



Professionalization of Validation Experts

## Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) in times of social and economic recovery after the Coronavirus

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The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the European economy is expected to be much higher than the last economic crisis it had to overcome in 2008 after the financial crisis of the sub primes. The European Union is faced to a “recession of historic proportions” as the pandemic should cause a 7.4 % drop in economic output in 2020. It is comparable to the economic shock of the Great Depression (1929-1930) worldwide according to the Economy chief of the EU (Euronews, 06/05/2020).

Unemployment across the European Union is expected to rise to nine percent in 2020, after the lockdowns enforced by national governments. Greece is expected to suffer the worst unemployment rate of 19.9 percent, followed by Spain at 18.9 percent while Germany is forecast to have the lowest unemployment rate at four percent (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1115276/coronavirus-european-unemployment/>, 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2020).

The EU economy is not expected to have recovered before the end of 2021, especially the labour market. The Commission warned the pandemic could leave "permanent scars" through bankruptcies and long-term damage to the labour market (Euronews, 06/05/2020).

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2020, the European Commission presented its major recovery plan to ensure a sustainable recovery, inclusive and fair for all Member States embedded with a long-term EU budget with a total financial firepower of the EU budget up to €1.85 trillion ([https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_20\\_940](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_940) , 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2020).

In this perspective, in order to enhance a fair and sustainable recovery of the labour market in Europe, and to support Europeans who are already unemployed or those whose employments might be jeopardized in a near future, this would be a perfect opportunity to put the validation of prior learning process (VPL) process back on the agenda. The VPL approach might be a relevant approach to contribute to the social and economic recovery in Europe as it is based on the experience and competence people have acquired in the past to build a new professional future. It used to be a main social and economic innovation in the 1990s in times where the European Union was also faced to difficult times with high unemployment rates. Equipping professionals working in in the labour market with relevant tools and methods to improve their support to unemployed people is a key issue. The profiles of unemployed people are more and more diverse and so must also be the profiles of professionals supporting them. The VPL process is also an example of diversity in the method and strategy to be enhanced to build a sustainable labour force.



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