Newsletter

Issue 5 – July 2021

"Making childminders´ competencies visible"

1. Introduction

In the previous ValChild newsletters the main topics were:

Issue 1: Introducing the ValChild project

Issue 2: The ValChild Model

Issue 3: The ValChild competence profile and the ValChild toolbox with ready to use instruments and operational and reliable validation procedures

Issue 4: Introducing the recommendations and certification scheme (Output 3 of the ValChild project).

In this 5th and final newsletter,

- The impact of ValChild.
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Position Paper

2. Impact of ValChild

The testing process was carried out with the aim to assess and validate the value and effectiveness of the VALCHILD tools and materials and was gathered during small-scale webinars and online workshops in Ireland, France, and Portugal. It gave useful feedback for the optimisation and revision of the materials and the toolbox itself. In total 139 participants attended the 6 events and responded to assessment tools by different target groups, including childminders, organization staff, invited

academics and other validation experts.

Partners decided to use different tools, such as interviews and evaluation forms, in order to gather and assess the feedback provided by participants.

Main findings:

- In terms of <u>relevance</u>: The VALCHILD toolbox and certification scheme demonstrates a comprehensive representation of childminders' competences, displays the professional perspective of the occupation, acknowledges personal relevance, raises awareness of a broader spectrum of childminders' competences, constitutes a good tool for self-reflection.

- In terms of <u>usability</u>: The VALCHILD toolbox and certification scheme was characterized "fantastic", "clear", "easy to follow", "with clear structure". Moreover, it enables childminders to become aware of what they know and which areas to improve.

- In terms of t<u>ransferability</u>: All of participants agreed upon the idea that the VALCHILD toolbox and certification, if existed, scheme could be relevant and useful for European childminders.

Summary of the findings

The assessment's findings confirmed the usability of the VALCHILD tools, verifying that both childminders and validation experts find the results useful for the improvement of the sector while

overall, very positive feedback was received from the participants.

3. ValChild Memorandum of Understanding

The project developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to involve the partners of the ValChild project and validation stakeholders, such as local/ regional/ national qualification agencies and training entities, in:

- the endorsement of VALCHILD validation outcomes,

- an intention to use and/or further develop the VALCHILD line of reasoning in the context of own activities.

You can support our work and strengthen the quality in Childminding by mailing us, stating that you support the Memorandum. The more people / organisations supporting the outcomes of ValChild, the stronger the voice is to integrate the outcomes, partly or as a whole, in the different countries in Europe and in Europe as a whole.

The Memorandum of Understanding can be found at: https://www.valchild.eu/outputs/

The outcomes of the ValChild project are described in the following documents:

VALCHILD assessment and validation toolbox
(in EN, EL, NL, FR, PT)

VALCHILD recommendations and certification scheme
(in EN, EL, NL, FR, PT)

4. ValChild position paper

VALCHILD project strongly makes recommendation to the EU institutions, relevant public authorities, social partners, and stakeholders from EU member states, to **facilitate the recognition of childminders' competences as a result of** the **validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNIL). The results/outcomes of the ValChild project are:**

1. Procedures of Validation of Prior Learning existing in partners' countries

2. Qualification profile of a childminder (EQF-3)

3. The VALCHILD procedure of VPL – 5 steps

4. Tools for Validation of Prior Learning

5. Practical examination framework and processes

6. Profile of the validation practitioner

To do so, **VALCHILD proposes the following key recommendations**:

1. Make use of the **strength of the European diversity** in qualifications, VPL-systems and phases in development of VPL by using a **modular system** (in the qualification profile, the validation procedure, validation instruments, accreditation): **a core** that everyone can accept and use **and freedom to adapt around the core** to fit into the national, branch, educational VPL-systems and procedures.

2. The promotion of **relevant qualifications adapted** to the needs of childminders, the families, and the labour market.

3. It is crucial to fully recognize **non-formal and informal learning** achievements of childminders. It is also crucial to extend this recognition with all childminding related activities in previous formal education.

4. The **facilitation to VNIL'** access, as a result of:

   i. The implementation of the **"centrality of the individual"** principle, since validation aims at empowering candidates,
   ii. The implementation of the **"no validation without guidance"**, a key for success within VNIL processes which are often long and complex,
   iii. A network of **trained and professional validation practitioners**.

5. **Employed and self-employed childminders are encouraged to exploit** VALCHILD assessment tools for measuring competences and widening employment opportunities.

6. Childminding practitioners are encouraged to use **VALCHILD tools for self-evaluation** with a plan to upskill and establish access to further education and training.
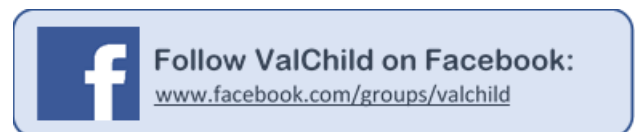
Partners:

7. The **promotion of costs-efficiency and affordability,** in order to ensure sustainability in the long-term.

8. The **recognition of the qualifications obtained as a result of VNIL, which in several countries are not equal to the qualifications in the NQF or they are not enjoying/ holding the same value or appreciation.**

9. The inclusion of the alternative assessment **approach within VNIL mechanisms**, considering the importance of soft skills and some essential practical competences

10. **The national certification agencies and validation bodies, involvement of employers, trade unions**, so as to ensure the relevance of the validation process and facilitate employment and professional career development and to be motivated to recognise knowledge, competences and skills by employing or inspiring from the VALCHILD certification scheme.

11. EU policy makers should **take into account VALCHILD results in the European policies**, particularly Council recommendation on validation (2012), New skills agenda (2016) and Council recommendation on upskilling pathways (2016).

This is the last ValChild newsletter.
The project ends on 31.07.2021.

It was a great pleasure being part of this project and it is great to experience that (part of) the results have already been adopted.

Let us stay in contact through the media platform:

Follow ValChild on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/groups/valchild

www.valchild.eu

ValChild Partners

1. Early Childhood Ireland (ECI Ireland)- project coordinator

2. Hellenic Society for the promotion of Research & Development (PROMEA, Greece)

3. Foundation European Centre for Valuation Prior Learning (EC-VPL, The Netherlands)

4. French Institute for the professionalization of family employment (IPERIA L'INSTITUT, France)

5. Instituto Universitário de Ciências Psicológicas, Sociais e da Vida (ISPA, Portugal)

Partners: