



Experimentation protocols

D2.1

June 2017

[Introduction to the project and this document](#)

The VISKA project seeks to implement and evaluate 5 interventions which have been agreed by the implementation partners and which are applied to the current processes (in the respective national contexts) for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. The interventions have been developed and agreed with a view to making the knowledge, skills and competence of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and adults with low skills¹ levels, more visible. While there will be many differences across the 4 participating countries in relation to validation policies, practices and infrastructures, the focus of the project team will be to learn how the chosen interventions, when enacted, can bring about real change, for individuals and systems thus contributing to a broader policy agenda. In order to be able to clearly identify and evaluate changes resulting from the interventions, it is necessary to explore the current situation in each partner country.

This document forms an essential part of the mapping process which will establish existing practices and also guide an analysis of the individual country needs. The responses from each of the country partners will when collated and analysed by the research and evaluation partners, provide a vital baseline on existing processes, procedures and resources for the validation of non-formal and informal learning and a structure through which to explore the lived experiences of key stakeholders. This important contextual information will support later evaluation of the interventions and their impacts. The content of the document has been guided by research and evaluation partner but has also been contributed to collectively by the project partnership during the initial project meeting and through subsequent communication.

This protocol provides a structure for the first wave of the desk and empirical research phases of the VISKA project in each partner country.

The document contains a number of sections each relating to key parts of the situational analysis activity:

[Section 1: Environment Analysis](#)

[Section 2: Stakeholders](#)

[Target group profile](#)

[Policy makers](#)

[Support personnel](#)

[Section 3: Intervention pre field trial SWOT analysis](#)

Each section comprises of a number of different parts/elements which will support the research partners in developing the report *D2.2 'A Briefing paper: Literature review and country needs analyses'*. It is acknowledged that each partner country has individually identified the particular interventions with which they intend to engage wholly, partially or not at all as part of the field trials, as well as the appropriate target population and size for their intervention focus.

¹ Throughout the project proposal reference is made to low-skilled adults. The project team and indeed the nature of the project clearly recognises that this target group is likely to have many valuable skills and that it would be more appropriate to consider this group as those having low, or no, formal qualifications. This recognition is at the core of the project.

A base line 'as is' picture in the area of validation and in relation to each of the target populations within each of the national contexts will provide an informed perspective to undertake the interventions as well as providing a framework for the identification of any impacts or outcomes of the interventions.

Target audience

In addition to the VISKA project partners, the target audience for *D2.1 Experimentation Protocols* includes but is not limited to government agencies, education institutions/providers, social partners, employer/ or representative bodies, learner support services and the document may also have relevance to other project teams.

It is the responsibility of the local researcher/ evaluator within each implementation partner to identify the appropriate research population to respond to the questions posed in this document in consultation with the project team in each partner country and the overall project leader.

Desk research

The document should be first considered from a desk research perspective and sources which contain potentially relevant information should be reviewed and the appropriate text extracted. The country partners are best placed to identify documents, policies, strategies in their national language(s), within their countries with impact on the current validation approaches. When completing this desk review phase, the project partners should pay attention to any sources which have a particular impact on their chosen target population, or relevance to the planned interventions. Where relevant information is extracted from documents it should be translated into English and reference to the excerpt/ quote/text should be retained in Harvard referencing style. Referencing should be completed through the 'references' tab on the menu bar in MS Word.

Empirical research

In order to develop a richer perspective of the current situation in each partner country, it is anticipated that input from some stakeholders will require an interview. The responsibility for identifying the national target group or individual lies with each of the implementation partner organisations of VISKA. Contacting and arranging to speak /work with the identified respondent for the empirical research phase is the responsibility of the local evaluator/ researcher as directed by the national partner. The questions contained in this document should assist in structuring the input from various stakeholders. The language/ text of the questions should be broadly retained to support analysis of comparable data across the partner countries.

Recording responses to the questions

Responses should be entered in this document – each partner will complete the document in a manner that is appropriate for their organisation and their country. If interviews are conducted responses should be recorded as received and not interpreted by the interviewer. It is intended that this will minimise interviewer bias. If the answer received during the interview is not clear to the interviewer then clarification should be sought during or after the interview. The transcription of the interview in English and in a MS Word document will be the required output.

Where there is more than one implementation partner within a particular country they will work to ensure that they provide a full comprehensive landscape analysis within that country but do not unnecessarily duplicate effort.

Information will also be collected at this first phase of the project on the type of target population by each of the implementation partners. This information is not intended as the base of a longitudinal study with the individual research respondents, but rather as an indication of the current attainment and profile and in order to support the planned interventions. This information will be collected in a separate Excel document (provided) and where appropriate. summarised into this document.

The following sections are to be completed by each Implementation Partner in each partner country.

Space has been provided to insert text directly into this document. If for any reason you find this difficult or inadequate or you need to add more information – please feel free to add pages to this document. In many cases the research and evaluation partner has sought to guide your answers and to provide typical values as answers to the questions – however you have space to add alternative text where these do not apply. In supplying your responses you are contributing to the development of an informed understanding of the current situation regarding the validation of non-formal and informal learning in your country at this time. This information and situational analysis will form the basis by which impact of the interventions that you take can be understood.

As you read through the document you will see that some questions are asked at a national, regional and local level. In your situation you may find that there is no difference, for instance, between national and regional, legislation, policy or practice – if this is the case simply make that clear in your response – there is no need to repeat the entries if they are identical. In the same way you are asked if there are different arrangements or practices in relation to migrants, refugees, low qualified – if there is no difference just make that clear – if there are differences or examples of practice that relate to one group or another provide that information.

Remember that you are best placed to answer these questions within your country and in all cases you are being asked for your interpretation/ opinion. For clarification on any of the question, first seek input from your organisation, from other implementation partners in your country, from the project leaders and from the research and evaluation partner. To suggest changes to this document (while in draft format or at any stage) contact the project leader and the research and evaluation partners.

The last section of this document (Pre-intervention Field Trial Analysis) provides a framework for a SWOT-type analysis relating to the 5 areas of intervention agreed by the project team. It is important that you consider the framework and the questions provided here (which were agreed by the project team) as a guideline to firmly establish the current scenario in relation to each separate intervention area. Without this it will be impossible to identify impact for the implementation stages planned in this project.

Project Partner: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Country: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name of the person responsible for completion of the document: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date Document completed: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Section 1: Environment analysis

What are the principles underpinning validation in your country?

(select all that apply) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Does it relate to access to education

Does it relate to access to the workplace

Does it relate to social inclusion

Does it relate to skills recognition or skills development

Does it relate to empowerment

Does it relate to all levels of education and training

Other [Click here to enter text.](#)

How and where is this principle supported? General comment [Click here to enter text.](#)

In Government legislation

Specify the legislation and the text from the legislation [Click here to enter text.](#)

In Regional policy/ legislation

Specify the regional policy/legislation and the relevant text [Click here to enter text.](#)

Is there other literature/ publications/ legislation that supports validation in your country.

If so clarify here [Click here to enter text.](#)

Source reference(s) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Text from that source(s). [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the **national** level are there;

Policies in the area of **validation of non-formal and informal learning**? Yes No [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name of policy and originating organisation [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference for the policy [Click here to enter text.](#)

National legislation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning? Yes No

What is the National legislation (name) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference for the National legislation [Click here to enter text.](#)

Statements made within documents about non-formal and informal learning? Yes No
[Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the statement (name) and what is the status (voluntary, guidance, recommendation, requirement...?) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference for the statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the **national** level are there validation arrangements (practice) related to the **low-skilled (low-qualified)**? Yes No

If yes what are these? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the national level are there validation arrangements (practice) related to **Migrants**? Yes No

If yes what are these? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the national level are there validation arrangements (practice) related to **Refugees**? Yes No

If yes what are these? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the **regional level** are there validation arrangements related to the **low-skilled (low-qualified)**? Yes No

If yes what are these? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the quality assurance system for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the regional level are there validation arrangements related to **Migrants**? Yes No

If yes what are these? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the regional level are there validation arrangements related to **Refugees**? Yes No

If yes what are these? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the **local level** are there validation arrangements related to the **low-skilled (low- qualified)**?

Yes No

If yes what are these and who is involved (institutions, workplace)? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the quality assurance system for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the local level are there validation arrangements related to **Migrants**? Yes No

If yes what are these and who is involved (institutions, workplace)? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

At the local level are there validation arrangements related to **Refugees**? Yes No

If yes what are these and who is involved (institutions, workplace)? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to arrangement [Click here to enter text.](#)

Can you provide an example of validation arrangements which already exist and work at the local level? [Click here to enter text.](#)

What are the quality assurance measures for these arrangements? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference to support statement [Click here to enter text.](#)

What role(s) (people, resources, positions) are involved in the validation of learning in your country? Examples could include guidance, mentoring, assessment, teaching and learning, quality assurance etc. [Click here to enter text.](#)

Who has responsibility in the different role(s)? Are there key organisations with specific responsibility? [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the overall national position on low skilled (low qualified) individuals in your country? (provide an overall indicator or level for instance and policy documents or government strategy where it relates to VNFIL) [Click here to enter text.](#)

What supports are in place? National Regional Local [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the national position on Migrants? Their rights, status, opportunities [Click here to enter text.](#)

What supports are in place? National Regional Local [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the national position on Refugees? Rights, status and opportunities [Click here to enter text.](#)

What supports are in place? National Regional Local [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the intention or key focus at the national, regional and local level of engaging with low skilled, migrants or refugees in the area of validating learning?

(for instance there may be a focus on entry to the workplace, entry to education etc.)

	National	Regional	Local
Low Skilled / Low Qualified	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Migrants	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Refugees	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Supporting text(s) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference (s) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Are the activities/services/supports conducted within

the National Framework of Qualifications

Linked to a formal recognition system? What is the system? [Click here to enter text.](#)

The European Framework of Qualification

Other

Reference(s) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Text sections [Click here to enter text.](#)

Section 2: Stakeholders Analysis

Target Group Profile

Target group profile – Low skilled, migrants, refugees : This activity is intended to more closely identify the target group, to establish whether there are common traits and profiles and to generally understand who they are in the different countries. This work will ensure that the interventions can be appropriately informed by the current realities.

For each partner organisation the appropriate number and type of individual results should be gathered through the EXCEL spreadsheet (sent as a separate document) and the overall findings collated by country in this document.

What is the country of origin (list all the countries) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Age profile (tick all that apply) 15-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55+

Gender % of each / numbers – what is the general gender make-up of the group

Male [Click here to enter text.](#)

Female [Click here to enter text.](#)

Source of this information [Click here to enter text.](#)

Status

Asylum seeker [Click here to enter text.,](#)

Refugee [Click here to enter text.](#)

Migrant [Click here to enter text.](#)

Low-skilled (low-qualified) adult [Click here to enter text.](#)

Source of information: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Formal education attainment

Early school education (primary)

Lower secondary education

Upper secondary education

Further Education/ Vocational Education and Training

Higher Education

Source of information: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Employment

Do people in the target group have work experience and of what duration (time) [Click here to enter text.](#)

What is the nature of work conducted by the target group(s) (Refugee, Migrant, Low Skilled) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Willingness to work (readiness to work) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Policy maker profile – interview guide outline

Purpose of this question set is to explore, in relation to VNFIL, in each country setting who makes the decisions, what decisions are made and for what purpose. The focus of the exploration is on the validation of learning with relevance to the particular target population. In general the study aims to provide answers to the questions below. The outline interview guide provides the local researcher with a framework for the research.

Target for this question set: Includes but is not limited to government agencies, education institutions at a VET or higher education level, Social partners, Employer and representative bodies. Local and National contexts should inform the group identified as respondents in this context.

Questions:

Who is responsible for policy related to validation? If it is a government department please specify or if it is the responsibility of intergovernmental departments specify with the name(s) of the relevant departments and an overview of the relevant decisions made [Click here to enter text.](#)

Who is responsible for policy related to low skilled, migrants and refugees within your country? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference [Click here to enter text.](#)

Interview guide outline

(please feel free to add to this question set and to develop any furthering questioning that will provide as comprehensive a current situational analysis as possible)

1. Who are you and what organisation do you represent?
2. What does your organisation do?
3. Do you or your organisation have an interest in the validation of non-formal and informal learning in _____ (insert country here)?
4. What is your organisation's focus in relation to VNFIL?
5. What is your role in relation to VNFIL?
6. Is there a cohort or target group with particular importance or relevance in relation to VNFIL at present? If so Explain the importance of this group and any particular policies or practices relevant to the group.
7. Is there a document or publically available information which outlines what you have discussed?
8. Are you aware of any future policy planned in the area of validation or with the identified target groups?

Support profile – interview guide outline

Purpose of this question set is to explore, in relation to VNFIL, in each country setting who supports, what supports are available and for what purpose. The focus of the exploration is on the validation of learning with relevance to the particular target population. In general the study aims to provide answers to the questions below. The outline interview guide provides the local researcher with a framework for the research.

Target for this question set: Includes but is not limited to government agencies, education institutions at a VET or higher education level, Social partners, Employer and representative bodies. Voluntary agencies. Local and National contexts should inform the group to be researched in this context.

Questions are intended to explore:

How the required supports are identified and where and how are they provided?

Who is responsible for supports related to validation? (these supports might include support and mentoring for the applicant or potential applicants, support for the staff involved in the processes and practices, support for the organisations involved, and might include financial support, templates and frameworks for practice as well as other resources)

Does the support provided depend on the level of the framework of the learning? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Does it depend on the learning, discipline, subject matter or industry? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Who is responsible for supports related to low skilled, migrants and refugees within your country? Please be as comprehensive as possible [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reference [Click here to enter text.](#)

Interview guide outline

1. Who are you and what organisation do you represent?
2. What does your organisation do?
3. Do you or your organisation have an interest in the validation of non-formal and informal learning in _____ (insert country here)?
4. What is your organisation's focus in relation to VNFIL? (in particular what supports does your organisation provide and what parts of the validation process are supported?)
5. What is your own role in relation to supporting VNFIL?
6. Is there a cohort or target group with particular importance or relevance in relation to VNFIL at present? If so Explain the importance of this group and any particular policies or practices relevant to the group. Explain how supports are made available for this group

and particular aspects of the supports required. Are there specific supports which are required but not available at the moment?

7. Is there a document or publically available information which outlines what you have discussed?
8. Are you aware of any future policy planned in the area of support for validation or particular supports for the identified target groups?

Section 3: Pre-Intervention field trial analysis

In advance of field interventions some base line of activities relating to the specific interventions planned must be determined to enable comparison and analysis after the intervention work packages during the project timeframe. To achieve this the project team has agreed on a SWOT-type approach which will explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to each of the 5 interventions. Where possible this has been interpreted in clear and accessible language and a set of questions to guide the responses has been agreed collectively.

Each intervention partner will have considered the interventions that are appropriate in their context and how those interventions are to be implemented and achieved. Therefore they will be best placed to guide this exploration into the pre-intervention status. It is also recommended that each partner be mindful of the means by which the impact of their particular intervention and activities can be measured and to use this to help guide the responses also.

SWOT per invention strategy

- **What's good about it – what works – Strengths**
- **What's not so good? -Weaknesses**
- **Identify opportunities for improvement- Opportunities**
- **Identify challenges or constraints- Threats**

Intervention 1 :

Developing and extending regional/national networks and partnerships to include policy makers, social partners and practitioners working on the validation of NFIL

1. Developing and extending Networks – what is the current status within your country?

- What networks exist? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Where? For whom? For how long? How good are they? How would you measure the extent? How would you measure the current impact? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- How are they resourced and funded? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Is there any comparability between countries? Are you aware of any comparability? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What will be the measurement parameters to identify development? How will you know networks are developing and/or extending? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- How will you decide if there is improvement in the way networks are working in your country? [Click here to enter text.](#)

- What is the shape of the potential policy impact?
 - Nationally? Internationally? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Networks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>What's good about it – what works – Strengths</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>What's not so good? –Weaknesses</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>Identify opportunities for improvement- Opportunities</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>Identify challenges or constraints- Threats</u> 	Click here to enter text.

Intervention 2:

Extending / adapting tools used in the validation of NFIL – includes digitisation as well as customisation for use with specific beneficiary groups and enhanced quality assurance of validation processes

Extending and adapting tools – current status we will be asking the following questions

- What tools exist to support validation? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What tools exist to support low skilled, migrants and/or refugees? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Where? Who uses them? How good are they? How would you measure the extent of use of the tools? How would you measure the current impact? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- How are they resourced and funded? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Who could adapt them? How do they relate to the specific beneficiaries? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Is there any comparability between countries? Is the tool selection informed by what other countries have implemented? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What will be the measurement parameters to identify development? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What are the implications for quality assurance of validation processes? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What is the shape of the potential policy impact? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - Nationally? [Click here to enter text.](#) Internationally? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Extending and adapting tools	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>What's good about it – what works – Strengths</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>What's not so good? –Weaknesses</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>Identify opportunities for improvement- Opportunities</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <u>Identify challenges or constraints- Threats</u> 	Click here to enter text.

Intervention 3:**Creating a common set of criteria for the documentation and assessment of transversal skills, able to be used with one or more adult learner groups**

Common criteria for documentation and assessment of transversal skills – current status
we will be asking the following questions

- What are transversal skills? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What projects / initiatives have helped to define them? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- How are they valued? In work? In education and training? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- How / where are they currently documented? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- How / where are they currently assessed? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Is there any comparability between countries? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What is the shape of the potential policy impact? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - Nationally? [Click here to enter text.](#) Internationally? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Documenting and assessing transversal skills	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What's good about it – what works – Strengths</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What's not so good? –Weaknesses</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identify opportunities for improvement- Opportunities</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identify challenges or constraints- Threats</u> 	Click here to enter text.

Intervention 4:**Training and / or Capacity building for guidance counsellors and other frontline staff working on the validation of NFIL, including with specific adult beneficiary groups**

Training and / or Capacity building for guidance counsellors, assessors and other frontline staff – current status

we will be asking the following questions

- **Who** are the staff? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **How** can we assess current training and capacity? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **How** can we quantify/ document and assess needs? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- From the perspective of the **GC, assessors and Frontline Staff**? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- From the perspective of the **service users**? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Is there any **comparability** between countries? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What is the shape of the **potential policy impact**? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **Nationally**? [Click here to enter text.](#) **Internationally**? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Training and capacity building guidance, assessors and other front line staff	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What's good about it – what works – Strengths</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What's not so good? –Weaknesses</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identify opportunities for improvement- Opportunities</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identify challenges or constraints- Threats</u> 	Click here to enter text.

Intervention 5:**Improving access to and awareness of validation services and support among specific adult beneficiary groups**

Improving access to and awareness of validation services– current status

we will be asking the following questions

- **How** to ascertain current levels of **awareness**? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **How** can we assess **access**? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **How** can we quantify or compare? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- **Whose** perspective should we consider? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- Is there any **comparability** between countries? [Click here to enter text.](#)
- What is the shape of the **potential policy impact**? [Click here to enter text.](#)
 - **Nationally**? [Click here to enter text.](#) **Internationally**? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Access to and awareness of validation services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What's good about it – what works – Strengths</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>What's not so good? –Weaknesses</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identify opportunities for improvement- Opportunities</u> 	Click here to enter text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identify challenges or constraints- Threats</u> 	Click here to enter text.