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European Student Engagement Project - Mapping of the legislative frameworks on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities

| Country | Summary | Category | Subcategory A: target audiences | Subcategory B: what is recognised | Subcategory C: nature of the framework - incentive / binding |
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| Austria | <i>In Austria, every volunteer can receive a document that recognises his or her volunteering activities and skills according to the Volunteering Act. This document is delivered by the hosting organisation and is called the Austrian Volunteer Passport ("Freiwilligenpass"). However, the Higher Education Act does not mention volunteering. This means that student engagement is not linked in these two laws and thus not regulated.</i> | Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education | Sous-catégorie A3: Les volontaires spécifiquement | Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired | X |

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| Belgium | <i>The Flemish government is currently looking for solutions to better recognise the skills and abilities a young person can acquire through volunteering. A "Policy Plan Youth" (2014-2019) has been launched to this end ; it includes a digital portfolio (Oscar) that aims at highlighting all the skills developed through volunteering.</i> | Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education | Subcategory A3: The volunteers (broadly speaking) + Subcategory A2: Young people under the age of 30 | Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired | X |
| Bulgaria | <i>In Bulgaria there is no policy framework for the recognition of volunteering activities and the competences acquired in this context.</i> | Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities | X | X | X |
| Croatia | <i>In Croatia, since 2008 there is an incentive framework inviting higher education institutions to deliver a diploma supplement to their students engaged in extracurricular activities, including volunteering. However, not all universities do it and as far as ECTS credits are concerned, each university can choose to allocate or not these credits.</i> | Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular | Subcategory A1: The students | Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general | Subcategory C1: Incentive framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions |
| Cyprus | <i>Cyprus has no national policy for the recognition of youth engagement and the skills acquired in this context. However, the National Youth Strategy (2017-2022) mentions the need to institutionalise volunteering and promote it "inside and outside school/university".</i> | Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities | X | X | X |

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| <p>Czech Republic</p> | <p><i>Two laws were adopted in Czech Republic to provide a framework for the recognition of volunteering activities and the related skills: the "Act on verification and recognition of further education results" for the recognition of prior skills acquired through informal way, including volunteering, it is independent from higher education and it concerns all the population; and the "Act on Voluntary Service" to impose all hosting organisations to deliver a certificate to their volunteers.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Denmark</p> | <p><i>In Denmark, the "Kompetencemappe" is a digital file that allows a citizen to gather the skills he acquired in any context. It can include abilities acquired in the frame of a volunteering experience.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Estonia</p> | <p><i>In Estonia, "Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning" (APEL) is a programme that allows the recognition of professional and volunteering experiences as well as the related skills, within higher education curricula. Higher education institutions are responsible for the implementation of the APEL. For instance, skills acquired through volunteering can be validated with ECTS credits.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>Subcategory C1: Incentive framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |

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| <p>Finland</p> | <p>Finland's education system has a long history of recognizing skills and "Competence-based Qualifications" (CBQs). Legislations and policies such as the "Act on the National Framework for Qualifications and Other Learning", prepared in 2014, regulate the validation of non-formal and informal learnings.</p> <p>Moreover, initiatives such as the "Open Badge" of the "Ok study center" are emerging from private sector to formalise the skills acquired within an informal frame such as volunteering.</p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>Subcategory C2: Binding framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |
| <p>France</p> | <p><i>In France, since the 2017 Equality & Citizenship Law (article 29), all higher education institutions (HEI) have to implement a recognition system to recognise the experiences of engagement of their students and the related skills. It is a binding framework for HEI. Nevertheless the institutions can choose the modalities of recognition: ETCS credits allocated to students, a bonification system, exemption of attendance to some courses etc.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired</p> | <p>Subcategory C2: Binding framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |
| <p>Germany</p> | <p><i>In Germany, since 2011, the German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen für lebenslanges Lernen, DQR) establishes a framework to recognise the skills acquired through life. It can apply to all the population. Moreover, some universities have implemented on their own specific measures to recognise the engagement of their students such as the validation of ECTS credits.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |

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| <p>Greece</p> | <p><i>In Greece, there is no national policy framework for the recognition of volunteering activities nor the skills acquired in this context. However, there are laws to frame the validation of non-formal learnings. The country also started to think about informal learning validation, in particular within vocational training schools for students who have a professional activity.</i></p> <p><i>furthermore, some higher education institutions took the initiative to implement recognition measures.</i></p> | <p>Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Hungary</p> | <p><i>Students in Hungary can make their volunteering activities recognised and ask for ETCS credits, up to 5% of all the credits they need to graduate (Law "CCIV of 2011- On National Higher Education"). It is a binding framework for higher education institutions.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired</p> | <p>Subcategory C2: Binding framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |
| <p>Ireland</p> | <p><i>In Ireland, the "National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030" from 2011 recommends that higher education institutions recognise civic engagement, with "accreditation programmes" when it is appropriate. It is an incentive framework for the institutions. In this context, the Campus Engage National Network was created, with the 7 Irish Universities and the Dublin Institute of Technology, to promote civic and community engagement. Thus, Irish universities have been implementing recognition measures.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired</p> | <p>Subcategory C1: Incentive framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |

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| <p>Italy</p> | <p>In Italy, there is a national system of validation since 2013 and the decree on the "National competences certification and validation of non-formal and informal learning". It allows up to a complete qualification equivalent to qualifications accessible through formal education. It is independent from higher education. Nevertheless, some initiatives have been launched. For instance, the Italian University Network for Lifelong Learning (RUIAP) brings together about thirty universities that promote lifelong learning.</p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Latvia</p> | <p><i>Latvia has no policy framework for the recognition of volunteering activities at a national level. That said, the European tools Youthpass and Europass are well established.</i></p> | <p>Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Lithuania</p> | <p><i>In Lithuania, the Law on Volunteering from 2011 encourages the recognition of student volunteering activities as "practical work and/or learning experience" (art.12) within the curricula of higher education institutions (HEI). It is an incentive framework for HEI which can decide the measures of recognition. However, such recognition within the curricula has not been implemented in every HEIs.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired</p> | <p>Subcategory C1: Incentive framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |

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| <p>Luxembourg</p> | <p><i>In Luxembourg, there are two schemes to enhance the value of volunteering experiences: the Certificate of participation, for young people under 30; and the 2010 Grand Ducal Regulation which includes a procedure for the validation of acquired experience (VAE), including the experience acquired in an informal context such as volunteering. The VAE can be applied if a person did a total of 5,000 hours of voluntary activities over three years. It allows a (partial) equivalence of a diploma outside the university framework. There is no specific scheme for students.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A2: Young people under the age of 30</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Malta</p> | <p><i>In Malta, the 2012 'Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning Regulations' makes it possible to recognise formally and certify the skills acquired through informal and non-formal learning activities. However, it is independant from higher education institutions (HEIs).</i></p> <p><i>HEIs can decide to recognise volunteering activities with ECTS credits. Some HEIs signed agreements with NGOs to offer them the possibility to develop optional programs for the students.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |

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| <p>The Netherlands</p> | <p><i>In the Netherlands there is no national policy framework on the recognition of volunteering experiences and the related skills. The validation of prior learning can only happen in higher vocational education, not in universities, except for the Open University that provides online courses. Furthermore, the government recognises the use of the tool Youthpass.</i></p> | <p>Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Poland</p> | <p><i>In Poland, there is no national policy framework regarding the recognition of volunteering experiences. However, since 2011, the country has been looking for options to encourage volunteering recognition within the frame of the "Long-Term Policy for the Development of Volunteering in Poland".</i></p> | <p>Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Portugal</p> | <p><i>In Portugal, the "Recognition, Validation and Certification of Skills" is adressed to people over 18 and aims at formalising all the skills acquired both through non-formal and informal learning. The main purpose is to find an equivalent diploma for people with few or no "formal" qualifications.</i></p> <p><i>Universities can decide on their if they want to implement recognition measures.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>X</p> |

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| <p>Romania</p> | <p><i>In Romania, the Act on Adult education allows certified training providers to evaluate the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in any way, including volunteering activities. Besides, since 2014 and the Act on Volunteering, hosting organisation can deliver a certificate of the learnings acquired through volunteering. However, such recognition is rarely used within formal education.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A4: The entire population + Subcategory A3: The volunteers (broadly speaking)</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general + B1 L'expérience d'engagement / de volontariat et / ou les compétences acquises</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Slovakia</p> | <p><i>In Slovakia, there is no policy framework for the recognition of volunteering. However, in 2017, the online tool D-Skills was set up to recognise skills gained by volunteers, within the Matej Bel University de Banská Bystrica. Volunteers can record and prove the skills they acquired during their experience.</i></p> | <p>Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>Slovenia</p> | <p><i>In Slovenia, the New National Programme for Higher Education 2011–2020 (Resolucija o Nacionalnem programu visokega šolstva) promotes the recognition of the skills acquired through informal education, including volunteering, by higher education institutions or vocation training centers. ECTS credits can be allocated to the students to recognise the related skills. It is an incentive framework for the institutions.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B2: Informal and non-formal learnings in general</p> | <p>Subcategory C1: Incentive framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |

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| <p>Spain</p> | <p><i>In Spain, the 2015 law on volunteering makes it possible for higher education institutions to implement recognition measures. It is an incentive framework. Also, it stipulates that the volunteers can ask the organisations where they engaged themselves a certificate highlighting their missions.</i></p> <p><i>Moreover, some autonomous regions such as Andalusia signed agreements with state universities to promote volunteering.</i></p> | <p>Category 1: Policy framework on the recognition of student engagement in non-profit activities, for higher education in particular</p> | <p>Subcategory A1: The students</p> | <p>Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired</p> | <p>Subcategory C1: Incentive framework for student engagement recognition within higher education institutions</p> |
| <p>Sweden</p> | <p><i>In Sweden, there is no policy framework for the recognition of volunteering. However the Swedish Commission on Validation was created in 2015 to reflect on implementing a recognition system for skills acquired outside the formal educational system. In 2017, there was still no concrete measures implemented.</i></p> | <p>Category 3: No policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> |
| <p>United Kingdom</p> | <p><i>In the United Kingdom, people who have performed a National Citizen Service receive a certification. In particular, they can be helped to value their new skills when they apply to university.</i></p> | <p>Category 2: Other policy framework on the recognition of engagement in non-profit activities independent from higher education</p> | <p>Subcategory A3: The volunteers (broadly speaking)</p> | <p>Subcategory B1: The experience of engagement / volunteering and/or the skills acquired</p> | <p>X</p> |