal and non-formal learning, partly promoted by the EU projects in Romania such as the Youth in Action initiative. The Lifelong Learning Programme in Romania has stimulated interest in validation in recent years. In particular, there is a growing number of non-governmental organisations interested in mobility and non-formal learning activities projects that are linked to Youth-Pass and Europass. The validation services in Romania are still focused on qualifications. There are only limited specific examples of validating other types of learning outcomes, such as those gained through participation in voluntary work. The law on national education also provides some regulation on using the lifelong learning portfolio for all students in pre-university education. The

lifelong learning portfolio contains evidence of learning outcomes acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. This evidence helps facilitate the individual school pathway of all students and creates better prospects for entering the labour market. However, using the lifelong learning portfolio is not yet a common practice in most of the schools in Romania and is not yet embedded in schools as a tool for learning assessment. In December 2013, Romania adopted the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) by the Government Decision no. 918/2013. The NQF has 8 levels of qualifications that can be acquired through the formal education and training system in Romania and by recognition of learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning. Now, the methodology allows the validation only for level four or lower to obtain a qualification through the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Validation is still linked with occupational standards and is not yet operational about formal education. The law of education no.1/2011 also proposes the establishment of a new local institution called Community Lifelong Learning Centre, as a community centre that might also provide validation and counselling services, according to specific local needs. However, the methodology for establishing the Community Lifelong Learning Centre is not yet in place although many stakeholders see the proposal as a solution to an increased access to validation services.

Decision makers: The national context is also important regarding the role of decision makers. The situation differs from country to country. Hence, specific educational contexts have to be considered as well as the EU recommendation to ‘promote the involvement in the development and implementation of the elements and principles [...] of all relevant stakeholders, such as employers, trade unions, chambers of industry, commerce and skilled crafts, national entities involved in the process of recognition of professional qualifications, employment services, youth organisations, youth workers, education and training providers, and civil society organisations’ (Council of EU, 2012, p. 4, points 4 and 5) when implementing the tool.

“ The Member States are furthermore called to ‘promote coordination on validation arrangements between stakeholders in the education, training, employment and youth sectors, as well as between those in other relevant policy areas. ”

In **Germany**, the situation is very diverse and complex. The responsibility for the education system in Germany lies primarily with the federal state, although there is a nationwide basic structure. Furthermore, this basic structure consists of a multitracked school system. NONFORLESL and MyKey is mainly geared towards the secondary level of Haupt- and Realschule and vocational school. Nonetheless, during the development of MyKey the consortium realized that it is very useful for all types of schools. On the one hand, it can and should be used to prevent students from an early dropout. At the same time, MyKey is a great tool for all other students who want to develop their own extra-curricular CV

and their key competences. Several certification systems already exist and are available in Germany in order to document non-formal learning. Nonetheless, MyKey is a tool, which is stronger integrated into everyday school life and activities are evaluated and certified by the school. Its reference system are the eight EU key competences. Furthermore, its flexibility makes it possible to integrate existing systems of certification. For stakeholders it is a huge chance to get in touch with a project, which is based on current scientific knowledge. Feedback by teachers and principals of several schools with high dropout rates support our idea to move away from narrow subject boundaries and to focus more on outcomes and key competences. MyKey is easy to use and easy to implement at every school. Hence, there are no risks for departments or school boards to promote it. In contrast, it is a great chance to tackle the problem of early dropout.

However, a school does not need the permission of a higher authority. It can simply contact us and implement it on its own. In order to implement the MyKey tool, the school has to designate a teacher who will be in charge of the MyKey tool and act as the administrator. He or she will get a password (it just takes several days, see contact information above) and from then on, he or she can create MyKey for his or her school. In addition, several other teachers should be involved and get an account for MyKey, because students should be able to choose their “evaluator” from a range of teachers. The associated Handbook, which explains the MyKey tool in detail and provides teachers and students with lots of background information, is included and available for download. If a school wants to be on the safe side, several model letter for parents, etc. are included in the attachment of this paper.

The result of our test runs showed that students wanted to use the certificate in order to apply for internships, schools or universities. Others simply enjoyed it using MyKey in order to get a better picture of their own. All confirmed that MyKey quit helpful to make you aware of your own skills, knowledge and abilities. It motivates and students feel accepted, as a whole. It is a strong hint that the holistic aspiration of MyKey works. What is noticeable is the fact that students rarely used the handbook. The structure of MyKey is pretty clear and self-explaining. Coincidentally there are students who maybe lack skills to use MyKey properly (e.g. language skills). This is especially true for students who are in danger of dropout. In this case, it is the responsibility of teachers to support the student and to develop a personal “educational trail” to make sure some results, which can be used for developing motivation and self-esteem as well as applications. Despite that, teachers need to inform students about MyKey in the first place while the person in charge for administration needs to configure to account of the school. After that the teachers need to be approachable for students, (if necessary) support them in using the tool and – most important – evaluate their activities. Finally, someone at the school, most probably the principal, has to stamp and sign the certificate.

What can vary from school to school is the process of evaluation. This again influences the amount of time students and teachers spent with MyKey. Some schools might decide to introduce a complex, multilevel evaluation, others trust in the information and documents the students provide. Please see the handbook for teachers to get more information on this.

In **Greece**, the certification system of formal and non-formal learning is supervised and managed by the state and especially by the Greek Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is the entity which undertook the creation of a National Qualifications Framework (law 3879/2010 on „Development of Lifelong Learning“) and the creation of a National Network for Life Long Learning pursuing qualitative upgrading of Lifelong Learning in Greece, rationalizing the system of recognition and certification of qualifications and the establishment of a general „culture of learning having in the centre the citizen and his needs.“ The new law established an entity (E.O.P.P.E.P) in the Ministry of Education that supervises the whole process. MyKey, as a tool can be used successfully in schools as it is in line with the new tendencies supporting the validation of non-formal and informal learning. However, MyKey tool could be more easily implemented in private schools as these have a long tradition in promoting and encouraging extracurricular activities.

Cyprus If the NON-FOR-LESL project is going to be implemented in a private or public school there are various changes that need to be made: (a) changes that are related to the official regulations, procedures and processes, and (b) changes that are related to the agents involved within the school. The first stage will be to implement the project/MyKey on a pilot basis, which does not involve any changes within the regulation, as it will run in parallel with the current assessment procedures at the national or school level. It is important prior to the pilot implementation to inform all agents involved or affected by the new ideas, such as the students, the teachers, the parents, the school inspectors and the community. The following letters can support the implementation of the project: Letter to the Ministry of Education for approval of implementation (Appendix A); Invitation to the school for participation (Appendix B); Letter to the parents (Appendix C); Parents' Consent for their children's participation (Appendix D); Participation Certificate (Appendix E); Questionnaires for teachers and students (Appendix F). The second stage will be to implement the NON-FOR-LESL project/ MyKey on a permanent basis, which will need to make the following changes:

- As the educational system of Cyprus is centralized and the Ministry of Educational and Culture controls both the National Curriculum as well as its implementation certain articles of the National Secondary School Rules and Regulations will have to be changed which related to the Students' Assessment.
- In order to be able to change the National Secondary School Rules and Regulations any amendments must be discussed and approved by the Secondary Teachers' Union, the Public Civil Servants Committee, the Cabinet of Ministers and lastly the House of Parliament. This is an extensive and long procedure, which involves various stages.
- The individual school regulations will have to be revised accordingly whereas the teachers' roles and responsibilities will also have to be changed.

- The National School Leaving Certificates will have to be changed in order to accommodate the new set of non-formal learning.
- The Ministry of Education will have to introduce a set of validation procedures at the national level which needs to be in accordance with the National Validation Project co-funded by the ESF.

Based on the above the implementation of the NON-FOR-LESL project/MyKey tool could be more easily achieved in private schools, which are already familiar with the promotion of extra-curricular activities. In this case it will be important for the school to provide all necessary information and training for teachers and students to be able to utilize all functions provided. It is also very important for the school to ensure that the CERTIFICATE OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING is acknowledged by various agencies, council, higher institutions etc. in order to achieve validity and credibility. The following documents are particularly important for future implementation: Presentation of the project (Appendix G); Dissemination material (Appendix H); Manual of MyKey tool (Appendix I); Step by step Guide for students (Appendix J); Guide for Administrative staff (Appendix K).

In **Italy**, every school can decide on its own whether to use MyKey. In practice, every school, which has adopted MyKey so far, did it on the initiative of one teacher who presented the idea to his/her colleagues, the school administration and the principal, who are only asked to approve MyKey used by teachers and students. Of course, school boards could theoretically introduce MyKey, but it is not realistic that it will be advertised extensively. Hence, the consortium decided that a bottom-up process is most useful for Italy. The distribution mainly depends on word-of-mouth advertising, dissemination activities and committed stakeholders.

In **Romania** the main actors in the process of validation are school principals, school inspectors and education authorities/ bodies. School principals can validate the usage of the tool in their school. They designate the teachers who are in charge of validating students' profiles and then assign each student a teacher who will do the validation. Schools can consider the tool as an additional evaluation tool which can help them decide on the most suitable candidates when the school has more enrolment applications than available places in projects, programmes etc. However, the school inspectors and education authorities can take this procedure to another level, validate it officially as common practice in schools, and include it in official ministry documents as a tool for the assessment of students' learning.

6 | BENEFITS

when validating non-formal/informal learning through the MyKey tool

The students have a varied range of opportunities to learn every day. Beyond the formal classroom setting, they can acquire the most valuable knowledge, skills and competences in their daily lives, be it while practising a hobby at home or in their leisure time. Lifelong learning is a key route to personal development and acknowledging such learning can give greater value to personal and civic achievements and their potential contributions to society. Despite this, the influence of traditional forms of education remains strong, with non-formal and informal learning often being ignored and undervalued. Validation necessarily starts with the identification of knowledge, skills and competences acquired and signals the moment when the individual becomes increasingly aware of their personal achievements. This stage is crucial as learning outcomes differ from person to person and will have been acquired in various contexts: at home, during leisure activities, practicing hobbies or through voluntary activities. The discovery and increased awareness of own capabilities is a valuable benefit of the process. The pilot and implementation phase involved a small number of students and teachers; as a result on the one hand it is difficult to assess the impact the tool will have in the future with such a small study population. On the other hand, this made an in-depth analysis possible. Given the positive results of the project evaluation, the combined multiple benefits of validation and the increase in the visibility and value of the learning taking place outside classrooms may be as follows:

Students:

- Students' performance may improve by using MyKey. MyKey makes them aware of what they actually can do and what competences they have gained through non-formal and informal activities.
- This approach removes the traditional stress students experience at school when they are examined and graded by their teachers and may also lead to increased motivation for all potential ESLs and maximization of learning outcomes.
- Students are encouraged to complete compulsory education that link them directly to the labour market as the project provides a means to measure and assess their transversal skills gained in non-formal and informal learning activities, which are highly valued by the E.C.
- Students are engaged in a continuous reflection process towards their own learning, the progress of their achievement of knowledge, various competences and skills as well as their personal, aca-

demic and career development planning;

- MyKey tool increases students' self-esteem/ self-confidence/ self-discovery;
- Students are engaged in activities that help them to develop personal and interpersonal team skills, employment skills (commitment, teamwork, leadership, time management), active citizenship skills, enrichment skills acquired and lastly enterprise and entrepreneurship skills;
- Students' performance in ICT-related activities are upgraded; the tool increases students' means of personal expression, enhancing motivation and thus minimizing aberrant classroom behaviour, both for maladjusted and introvert students;
- The tool enhances students' motivation and empowers students to actively participate in the official assessment procedures of their performance by using existing knowledge gained in extracurricular activities;

Teachers:

- The project provides opportunities for investing in the student-teacher relationship, thus creating a positive atmosphere, a new school climate and a new culture in which teachers view students as active citizens with talents and skills. In essence, this tool enables teachers to match their teaching to students' needs.
- Teachers' professional development is stimulated as they are engaged in the implementation of an innovative project, which promotes the EC initiatives and aims to raise the quality of education provided by introducing the need for validating non-formal learning, thus changing the educational paradigm from a learning for learning to a learning for doing model, thereby.
- Teachers get to know their students much better and get a more holistic view of them, because they recognize their activities and interests outside of formal schooling. This in turn can lead to a more confident relationship between teachers and students.

Community:

- The impact of the project on the community depends on the success of the dissemination strategy followed, which promotes the active participation of the local stakeholders. Raising the local and regional awareness of the economic, social and personal consequences of ESL ensures a supportive framework for the activities and actions proposed. In addition, the spill over effect contributes to gradually implementing the activities as the project gains momentum in time.

Schools and Institutions:

- School staff share their experience with their colleagues thus increasing ESL-awareness as well as a non-formal learning orientation.
- The tool contributes to the efforts being made to introduce into the official educational systems methods that assess students' overall assessment beyond subject boundaries; it empowers students to self-assess themselves;
- The tool introduces alternative high tech ways of assessment that contribute to tackling disruptive behaviour, high level of absenteeism, lack of confidence and self-esteem that students at risk of ESL usually face;
- An Open Learning Environment is created in the organizations where this innovative approach to preventing ESL behaviour is implemented, thus upgrading the level of performance and development of all staff
- The implementation of the project offers opportunities for cooperation for all participating actors, greatly enhancing interoperability within the school and beyond it via interaction with the local authorities, thereby offering the integrated approach required in the successful implementation of the project.

Family:

- Through the dissemination activities, parents become more aware of the ESL phenomenon and the ways to prevent it. As a result, parents and schools can cooperate better in order to provide a better context for student motivation and incentives for students' more active involvement in the school activities and thus resolving school alienation.
- The implementation of the OER assists in the efforts of the families to avoid the risk of ESL and, in essence, prevent the young people's potential social and economic failure.
- By addressing the necessary skills at a non-formal and informal level, negative social, cultural and behavioural expectations are removed, since the OER is moving off the beaten tracks required by formal education.

7 | Target Audience - Stakeholders

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is a complex process that requires the involvement of many different actors with different responsibilities and functions. Bringing together the different stakeholders within a coordinated strategy is challenging and it depends on the specificity of each country (see also chapters 3 and 4). While some countries are introducing new legislation and new governance arrangements to support validation, others still lack a national strategy in this respect, making it difficult to identify and mobilise stakeholders willing to implement validation policy at national level.

Direct Beneficiaries: The direct beneficiaries group includes all the key actors/participants that will be direct users of the project results and products. In the case of the NON-FOR-LESL project these are:

- Students of upper primary education
- Students of secondary education
- Students of vocational education

Indirect and Long-Term Beneficiaries: The indirect and long-term beneficiaries group includes entities and bodies not directly benefiting from the use of the various deliverables throughout the funded life of the project but mainly when the products are completed and validated, as well as organizations that can provide support to the direct beneficiaries. Below there is a table with different types of stakeholders that could be involved and the way they will be involved in promoting the use of MyKey in completing the process of students' assessment by taking into account the valuable competences and skills acquired through formal and informal learning:

Stakeholder	Type of Involvement
<p>European organizations (youth organizations, nongovernmental organizations, agencies)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support policy learning and best practices transfer
<p>Public national stakeholders (ministries of education, labour, training as well as qualification authorities and social partners)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide adequate legislation • establish procedures • coordinate institutional actors • provide national guidelines • establish quality assurance mechanisms

Stakeholder	Type of Involvement
<p>Public regional and local stakeholders (regional public authorities in education and training, labour & social services, parents & professional associations , teachers, trainers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide support for implementation of the tool • adapt guidelines to local environment • provide information and support
<p>Education and training institutions (Secondary Schools, Higher Education Schools, Colleges, Universities, private education institutions, assessment centres and specialist recognition Centres)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out assessment and certification using the tool • provide support for identification and documentation, including information and guidance • support individuals
<p>Business sector (enterprises, associations, trade unions, employer organisations, chambers of commerce and industry)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out assessment and certification • carry out identification and documentation of competences

8 | EVALUATION

aiming at the continuous improvement of the processes

The first part of this chapter is concerned with the evaluation from the projects implementation and test phase. We asked students and teachers about their experiences. It gives very interesting insights into the project and is relevant for everyone who is interested in implementing MyKey. The second part gives you an idea how to evaluate your MyKey on your own after its implementation.

Final feedback as collected from students'/teachers' NON-FOR-LESL experiences/ outcomes:

The project was evaluated through the feedback obtained from questionnaires and interviews carried out on 17 teachers, 8 school principals and 106 students, case studies, Participants Committees and improvement reports on the evaluation of the NON-FOR-LESL outputs. Based on these data, one improvement report per country was written. It is true that the time was too short to examine the process into all its details (particularly, as some of its elements need more time to show their results). There were some difficulties at the beginning when several aspects of the tool did not function properly and were not reliable. The tool might have been demanding for teachers because they needed to invest time in both learning how to use the tool and how to monitor the entire process. The teachers had to be available to go through students' profile, guide them to fill it in (see correspondence with students) and then validate the profile. In addition, some students did not take care of their profile after a while so they needed even more time to be talked into resuming their activity.

However, the tool gradually developed into a user-friendly application. The feedback resulted by far surpassed our expectations. All respondents involved in the evaluation feedback of the MyKey tool, teachers and students alike, agreed that the value of the tool (MyKey) and of the procedure developed as part of the project is enormous and can be further explored. The importance of creating a certificate, which presents and validates student's non-formal learning, has been highlighted as it can help students to build up or enrich their profile and increase their self-esteem and self-confidence. Teachers also were satisfied with the "new CERTIFICATE because they felt they had an overall picture/ profile of their students, and not only the academic part," (teacher, Cyprus). The CERTIFICATE needs to be 'approved' by the officials as an important document in the Personal Records of Achievements for each student along with the Academic Certificate. Everybody held that the project proposes an innovative, useful and multi-purpose way to use non-formal/informal learning within formal school. The project managed to make this hidden knowledge VISIBLE, based on true EVIDENCE, which could not be disputed. The improvement reports held that all respondents were of the opinion that MyKey is very clear and easy to use and its design is attractive.

In spite of the short period of the implementation, there were several points all participants agreed upon. Firstly, the improvement reports on the evaluation of the NON-FOR-LESL outputs highlighted and appreciated the value and the potential of the recognition and validation of this rich and diverse knowledge and skills that students acquire outside school. All students said that MyKey was a great experience, because it made them realize what they had learned and what competences they had acquired. Secondly, they also noticed a significant increase in their self-esteem: “My activities have been taken into consideration. I feel more appreciated by my colleagues and teachers,” (student, Germany) and self-confidence. They appreciated the idea that their activities were taken into consideration and that teachers saw them from a different perspective: “I feel better at school. It is good to see that what you do (even if it is in your free time) counts a lot” (student, Greece). Thirdly, students noticed their relationships with their peers and teachers got better: “I am now appreciated by my colleagues, my teachers and my family. As a result, I have a good relationship with them: we spend more time together“ (student, Romania). All teachers agreed that by using MyKey:

- “Teachers and students relationships can be improved, as teachers get to know their students better, which “results in good relationships” (teacher, Greece);
- “I can say that teachers and students, by using the MyKey tool, get to know each other better which in turn lead to closer relationships” (teacher, Germany).
- „Students’ self-esteem and confidence can be improved, as they are given the opportunity to reflect on their progress; ‘It gives students the unique feeling of satisfaction that everybody needs when learning“ (teacher, Romania).
- „It is closely related to students’ personal talents and interests relying on intrinsic motivation“ (teacher, Romania).
- ”Their self-esteem and confidence was enriched and they felt proud of their achievements. The process worked also as a motive for them to try harder, as well as a ‘competition’ to achieve something in a Key Competence that is not evident in the tool” (teacher, Cyprus).
- ”Students’ profile can be improved, as many students might not be so good at academic subjects, but they can be good at art, music etc. Acknowledging hidden talents can support academically weak students and motivate them to try harder and complete their studies“ (teacher, Italy).
- “Non-formal and informal learning is personal and capitalizes on students’ aptitudes“; „It helps students find their place and their way in a changing world by showing them their strengths“, (teacher, Italy).

- The Certificate can be developed into an additional formal evidence of students' extra-curricular performance. "I'll use MyKey for creating an additional CV and that it is a useful addition in order to apply for internships," (student- Germany).

Teachers agreed that non-formal and informal learning has a high impact on students' general knowledge, development and image and must therefore be taken into consideration: such gains must be validated, recognized and introduced in their school report. Overall, the implementation of the project was very successful and provided the project team with the opportunity to explore other positive aspects of the project, which were not initially thought of. Thus, the implementation stage also revealed concrete cases when the tool was exploited successfully in other ways than initially envisaged in real life:

- For example, Emphasys focused on two Case Studies: a. Students used the certificate when they moved from one level of education to another (i.e. from lower to higher secondary school). Cyprus students wanted to show their complete profile to their new schools, which means that apart from their academic records of achievements they also had a wide range of experience and achievements in music, dance and ICT.
- Other students used the certificate when they completed formal schooling and had to enrol in higher education. For this category of students, the aim was to support their CV – 'Personal Statement' and their entry into higher education. In both cases, their involvement worked as a motive to try harder and as a self-evaluation of their current skills and knowledge. The result of the test runs in Germany showed that students wanted to use the certificate in order to apply for internships, schools or universities. In Greece, Italy and Romania the tool was used as an exercise in students creating their own portfolio and getting involved in self-evaluation, which is essential when applying for internships. In Italy, the MyKey experience helped one of the students to get an internship at a company in his town. In Romania the school participating in the project took into account the students' NON-FOR-LESL certificate as an evaluation tool when the school recruited candidates for a project event.

How to evaluate the tool implementation in your school

During the implementation of MyKey, ongoing observation and monitoring procedure should take place. This activity involves collecting and analyzing information about the activities, their impact and outcomes. Its purpose is to make judgments about the tool and the validation process, to improve its effectiveness, and/or to adapt it to the needs of its users and beneficiaries. The guidelines and processes for the on-going evaluation could be decided by each implementing school. The NON-FOR-LESL partnership created a package of evaluation tools which can be used for on-going monitoring and evaluation of the implementation: Letters of consent (parents, school agreement) - Annex 4; Questionnaires (Students/Teachers/Admins) - Annex 5; Case Study (one or two examples to show the potential of MyKey) - Annex 6.

9 | CHALLENGES

AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THEM

When implementing MyKey, as with every new method, challenges can occur. Below we list the main challenges together with possible strategies for solving these challenges:

- Though appropriate, fair, and user-friendly this assessment tool may not be accepted by all teachers as an assessment procedure. It needs to be officially recognized and validated.
- The teachers will feel that they are given more responsibility, which means more work to do. However, the gains will pay off their efforts; the students are empowered to use the tool and go through the whole process by themselves and, thus, they will get invaluable lessons in self-assessment; the teachers' job will be only to monitor and validate students' work.
- Some schools may register teachers' resistance to change (and therefore not accept the tool). This challenge may be addressed if the teachers follow an induction programme so that they get familiar with the tool and its benefits and feel more comfortable to use it.
- Some teachers may not believe in non-formal learning and the benefits that it can bring to the formal learning process and to students. The project case studies may solve this challenge.
- Some colleagues may not accept MyKey as an assessment tool. This is rather unproblematic as long as it was officially introduced by the school and other teachers are available to the students. Besides that, it is likely that some teachers will be convinced after a while.
- A bigger challenge when using MyKey is teachers' time. Nonetheless, the graph above shows that the time effort is manageable. Of course, this depends on the evaluation system you use (see handbooks for teachers and administrators for more information). This challenge is one of the main reasons why we tried to make MyKey as easy and accessible as possible.
- Some students may need extra help, e.g. they lack language competence. This is especially true for students in danger of dropout. In this case, extra efforts and working time are needed. We suggest meeting these students regularly (e.g. one hour every two weeks) in order to support them in using MyKey. This little regularity is a huge support for these students in order to finish their certificate.

- It saves time and energy to meet all students who use MyKey on a regular basis. Invite them every two weeks (up to the school or the teachers) and work with them on their activities and certificates for a few hours. This will solve most problems.
- Another challenge is to keep students motivated. Some may be motivated in the beginning, but after a while, they have nothing new to add and stop using the tool. In this case, it is also useful to meet on a regular basis (e.g. one hour every two weeks). Make sure they know what they can gain from the certificate and try to devise a plan together with them. What do they want to do in the following month? How is it possible to describe and document these activities? To which key competences can these activities be related? And so on.
- Students add activities, but their descriptions, evidence and rationales for these activities are deficient, even after you mailed with them several times. Such problems can be resolved in face-to-face meetings.
- The only challenge addressing teachers is to instil in their students interest in lifelong learning as the learning process never stops during their lives and skills, competences and knowledge can be gained through every action of their life.

10 | FUTURE ACTIVITIES

of the Non-for-lesl consortium

As explained above, Non-for-lesl surpassed our expectations in many ways. It was a big success and hence the following chapter deals with future activities in each country related to the project. On the one hand, this will give you an interesting insight into the work we will do. On the other hand, you may find activities you would like to join or connect.

Germany:

- Non-For-Lesl will be implemented in January 2017 in the following schools: Europaschule BBS (Stadthagen), Glockseeschule (Hannover), Euro Akademie (Hannover), Euro Akademie (Oldenburg), Oberschule an der Lerchenstraße (Bremen), Gewerbliche Schule (Backnang), BBS Lüchow, Julius-Echter-Gymnasium (Elsenfeld)
- Furthermore, we are in close contact with Peter-Unstinov Schule, Hannover. This is a so-called “Brennpunktschule” (high risk school), where we will be part of a consortium which will develop a method in order to tackle extremely high drop-out rates. Non-For Lesl and My-Key will be used for basic considerations.
- The newly founded School of education (with Prof Dr. Dirk Lange being the research director) will offer trainings for teachers about Non-For-Lesl on a regular basis. Through this, we are able to act as stakeholders for whole Lower-Saxony and beyond.
- Non-For-Lesl will be part of the curriculum of future seminars at the Leibniz University of Hanover and presented to (future) teachers in several seminars, e.g. „Didaktik der Politischen Bildung an Berufsbildenden Schulen und Gymnasien“
- The team of the IDD will be available to institutions who use or are interested in using My-Key after the end of the project duration
- Non-For-Lesl will be presented at all kinds of events in the future, like conferences, meetings, etc.
- The websites www.my-key.online and www.non4lesl.eu will be up for at least 2 more years. The website www.Facebook.com/nonforlesl will be up as long as Facebook exists and updated at least once per month

Cyprus:

- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be used as an example of a custom-made tool and a good practice for the purposes of the Erasmus+ KA2 – VET Project titled “APT - Apprentice Preparation Training - New Approaches in Managing the Transition from Education to Employment”. This project aims to support young people to find their way into the labour market and present their skills and competences. The target group are mainly Early School Leavers. The project is coordinated by the Lancaster and Morecambe College (UK).
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be presented at the 2017 CYPRUS INTERNATIONAL ‘EDUCATION AND CAREER’ EXHIBITION 2017 on the 17th and 19th of February 2017 in Nicosia. During the Exhibition ‘Emphasys Centre’ will be using a Booth to present the “MyKEY Tool” to students, counselors, teachers, stakeholders etc. Every year over 10000 young people are visitors.
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be presented at the “Empowering Young People in the Digital Era” Conference to be organized by the Emphasys Centre next April 2017 in Nicosia (3-7/4/2017). During the Conference various good practices will be presented by organization to empower and support the young students to upgrade their digital skills, validate their competences in order to meet the needs of the labour market. The ‘Emphasys Centre’ will be presenting the “MyKEY Tool” as a good example to monitor, recognize and validate any type of skills acquired in non-formal learning settings to students, counselors, teachers, stakeholders etc. During this time Learning Mobility between Young People will be organized.
- The “MyKEY Tool” will be used widely as part of the COUNSELLING SERVICES provided by the following Educational Centres for students: „Electra Private Institute“ (Dr Marios Eliades – Career Counselor – Official UCAS Centre) and „Emphasys Centre“ (British Council Examination Centre – ECDL Examination Centre). The target group is students – young students who would like to record, monitor, recognize and validate the experience, skills and competences acquired in non-formal learning settings. The MyKEY Certificate could be used for entry into higher education as part of their Personal Statement.
- The NONFORLESL project as well as the “MyKEY Tool” will be part of the Erasmus+ KA1 – Mobility Learning for Educators and Youth Workers during the academic year 2017-2018. Every year teachers from EU countries participate in the professional development courses organized by Emphasys Centre.
- The NONFORLESL will be disseminated (cross-links) with various School Education Projects, VET projects as well as YOUTH Projects. The NONFORLESL Implementation and Exploitation Strategy will be implemented by the TLC Private School in Paphos for the academic year 2017-2018.

Italy:

- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be presented in the framework of future project meeting Pixel will be involved in. The target group will be composed by teachers and school directors.
- The NON-FOR-LESL project, and the related documents saved within the USB stick, will be distributed to the participants in the International Conferences organized by Pixel. The International Conferences are: New Perspectives in Science Education; The Future of Education; ICT for Language Learning.
- NON-FOR-LESL will be implemented by the school already involved in the first implementation phase, Istituto Francesco Datini of Prato. In addition teachers already involved will disseminate the project, and the related tool, to their colleagues (within the same school and outside their school)
- In January 2017, the NON-FOR-LESL will be presented at the Graz University in the framework of an International Conference
- Pixel team will be available to institutions which are interested in using the My-Key tool after the end of the project duration
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be linked to the following websites: Pixel; Europlan (European Cooperation Portal for Education, Training, Culture and Research)

Greece:

- As we approach the end of our two year project we think about its exploitation and sustainability. First of all, our school will keep using MyKey and engage more teachers and students who attend 7th and 8th graders. For the promotion of the project and its benefits we will use various means such as our school website, social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) the local newspapers: "Olympio Bima", "Pierikoi Antilaloi", "Seven" and local news websites: "pierianews.gr", "lefteria.blogspot.com", "katerini-news.gr" as well as a national website about education: "ipaideia.gr".
- In addition, on 02/12/2016 I will meet with the director of the secondary schools of the county of Pieria Mr. Kaztaridis Ioannis whom I will inform about our project and will invite to the local conference I am organizing for this reason. I will also ask him to give permission to schools which might be interested to cooperate with our project.
- There are two local schools which showed interest in implementing MyKey and will do so from March 2017: „6th Gymnasium of Katerini“ (State school) and the „Kountoura Language School“

(Private Foreign Language school)

- On 07/12/2016 we will organise an informative day conference about the project and the “my key tool” and we have invited the head teachers and teachers of all the gymnasiums of the county of Pieria to participate.
- We are also planning to inform about the “NonForLesl” project and the “my key tool” the partners of our 9 new Erasmus+ K2 projects that we are going to work with during the next 2 years.

Romania:

- EuroED team team will be available to institutions which are interested in using the My Key tool after the end of the project duration.
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be implemented in 2017 in the following schools: Eminescu College, Hasdeu School. The NON-FOR-LESL project will be implemented by the school already involved in the first implementation phase, Liceul Vasile Alecsnadri Iasi. In addition teachers already involved will disseminate the project, and MyKey tool to their colleagues (within the same school and outside their school).
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be used as an example of good practice for the Erasmus+ KA2 – VET Project entitled “APT - Apprentice Preparation Training - New Approaches in Managing the Transition from Education to Employment”. This project aims to support young people to find their way into the labour market and present their skills and competences. The target group are mainly Early School Leavers. The project is coordinated by the Lancaster and Morecambe College (UK).
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be used as an example of good practice for the Erasmus+ Mobility of learners and staff Project entitled D.E.L.T.A. -Digital Europe: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Formazione all'estero per gli Animatori Digitali
- The NON-FOR-LESL project will be presented and promoted at all future project meetings EuroEd Foundation will participate in. The target groups will be made up of teachers and school principals. These presentations will raise stakeholders and policy-makers' awareness about the project and encourage them to visit the site and implement the tool in their institutions.
- The project will be linked to the institution website and will be presented and promoted via existing contacts/ mailing lists (from previous work, earlier networks, like-minded stakeholders, or professional bodies). The NON-FOR-LESL project will be presented and promoted on a national website about education: “didactic.ro”

11 | PARTNER PRESENTATION

The Institute of Civic Education (IDD) is part of University of Hannover. The overall aim of the institute is to enable both young people and adults to acquire key skills and competences necessary for active citizenship and participation at all levels of social and political life. IDD develops, tests and implements a wide range of training programs, all of which aim to improve the skills of trainee teachers and other education professionals. Teacher trainings focus on improving knowledge and practical skills about civic competences and active citizenship, and are delivered in a variety of ways: As lectures, workshops, mentoring sessions, innovative learning approaches such as blended learning and e-portfolios. They are built on an evidential base from both research and academic theory, and on a sound analysis of learning processes. The trainings are offered on university-level as well as on national and European level. At one level, IDD also seeks to produce policy-useful material to support the development of instruments and tools necessary for active citizenship and advanced civic education.

As stated above, two of our central research interests at the IDD are participation and social inclusion of citizens. NON-FOR-LESL its main output, MyKey, covers exactly these interests: It tries to strengthen the participation and the citizenship of people (in these case students) who are in danger of social exclusion in the form of strengthening key competences. MyKey provides young people with self-esteem and new perspectives, which in turn lowers the probability of an early dropout of school and ensures the participation of these students in our society as a whole. Hence, the participation in the project came naturally, as it is concerned with our core interests. Our expectations in NON-FOR-LESL were the creation of an easy to use open educational resource. It should be structured in a way that as many students as possible are able to use it. At the same time, the expenditure for teachers and administrators should be adjustable, as well. These decisions were made at our first meetings. On a dissemination level, we wanted to convince as many stakeholders, teachers and multipliers as possible in order to guarantee the prevalence and sustainability of the project and its ideas. Both aims have been fulfilled. MyKey is very user-friendly, if necessary timesaving for teachers and administrators and all dissemination activities have been a big success. Several schools showed interest and already started implementing MyKey. On a stakeholder-level, MyKey has been presented to various departments and institutions to make sure a widespread distribution and the feedback was positive throughout.

PLATON (<http://www.platon.edu.gr>) is a private school in Greece with a long experience in EU projects and its staff can produce teaching material conventional or based in e-learning platforms. Through the Research Department (R.D) the participation of PLATON in EU programs of design, implementation and assessment of innovative methods and materials is pursued. The R.D. actively involves itself in the design of advanced educational materials, both conventional and electronic in order to enhance teaching and learning. The tools developed within the framework of educational programmes are the

result of cooperation and joint efforts amongst specialists from a variety of academic fields, with a major focus on ICT, teaching and learning studies.

In this framework, the expectations of PLATON with regard to the project (after the development of the products) are associated with the development of consciousness on the part of students at risk about how the formal and non-formal or informal learning are directly related. It is also expected the development of a continuous reflection process towards their own learning, as well as their personal, academic and career development planning. So, it is expected that students' performance, self-esteem and confidence will be improved.

The «**Emphasys Centre**» (www.emphasyscentre.com) began operating in 1998, as a related company to «A & A Emphasys Interactive Solutions Ltd» (due to common ownership), a successful company specialising in consultancy, software and support services in the field of ICT. It operates as an «ICT Educational and Vocational Centre» and a «European Research Centre», that cooperates closely with various organisations in Europe for the implementation of EU projects, while it has continued to operate as an «ICT Software Centre». It is authorized by the ECDL Foundation and the Council of Europe Information Scientists (CEPIS) to offer specialised training courses for the acquisition of the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), whereas its staff is ECDL Certified Training Professionals. Within the area of education and training the «Emphasys Centre» is authorised by the British Council of Cyprus and the Cambridge International Examination Board to teach GCE A' Level Computer Science and organise various exams, as an approved examination centre. The main aim of the organisation is to offer non-formal opportunities for young people to acquire employability, entrepreneurship and digital skills to support their transition from school to the world of work thus achieving a better skills match and career orientation.

Based on the above, the involvement of the E.C. in the NON-FOR-LESL project focuses on the provision of opportunities for students to acknowledge the importance of the learning, skills, experiences and attitudes gained in extra-curricular activities outside the school. The value of formal education for the acquisition of knowledge is undisputed. However, there is a vast amount of knowledge, skills and competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning settings, such as the church, youth centres, voluntary work, music and dance clubs etc. that is hidden. There is an urgent need for all students to explore their talents, interests and hidden skills, which can be of great support to complete formal education or even enrich their profiles and explore their potential for succeeding in life. Emphasys Centre, as a provider of validated and accredited non-formal learning (i.e. ECDL) and career counselling is committed to promote the recognition and validation of the learning that is acquired in activities that are organized outside of school in an attempt to support all students. The process through which students will be required to record and monitor their skills, experiences and knowledge categorized in the 8 Key Competences defined by the European Commission, will assist them to develop their self-esteem, self-confidence while motivating them to try harder. At the same time, this process will assist teachers and educators to get to know the students better, as the academic performance does not always represent the whole personality of the students. Talents and interests, which are sometimes hidden behind

Pixel (<http://www.pixel-online.net/>) is an international education and training institution with over 15 years of experience in international cooperation and European project management. Established in Florence (Italy) in January 1999, Pixel is engaged in a constant improvement in the quality of the services performed. Pixel obtained quality certification according to UNI EN ISO 9001. Pixel is also accredited by the Italian Ministry of Education and by the Tuscany Regional Government. Pixel has a specific expertise and a long experience in the following areas:

- Organization of international education and training initiatives: Since 1999, Pixel organizes and delivers international in-service training courses on different topics such as: European cooperation, new technologies for education, innovative educational methodologies, language learning.
- Direct submission and management of European projects: Since 1999, Pixel was/is involved in 87 European projects funded by the European Commission. The main thematic areas addressed by some of the European projects in which Pixel is involved are: Innovation in Education (13 projects implemented); Prevention of Early School Leaving (8 projects), Language Teaching and Learning (12 projects); Promotion of Employment and Entrepreneurship (7 projects)
- Organization of international events and conferences in the field of education: Since 2001, Pixel organizes international conferences in the field of higher education and research. Three of them are organized on a yearly basis “The Future of Education”, “ICT for language Learning” and “New Perspectives in Science Education”.
- Organization of international study visits, mobility and exchanges: Since 2004, Pixel has organized and managed several international mobility initiatives acting as host /intermediary organization. The mobility initiatives organized focused on several subject areas such as: innovation in vocational education, new technologies, data processing, etc.
- Transnational Networking and Partnerships

The experience developed in the last years, with a specific focus on innovation in education and prevention of early school leaving, has been put at the service of the NONFORLESL project. Our involvement in the project was linked, since the very beginning, in the opportunity to create an innovative tool, which could help both teachers and students. The result of our participation, within this productive and professional partnership, took to the production of MyKey. Our main contribution was represented by the creation of the 3 guidelines for using the MyKey addressed to the main project’ target groups (students, teachers and school admins). On a dissemination level, our main result was the presentation of the NON-FOR-LESL project, and its related tool, in the framework of the International Conference “ICT for Language Learning”, which brings together experts from all over the world to share findings, expertise and experience on innovative teaching and learning solutions.

EuroEd Foundation (<http://www.euroed.ro/>) is a non-profit organisation set up in 1992 and located in Iasi, Romania. It delivers educational services to all age categories and developed a series of programmes, including language and professional training courses. Since 1995, EuroEd implemented over 60 national and international educational projects. Since its beginning, EuroEd Foundation has been involved in projects and programmes meant to enhance the quality of the Romanian educational system. The NON-FOR-LESL project addresses one of the main challenges the European education faces today: early school leaving. The school dropout rate in Romania has increased over the past years, being one of the highest rates in the European Union. From the very beginning, EuroEd Foundation realized the potential the project has in increasing students' motivation to complete school and providing teachers with the necessary tools to help them. The project promotes the recognition of non-formal and informal learning based on the 8 key competences. Thus, it helps students create a complete profile incorporating skills acquired at school but also skills gained through extracurricular activities; undoubtedly, this will lead to students' increased self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation to complete their studies. We, at the EuroEd Foundation, have understood that the validation of non-formal and informal learning will help everybody: students and educators, as well as schools and educational institutions.

We aim to raise the educators' and the authorities' awareness about the role that non-formal and informal education have in students' development. We would like to help educators sensitise authorities about the necessity to validate non-formal and informal education and make this type of learning visible and worth considering in schools. We also think that the OER innovative tool supports the reform processes of our society and promotes high-quality standards in education by enhancing students' role in their learning process and assessment.

CONTACTS

While using MyKey you may realize that some aspects of MyKey do not function well for your school. In this case, contact:



Germany:

Christoph Wolf

Institut für Politische Wissenschaft · Scheiderberg 50 · 30167 Hannover
c.wolf@ipw.uni-hannover.de · www.uni-hannover.de



Romania:

Oana Mihoci

Fundatia EuroEd · Strada Florilor 1C · Iasi, 700513
contact@euroed.ro · www.euroed.ro



Greece:

Evangelos Kapetis

kapetise@windowslive.com · www.platon.edu.gr



Italy:

Antonio Giordano

antonio@pixel-online.net · www.pixel-online.net



Cyprus:

Athos Charalambides

ICT Training and Research · 3 A-D, Dimitrakopoulou Str, 1090 Nicosia
info@emphasyscentre.com · www.emphasyscentre.com

APPENDIX

The following tools are provided for your use when preparing for training implementation:

- Annex 1 - Step-by-step guide for the use of MyKey
- Annex 2 - Information Pack for the use of “MyKey”
- Annex 3 - Guide for School Administrators
- Annex 4 - Letters of consent (parents, school agreement)
- Annex 5 - Questionnaires (Students/Teachers/Admins) –
- Annex 6 - Case Study (one or two example for showing the potential of MyKey tool)
- Annex 7 - Certificate
- Annex 8 - Flyer/leaflet

