Potential synergies between European instruments promoting lifelong learning

Reykjavik 09.12.2011

VIRKE™
HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

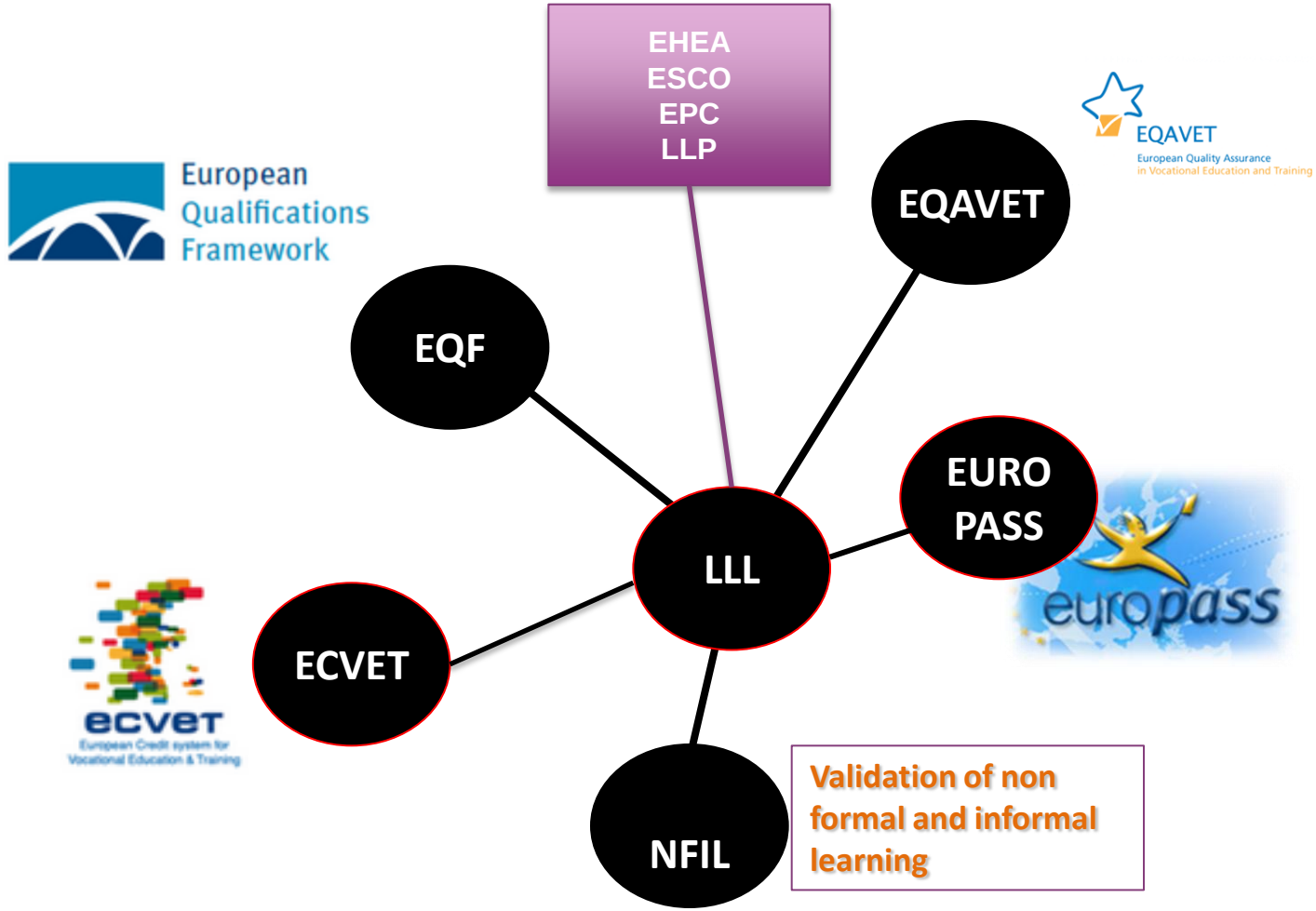
Underlying principles for all instruments

- Lifelong learning

- Mobility
- Transparency
- Permeability

- Quality assurance
- Learning outcomes

Potential synergies between european instruments



VIRKE HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

European instruments

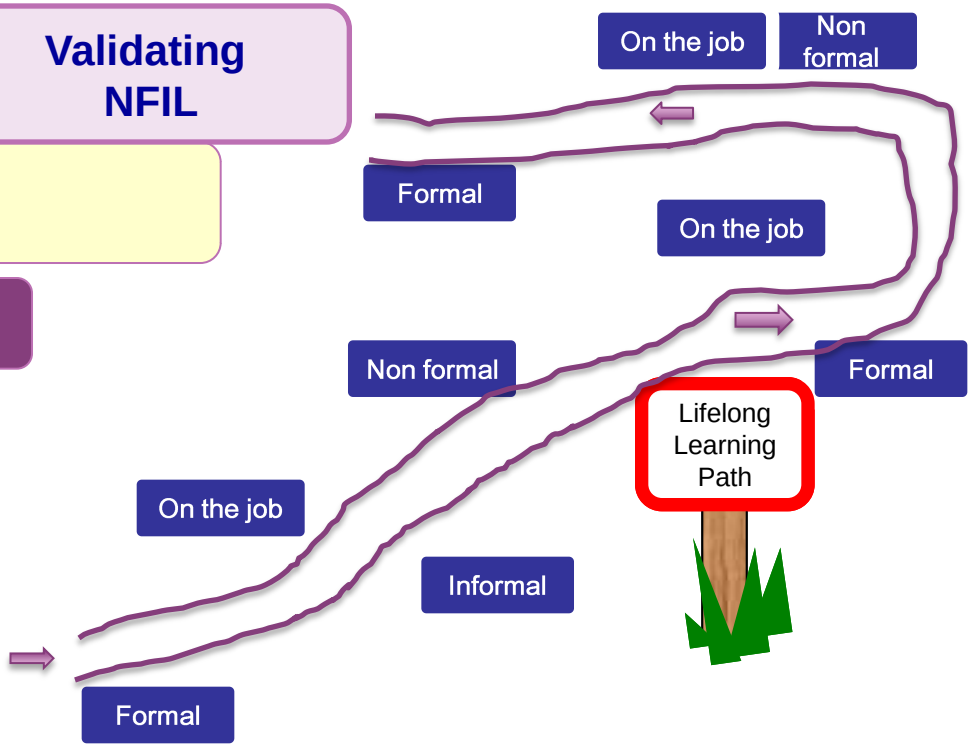
- **EQF**: Recommendation. Reference framework. Qualifications, levels, learning outcomes
- **ECVET**: Recommendation. Technical framework. Units of qualifications (learning outcomes), transfer/accumulation/recognition, credit points,
- **EQARF**: Recommendation. Reference framework. Criteria, descriptors, indicators
- **EQAVET**: Community of practice based on EQARF
- **EUROPASS**: 5 documents. Self-assessment by individuals or providers
- **NFIL**: Validation of non-formal/informal learning. European Guidelines.

The individuals perspective

europass | ECVET, ECTS | NQF/EQF | Validating NFIL

Learning outcomes
Knowledge, skills, competence

Lifelong guidance and counselling



VIRKE HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

Policy context

- Europe 2020 Strategy
- Education & Training 2020; ”Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training”
- A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy
- European Employment Strategy / Agenda for new skills and jobs
- Modernising Higher Education
- Bologna process

Europe 2020 Strategy

- **Smart growth**
  - an economy based on knowledge and innovation requires:
    - **improving the quality of education;**
    - **knowledge transfer;**
    - **openness and relevance of education systems by building national qualification frameworks;**
    - **better gearing learning outcomes towards labour market needs**
- **Sustainable growth**
  - future skill needs; ”skills for green jobs”
- **Inclusive growth**
  - implementation of lifelong learning principles; flexicurity

Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (”ET 2020”)

- Significant progress being made:
  - in support of national reforms of lifelong learning;
  - the modernisation of higher education;
  - the development of common European instruments promoting quality, transparency and mobility;

- Strategic objectives:
  - Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
  - Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

A new impetus for European Cooperation in VET

- IVET as an attractive learning option with high relevance to labour market needs and pathways to higher education;
  - Flexible systems based on the recognition of learning outcomes and supporting individual learning pathways;
  - Cross-border mobility as an integral part of VET practices;
  - Recognition of the mobility training experience has to be ensured through the use of ECVET;
- *Validation of non-formal and informal learning provides pathways for up-skilling and reintegration of people to the labour market. The adoption of an outcome-based approach for vocational qualifications, as promoted by the EQF and ECVET, is key to achieving this*;
- By 2020, systematic use of EQF, ECVET and Europass aimed at transparency of qualifications and portability of learning outcomes

An agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment

- Improving access to lifelong learning;
  - these pathways should also allow for the validation of non-formal and informal learning and be based on learning outcomes, as well as the integration of learning and career guidance systems
- Enhancing geographical mobility throughout th EU;
  - the recognition of mobility experiences
- Key actions – skills upgrading and matching:
  - By 2012, complete in all European languages the European Skills, Competences and Occupations classification (ESCO), as a shared interface between the worlds of employment, education and training
- Accompanying and preparatory measures:
  - In 2011, propose a Council Recommendation on the identification, recording and **validation of competences** gained outside of formal education and training, including in particular a **European Skills Passport** to help individuals record and present the skills aquired throughout their life.

Higher education

- EU-process: Modernising higher education
- Develop clear progression routes from vocational and other education types into higher education. An effective way to achieve this is through national qualification frameworks linked to the EQF and based on learning outcomes, and through clear procedures for recognising learning and experience gained outside formal education and training.
- European Higher Education Area (EHEA): Bologna-process (49 countries)
- As the main objective of the Bologna Process since its inception in 1999, the EHEA was meant to ensure more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe.

- ”Comprehensive national qualifications frameworks referenced to the EQF will help permeability between VET and HE: the highest levels of qualifications frameworks should cover both sectors, with strong convergence between ECTS and ECVET systems.”

- EUA (European University Association): Charter on Lifelong Learning

VIRKE
HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

ESCO; European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations

- Develop a European classification linking skills/competences, qualifications and occupations;
- Constructed by three interrelated pillars;
- Building a bridge between labour markets and the world of education and training;
- Coupled with the new approach of output measurement of educational attainment based on the EQF;
- ESCO will provide a rich resource to allow mobile jobseekers to identify skills and comptences that are transferable;
- Taxonomy; currently the ocupations pillar of ESCO contains around 5000 terms per language, each one describing one occupation. Translated into 22 languages.

The European Professional Card

- Initiative within the ”Modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive” agenda
- Review of the scope of regulated professions. Currently the MS regulate around 4.700 professions on the basis of a professional qualification;
- The notion of regulated education could be extended to encompass any education and training recognised by a Member State and relevant to a profession. The Europass Diploma Supplement or the European Certificate Supplement could be used by training institutions to give information on the contents and objectives of the relevant programmes;

ECVET – and potential synergies

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Host provider

Sending provider

Learning agreement

The individual acquires KSC

The learning outcomes are assessed

Learning outcomes are recognised and accumulated as part of the intended qualification, corresponding ECVET points are included

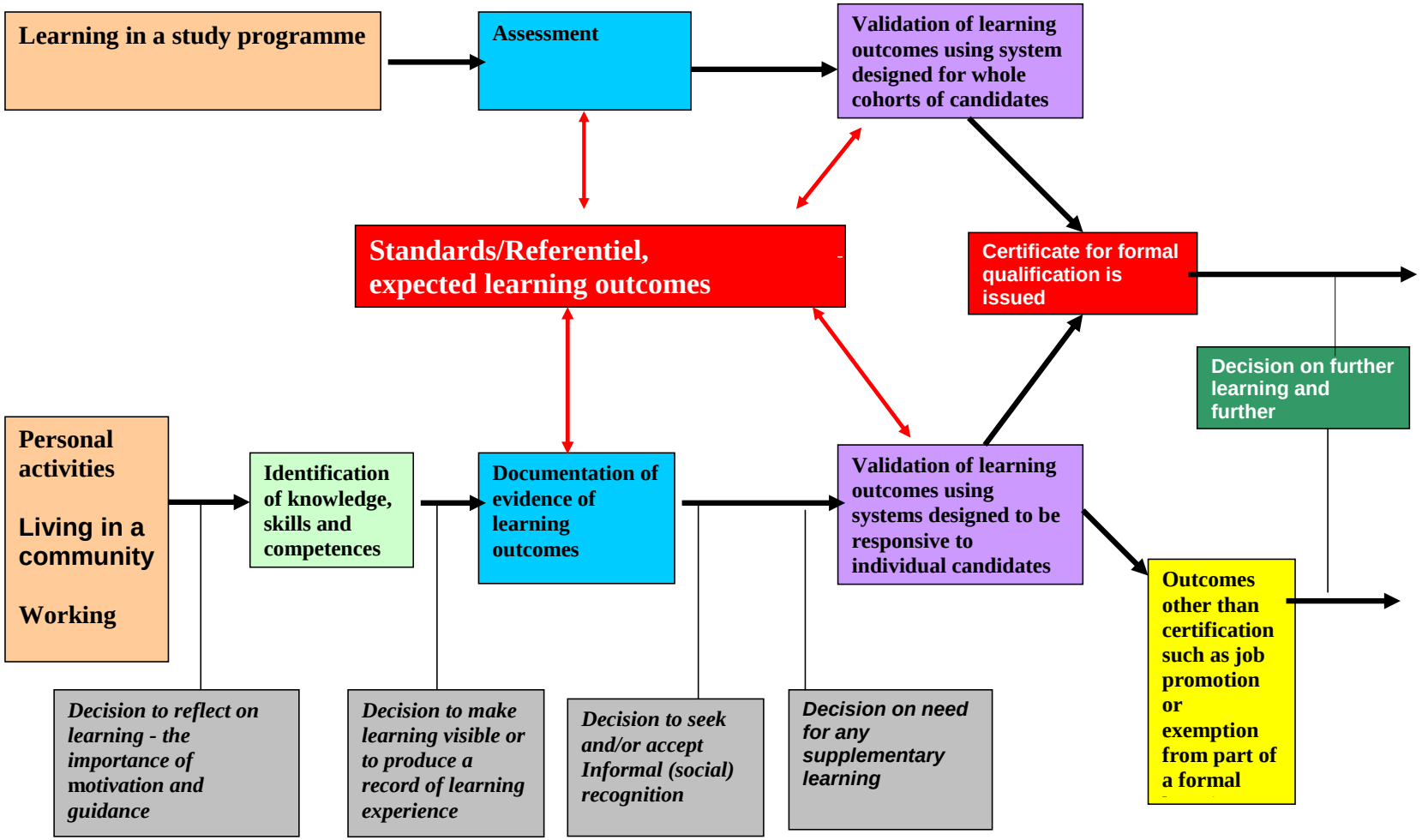
Credit is validated

Credit is awarded for the individual learning outcomes achieved

Learner's credit in a individual transcript of record

VIRKE HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

Validation of non-formal/informal learning (NFIL)



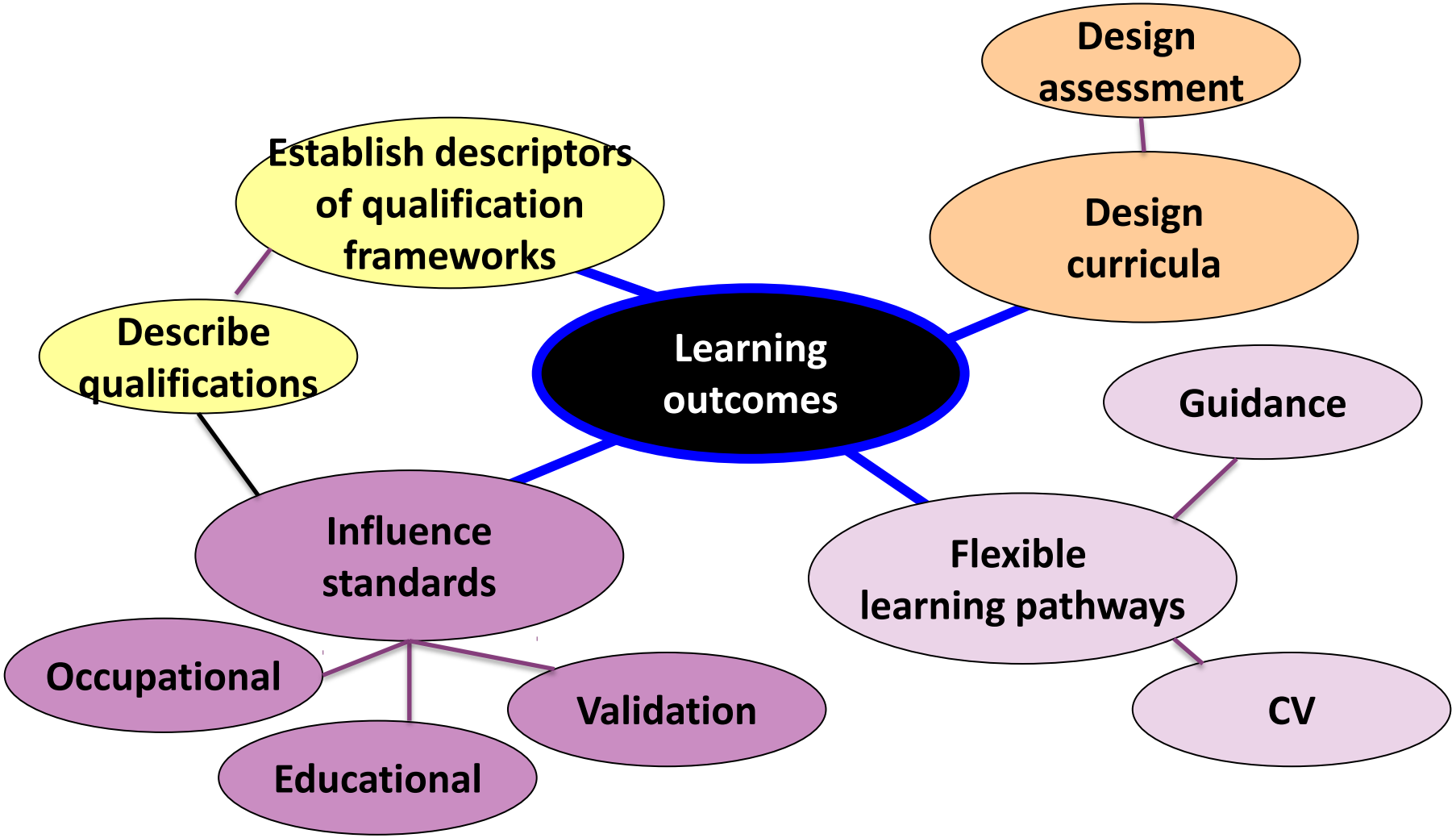
VIRKE HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

Quality assurance

- **EQF:**
- Common Principles for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training in the context of the EQF

- **EQARF:**
- Quality Criteria and Indicative Descriptors
- Reference set of selected quality indicators for assessing quality in VET

Learning outcomes impact



The quality circle and learning outcomes – a link?

EU Quality Assurance
in Vocational Education & Training

VIRKE
HOVEDORGANISASJONEN

Potential synergies - The scope of change

- Broadening the understanding of qualifications
- Cultural change; it’s not about ticking boxes or producing reports but a change in mindsets
- Developing expertice; trainers and teachers
- Information and transfer; community of practice
- From linking to integrating; mainstreaming the tools
- The implementation direction; from EU to national or from national to EU

- Closing the gap between policy papers and practical experiences

Thank you for the attention !

t.skjerve@virke.no

VIRKE™
HOVEDORGANISASJONEN