

Terms of Reference
for
data collection for tracer study of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programmes

Lead Office: ILO DWT/CO-Budapest
Duration: Estimated x working days between May – June
Target County: Moldova

Background and rationale

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that evaluates and formally acknowledges the knowledge, skills, and competencies individuals have acquired outside the formal education system. This includes learning gained through work experience, non-formal and informal education, or other life activities. Through RPL, individuals can obtain official recognition—such as qualifications or academic credits—for what they already know and can do.

RPL offers several significant benefits:

- **Increased Access to Education:** It enables individuals to enter formal education pathways by recognizing previously acquired competencies, thus avoiding redundant coursework.
- **Enhanced Employability:** By validating informal and experiential learning, RPL improves job prospects and career advancement opportunities.
- **Cost and Time Efficiency:** RPL reduces the time and financial resources required to complete formal education or training.
- **Promotion of Lifelong Learning:** It fosters a culture of continuous learning by recognizing learning beyond formal institutions.
- **Social Inclusion:** RPL supports inclusion by providing recognition for people from diverse backgrounds, particularly those with limited access to formal education.

In Moldova, RPL is still in a developmental stage, but substantial progress has been made. The Ministry of Education and Research (MER), in collaboration with international partners, has piloted several initiatives under the framework of validating non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL), which is synonymous with RPL. Key developments include:

- **Pilot Programs (2019–2021):** Initial pilots tested the operational and institutional frameworks for RPL.
- **Focus on Returning Migrants:** Special attention was given to returning migrants, with efforts to recognize skills acquired abroad and facilitate labour market reintegration.
- **Policy Alignment with EU Standards:** Implementation efforts have sought to align with European RPL practices, and lessons learned from the pilots have informed ongoing improvements.

To better understand the medium- to long-term outcomes of these efforts, the ILO project ‘Inclusive and productive employment in Moldova’ has hired a consultant (Mr Radu

Moldovanu) to undertake a tracer study of the RPL system in the country and evaluate the career outcome tracker for participants, particularly in relation to securing employment, advancing career opportunities, pursuing further education, and exploring alternative work trajectories, including migration.

2. ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Objectives

To support the consultant in interviewing program beneficiaries and compiling relevant data, the project will engage a data collection company (hereinafter referred to as “the supplier”) to implement the fieldwork component of the tracer study. Data collection will be conducted using structured tracer study questionnaires developed by the consultant. In addition, the consultant will provide methodological guidance, define sampling criteria, and supply quality assurance tools to ensure the reliability and consistency of the data gathered.

The key objective of the assignment is to gather quantitative and qualitative data (clients’ satisfaction) on the experiences with the RPL process and, in particular, the employment and career outcomes of individuals who have participated in the RPL process. The focus of the research is to understand what happened after the RPL experience – if participants were able to find a job, progress in their career, increase their earnings and how useful they found the RPL experience. The collected data will contribute to a broader analysis of Moldova’s RPL framework and provide actionable insights to inform future strategies aimed at promoting lifelong learning, employability, and labour market inclusion.

2.2. Deliverables

The service provider is responsible for the following deliverables:

1. Pre-test the developed questionnaires with a sample of 10 beneficiaries from the target groups: (i) unemployed individuals registered with the National Employment Agency (ANOFM) who participate in active labour market measures in accordance with Article 35 of Law No. 105/2018 on the promotion of employment and unemployment insurance; and (ii) individuals who have completed RPL processes in Centres of Excellence and other RPL providers, regardless of their current employment status. The pre-test should also assess respondents' satisfaction with the RPL process. The questionnaires to be used are included in Annexes A1 and A2.
2. Provide recommendations for potential revision to specific questions and assist in finalizing the questionnaires;
3. Data collection along with primary data analysis

2.3. Description of the deliverables:

Deliverable 1 involves the testing with questionnaire group(s) - pre-testing and questionnaire completion.

Deliverable 2 involves the finalization of the questionnaire’ development.

Deliverable 3 involves the data collection accompanied by primary data analysis

2.4. Timeline of activities

Tasks	Estimated number of days
1. Pre-test the developed questionnaires for the target group	x days
2. Revision of the questions and assist in finalizing the questionnaires	x days
3. Pilot test survey team(s)- pre-testing and finalization of the questionnaires embedding the feedback on the preliminary questionnaire design in the final questionnaire.	x day
4. Data collection along with primary data analysis.	x days
5. Preparation of the final technical report with the main findings of the evaluation.	x days

3. Terms and duration of the assignment:

The assignment under this ToRs will be May-June.

3.1. Specific tasks:

- Performing this assignment, the Service Provider will:
 1. ensure full compliance with relevant data protection regulations;
 2. maintain accurate records of the data collection process, ensuring transparency and traceability of the work;
 3. ensure that informed consent is obtained from participants before collecting their personal data. Explain the purpose of data collection, how the data will be used, and the rights of the participants regarding their data;
 4. implement robust security measures to protect personal data against unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, or destruction;

4. Required Qualifications

The service provider should meet the following criteria:

- **Proven experience in applied research in the labour market**, particularly in data collection and analysis related to employment, non-formal education, and recognition of prior learning (RPL) processes.
- **Strong understanding of tracer study methodologies**, learning outcome evaluations, and labour market integration.
- **Expertise in both quantitative and qualitative data analysis**, including proficiency with statistical tools and the ability to produce analytical reports.
- **Experience working with vulnerable or diverse groups**, such as returning migrants, unemployed individuals, or persons with limited access to formal education.
- **Excellent communication and interpersonal skills**, especially for conducting interviews with beneficiaries and collaborating closely with the project consultant.
- **Proven ability to draft and adapt official materials**, including support in testing and refining research tools (e.g., questionnaires).

- **Demonstrated capacity to carry out small- to medium-scale fieldwork**, in line with ethical standards and quality assurance procedures.
- **Fluency in Romanian is required**; working knowledge of Russian is considered an asset to ensure effective communication with all respondents.

5. Application Process

Qualified and interested service providers are invited to submit the following documents in English:

1. Organizational profile and/or CVs of key personnel, demonstrating relevant experience in labour market research, data collection, and evaluation, particularly related to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or similar areas.
2. Technical proposal (maximum 3 pages), outlining:
 - The proposed approach and methodology for implementing the assignment;
 - Workplan and timeline;
 - Quality assurance measures to ensure data reliability and validity;
 - Description of the team's structure and division of responsibilities.
3. Detailed financial proposal, including a breakdown of all costs (e.g., pre-testing, data collection, analysis, reporting), clearly indicating the total cost of the assignment.
4. Relevant sample(s) of previous work, such as tracer study reports, data collection tools, or summaries of survey-based research.

All application materials must be submitted electronically to vrabie@ilo.org no later than May, 16th, 2025, with the subject line: *Application – RPL Tracer Study Data Collection*.

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to provide additional information before final selection.

ANNEX A.1 - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED PERSONS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE RPL PROGRAMME

1. What is your current status on the labour market?

- Employed by a company / entity. Please specify
- Self-employed / Freelancer
- Unemployed
- Other type of activity. Please specify

2. **How long after completing the competency certification activities (your participation in the programme) organized by NEA did you manage to get employed?**
 - Immediately
 - Within 1-3 months
 - Within 4-6 months
 - After more than 6 months
 - I am still not employed
3. **If you are employed, what type of contractual relationship do you currently have?**
 - Permanent employment contract
 - Fixed-term employment contract
 - Service provision contract
 - Informal employment
 - Self-employed (informal)
4. **If you are employed, does your current job match the field of activities completed through the NEA certification/RPL programme?**
 - Yes, it matches
 - Partially matches
 - Does not match
5. **If you are employed, did the certification/ RPL programme organized by NEA help you obtain a job with a higher salary than previous jobs?**
 - Yes
 - No
 - No difference
6. **Did you receive job offers after participating in the ANOFM competency certification program?**
 - Yes
 - No
7. **If yes, how many? ____**
8. **Did you benefit from career counseling within the NEA competency certification programme?**
 - Yes
 - No
9. **If yes, was it helpful?**
 - Yes
 - No

10. Do you feel you received enough support (guidance) from NEA to understand the benefits of successfully completing the competency certification programme?

- Yes
- No

11. Do you feel you received enough support (guidance) from NEA to understand how the competency certification programme works?

- Always
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

12. Before participating in the certification process through NEA, did you work in the field in which you were assessed?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you hold a professional qualification in the field in which you were assessed through the NEA certification system?

- Yes
- No

14. Do you believe the NEA certification program improved your employability (attractiveness to employers)?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

15. Do you believe the NEA certification program improved your chances of career advancement in the future?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

16. Did the NEA certification program motivate you to further develop your professional skills (e.g., to obtain an additional specialization or higher qualification)?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

17. Have you enrolled or do you plan to enroll in an additional education or training program?

- Already enrolled
- Plan to enroll
- No

18. What challenges did you face in finding a job after completing the competency certification activities through NEA? (Open-ended or multiple choice)

- Lack of relevant job opportunities
- Lack of professional qualifications required by employers
- Unattractive salary
- Unattractive working conditions
- Job offers from abroad
- Other reason (please specify)

19. How satisfied are you with your current professional situation?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

20. Are you considering working abroad?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

21. Would you recommend the NEA certification programme to colleagues or acquaintances?

- Definitely yes
- Probably yes
- Probably not
- Definitely not

22. What suggestions do you have for improving the NEA competency certification program? (Open-ended)

ANNEX A.2 - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PERSONS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE RPL PROGRAMME

- 1. Through which institution/company did you participate in the RPL programme?**
- 2. What is your current status on the labour market?**

- Employed by a company/entity. Please specify
- Self-employed / Freelancer
- Unemployed

- Other type of activity. Please specify
3. **Before participating in the certification system, were you employed?**
- Yes
 - No
 - Self-employed
4. **Before your involvement in the certification system, were you employed in the field in which you were assessed?**
- Yes
 - No
5. **Do you hold a professional qualification in the field in which you participated in the certification of acquired skills?**
- Yes
 - No
6. **Did the certification programme and the acquired skills helped you find a (new) job?**
- Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable, I was not looking for a (new) job
7. **Did the certification of informally and non-formally acquired skills help you advance professionally?**
- Yes
 - No
 - Not yet
8. **What was your main motivation for participating in the certification of informally and non-formally acquired skills?**
- Employment prospects
 - Promotion prospects
 - Continuing studies
 - Personal development
 - Other reason (please specify)
9. **How satisfied are you, in general, with the certification system of informally and non-formally acquired skills?**
- Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied

10. Do you believe the assessment accurately reflected your skills and experience?

- Yes
- No

11. Have you used the document obtained as a result of the certification of informally and non-formally acquired skills to apply for jobs or for professional promotion?

- Yes
- No

12. Was the document obtained through the certification of informally and non-formally acquired skills recognized by your employer / potential new employers?

- Fully recognized
- Partially recognized
- Not recognized

13. Are you considering moving abroad to make use of your certified skills?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

14. What benefits did you gain after completing the certification process of informally and non-formally acquired skills?

- Employment
- Promotion to a better position within the company
- Access to a job that couldn't be performed before certification
- Salary increase
- Better working conditions
- Others (please specify)

15. Do you believe you received enough support (guidance) to understand how the certification process of informally and non-formally acquired skills works?

- Yes
- No

Mai jos se află cele două chestionare în varianta română, care vor fi utilizate pentru interviewarea beneficiarilor.

ANEXA A 1. CHESTIONAREA PERSOANELOR ȘOMERE ÎNREGISTRATE LA ANOFM CARE AU PARTICIPAT LA CERTIFICAREA CUNOȘTINȚELOR ȘI A COMPETENȚELOR DOBÎNDITE ÎN CONTEXTE DE EDUCAȚIE NONFORMALĂ ȘI INFORMALĂ

1. Care este statutul dvs. actual pe piața muncii?

- Angajat la companie. Angajat în cadrul unei entități. De specificat
- Lucrător independent. Freelancer
- Șomer
- Alt tip de activitate. De specificat.

2. Cât timp după finalizarea activităților de certificare a competențelor organizate de ANOFM ați reușit să vă angajați?

- Imediat
- În 1-3 luni
- În 4-6 luni
- După mai mult de 6 luni
- Încă nu sunt angajat

3. Dacă sunteți angajat, ce tip de relație contractuală aveți în prezent?

- Contract de angajare pe durată nedeterminată
- Contract de angajare pe durată determinată
- Contract de prestări de servicii
- Angajat informal
- Angajat informal

4. Dacă sunteți angajat, corespunde locul dvs. de muncă actual cu domeniul activităților pe care le-ați finalizat prin intermediul sistemului de certificare a competențelor organizat de ANOFM?

- Da, corespunde
- Parțial corespunde
- Nu corespunde

5. Dacă sunteți angajat, v-au ajutat activitățile de certificare a competențelor organizate de ANOFM să obțineți un loc de muncă cu un salariu mai mare decât la locurile de muncă anterioare?

- Da
- Nu
- Nicio diferență

6. Ați primit oferte de muncă după participarea la programul de certificare a competențelor organizat de ANOFM?

- Da
- Nu

7. Dacă da, câte? ____

8. Ați beneficiat de consiliere profesională în cadrul programului ANOFM de certificare a competențelor?

- Da
- Nu

9. Dacă da, v-a fost de ajutor?

- Da
- Nu

10. Considerați că ați primit suficient sprijin (ghidare) din partea ANOFM pentru a înțelege beneficiile finalizării cu succes a programului de certificare a competențelor?

- Da
- Nu

11. Considerați că ați primit suficient sprijin (ghidare) din partea ANOFM pentru a înțelege cum funcționează programul de certificare a competențelor?

- Întotdeauna
- Frecvent
- Ocazional
- Rar
- Niciodată

12. Înainte de a participa la procesul de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM, ați lucrat vreodată în domeniul în care ați fost evaluat?

- Da
- Nu

13. Dețineți o calificare profesională în domeniul în care ați fost evaluat prin sistemul ANOFM de certificare a competențelor?

- Da
- Nu

14. Credeți că programul de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM v-a îmbunătățit capacitatea de angajare (atractivitatea pentru angajatori de a vă angaja)?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

15. Credeți că programul de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM v-a îmbunătățit șansele de a avansa în cariera profesională în viitor?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

16. V-a oferit programul de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM motivația de a vă dezvolta în continuare competențele profesionale în viitor (de exemplu, pentru a obține o specializare profesională suplimentară sau o calificare superioară)?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

17. V-ați înscris sau intenționați să vă înscrieți la un program suplimentar de educație sau formare?

- Deja înscris
- Intenționez să mă înscriu
- Nu

18. Cu ce provocări v-ați confruntat în căutarea unui loc de muncă după finalizarea activităților de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM? (răspuns deschis sau alegere multiplă)

- Lipsa oportunităților de angajare relevante
- Lipsa calificărilor profesionale solicitate de angajatori
- Salariu neatractiv
- Condiții de muncă neatractive
- Oferte de muncă în străinătate
- Alt motiv (vă rugăm să specificați)

19. Cât de mulțumit sunteți de situația dvs. profesională actuală?

- Foarte mulțumit
- Mulțumit
- Nemulțumit

- Foarte nemulțumit

20. Luați în considerare posibilitatea de a lucra în străinătate

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

21. Ați recomanda programul de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM colegilor sau cunoscuților?

- Cu siguranță da
- Probabil da
- Probabil nu
- Cu siguranță nu

22. Care ar fi sugestiile Dvs pentru îmbunătățirea programului de certificare a competențelor prin ANOFM? *Răspuns deschis*

ANEXA A.2 CHESTIONAREA PERSOANELOR CARE AU PARTICIPAT LA CERTIFICAREA CUNOȘTIINȚELOR ȘI A COMPETENȚELOR DOBÎNDITE ÎN CONTEXTE DE EDUCAȚIE NONFORMALĂ ȘI INFORMALĂ

1. Prin care instituție/companie ați participat la procesul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal?

2. Care este statutul dvs. actual pe piața muncii?

- Angajat la companie. Angajat la o entitate. De specificat
- Lucrător independent. Freelancer
- Șomer
- Alt tip de activitate. De specificat.

3. Înainte de a participa la sistemul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal, erați angajat?

- Da
- Nu
- Lucram pe cont propriu

4. Înainte de implicarea în cadrul sistemului de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal, erați angajat în domeniul pentru care ați fost evaluat?

- Da
- Nu

5. Dețineți o calificare profesională în domeniul în care ați participat la certificarea competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal ?

- Da
- Nu

6. V-a ajutat certificarea competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal să găsiți un (nou) loc de muncă?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu este cazul, nu am căutat un (nou) loc de muncă

7. Certificarea competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal v-a ajutat să avansați profesional?

- Da
- Nu
- Încă nu

8. Care a fost principala dvs. motivație pentru a participa la certificarea competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal?

- Perspectiva de angajare
- Perspectiva de promovare
- Continuarea studiilor
- Dezvoltare personală
- Alt motiv (de indicat)

9. Cât de satisfăcut sunteți, în general, de sistemul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal?

- Foarte satisfăcut
- Satisfăcut
- Nesatisfăcut
- Foarte nesatisfăcut

10. Considerați că evaluarea a reflectat corect competențele și experiența dvs.?

- Da
- Nu

11. Ați utilizat documentul obținut în rezultatul certificării competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal pentru a aplica la joburi sau pentru a aplica în vederea promovării profesionale?

- Da
- Nu

12. A fost documentul obținut prin certificarea competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal recunoscut de angajatorul dvs. / noii angajatori potențiali?

- Recunoscut integral
- Recunoscut parțial
- Nu a fost recunoscut

13. Luați în considerație plecarea în străinătate pentru a valorifica competențele certificate?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

14. Ce beneficii ați avut în urma finalizării procesului de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal?

- Angajarea în câmpul muncii
- Promovarea într-o poziție mai bună în cadrul companiei
- Acces la o activitate, care nu putea fi exercitată până la finalizarea procesului de certificare
- Creșterea de salariu
- Condiții de muncă mai bune
- Altele (specificați)

15. Considerați că ați primit suficient sprijin (ghidare) pentru a înțelege cum funcționează procesul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal?

- Da
- Nu

16. Credeți că procesul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal v-a îmbunătățit șansele de a avansa în cariera profesională în viitor?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

17. V-a oferit procesul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal motivația de a vă dezvolta în continuare competențele profesionale în viitor (de exemplu, pentru a obține o specializare profesională suplimentară sau o calificare superioară)?

- Da
- Nu
- Nu sunt sigur

18. V-ați înscris sau intenționați să vă înscrieți la un program suplimentar de educație sau formare?

- Deja înscris
- Intenționez să mă înscriu
- Nu

19. Cu ce dificultăți v-ați confruntat în timpul procesului de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal (*Răspuns deschis*)

20. **Ce îmbunătățiri ați sugera pentru procesul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal în Moldova?** *(Răspuns deschis)*
21. **Ați recomanda procesul de certificare a competențelor dobândite în context informal și nonformal altor persoane? De ce?** *(Răspuns deschis)*