Verification and certification of non-formal learning in the Netherlands

The importance of lifelong learning has been recognized in the Netherlands for decades. Currently, this trend is also supported by the increasing number of people between the ages of 25 and 64 participating in educational activities. In the Netherlands, there are two options to promote adult learning:

Schools can develop their own recognition and validation methods and tools or partner with CVE (recognition of previously acquired skills) providers. An experience certificate (Ervaringscertificaat EVC) describes a person's abilities, knowledge and professional experience. This is especially important when people have many years of professional experience and there is a mismatch in their educational background. This mismatch means they are competent to perform tasks above the level that might be expected based on their training. New knowledge and skills can then be recognized with certificates of competency that help strengthen people's position in the labor market.

The EVC procedure involves collecting data about a person's knowledge and skills. Evidence is assessed against nationally recognized professional standards. Relevant qualifications and life/work experience are included in the assessment. The evidence collected will then be recorded on the certificate of competency. These skills certificates can be used to create professional mobility in the labor market. For example, a person who wants to pursue vocational training (MBO) or higher professional training (HBO) can use EVC to exempt certain parts of the new training and thereby reduce their study time. Surname. Another positive effect of a certificate of competency is that it helps learners have a clear overview of their professional experience and performance level. This helps them understand their own abilities, thereby helping them develop their talents more effectively and know the type of job that is suitable for them. The certificate will encourage them to choose a training program that is suitable for their current job or the career they aim for in the future.

The EVC application is submitted to an accredited local EVC provider, usually an educational institution, but can also be submitted to a branch office. The cost of an EVC may be paid (in part) by the employer, local employment agency or local social services. The cost of EVC is tax deductible.

Support for studying and working

Another important development was the Study and Work program (Leren en werken, in Dutch only), supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, launched in 2009. The goal of the program is to strengthen the link between education, training market, labor market and employment opportunities. The priorities are to improve workplace learning (learning while working), career guidance and the use of experience certificates (Ervaringscertificaat EVC) that describe professional skills, knowledge and experience. one's subject. To better connect these areas, there are one or more study and work offices in all 35 labor market areas (Arbeidsmarktregio's) in the Netherlands. Regional and local stakeholders are well informed about the local labor market situation. They can provide, if necessary, appropriate support to the unemployed. This regional approach is the result of a process that began in 2009 to create structures of cooperation between actors at the regional level to address the problem of unemployment. The future: EduBadges and micro-credentials

EduBadges and micro-credentials

A new (and rapidly growing) way to deliver EVC is using EduBadges and micro-credentials. EduBadges are digital certificates that provide students with evidence of the knowledge and skills acquired during training. EduBadges can be earned in formal, accredited educational programs and in informal, non-accredited educational contexts. Education badges are different from micro-credentials, which are also evidence of the learning outcomes a learner achieves after a short-term learning experience. The difference is that micro-credential learning outcomes are assessed against transparent standards. Evidence is also contained in a certified document that mentions the name of the holder, the learning outcomes achieved, the assessment method, the issuing institution and, if applicable, the level of the certification and credit framework. just achieved. EduBadges and micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared, are portable, and can be combined into broader credentials or qualifications. However, only micro-credentials benefit from quality assurance based on agreed standards. Currently, a lot of research and testing is being conducted in the Netherlands on the use of EduBadges and micro-credentials.