

Criteria for HE admission for non-traditional target groups (R4)

LEONARDO DA VINCI Transfer of Innovation Project
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Foreword

WP3 “*Sharing the results of former projects and summarizing key issues*” is a key work package for the development of the project’s core outcomes. Its results represent the basis for designing the methodologies and tools for the transfer of innovation. WP3 relies on desk research and field research to be performed in Estonia, Germany (Saxony) and Romania with the purpose to collect useful data about the partners’ previous projects on RPL, about the current status of RPL implementation from VET to HE in partner countries, on recognition criteria of VET diplomas.

This document is a transnational report presenting the research findings from all partners in the framework of WP3 on the ***criteria for HE admission for non-traditional target groups***. Within this project, non-traditional target groups refer to adult learners coming from AE and VET education.

As indicated in the application, this document is prerequisite of WPs 4-6, namely transfer and adaptation of results of former projects and summarized key issue, to German, Estonian and Romanian contexts.

This document represents the project fourth result and part of the set of outcomes/deliverables for WP3.

2 Objective

This desk research was aimed to gather information and practice about criteria for HE admission for non-traditional target groups. As explained above, these criteria will help the consortium to better understand realities in the targeted countries, adapt the outcomes for the transfer and perform a successful transfer.

3 Methodology

The desk research on admission criteria to HE was achieved at national level, in Estonia, Germany and Romania, based on standardized template, discussed and agreed by all partners. The template and explanations on how to perform the research are included in the guidelines for partners on collecting data for WP3.

4 Findings

The research findings are rendered below, per partner country.

4.1 Criteria for HE admission for non-traditional target groups in Estonia

All the non-traditional target groups (e.g. disabled, refugees, immigrants, adult learners) have the same admission criteria as the traditional target groups when entering to the higher education.

It is regulated by the law that a person entering to HE:

- first level of higher education (e.g. bachelor studies or applied higher education) must have a secondary education or an *education equivalent* to that;
- second level of higher education (e.g. masters' level) must have a bachelor degree or education equivalent to that (e.g. applied higher education, integrated studies).

As for having the access to the education it has been regulated that:

- a person from the age of 22 without basic education, but with corresponding competencies, can enter vocational secondary education. Methods and criteria for the necessary criteria are being developed;
- higher education institutions will allow study for a master's degree without a corresponding bachelor's degree, as long as the applicant can show that they have relevant experience to contribute (though having a bachelor's degree in some other area or an equivalent to that is still a needed requirement). The head of curriculum will decide if the previous experience is relevant and sufficient to enter to the next level;

Entering higher education without secondary education or master's level without first level of higher education has been under discussion, but has not been so far accepted.

4.2 Criteria for HE admission for non-traditional target groups in Germany

In Germany, according to the law, the traditional target group to enter HE is represented by *graduates of Gymnasium, who have passed the Abitur exams (A-Levels).*

Non-traditional target groups, as defined in RELATE project (e.g. adult learners coming from AE and VET education) could be:

- Persons without general or specified matriculation standard (Abitur)
- Persons without Abitur, but with VET or AE qualification
- Foreign citizens (persons with legal stay permit in Germany: with study visa, married with German citizens, etc.)
- Immigrants, refugees

The current Framework Act for Higher Education 04/2007 states:

§ 27 General Requirements

(1) All Germans within the meaning of Article 116 of the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) shall be entitled to pursue the course of higher education of their choice if they furnish proof of the requisite qualifications. Nationals of any other Member State of the European Union shall be placed on the same footing as Germans if they provide evidence of the language proficiency required for participation in higher education. Impediments to admission relating to the personal characteristics of applicants other than qualification shall be governed by Land law.

(2) In the case of admission to studies leading to a first degree qualifying the graduate for entry into a profession, the proof required under the first sentence of paragraph 1 above shall, in principle, be furnished by the successful completion of a course of school education designed to prepare pupils for entry into higher education. Vocationally qualified applicants may also furnish proof of qualification in another form, subject to the provisions of the relevant Land legislation.

(3) The present Act shall apply without prejudice to other legal provisions pursuant to which other persons are placed on the same footing as Germans as defined in paragraph 1 above.

The enrolment to universities, universities of applied sciences and universities of cooperative education supposes valid entrance requirements:

- General or specified matriculation standard (Abitur)
- advanced technical college certificate (Fachhochschulreife)
- or a qualification, which is stated as equal entrance requirement by the Saxon Ministry of Educational Affairs (SMK)

Applicants with qualifications from vocational education can get the admission to Higher Education by passing an admission exam, if they worked in the field of studies for at least 3 years. Each HE institution develops and applies its own regulation for organizing the admission to the provided programs of study.

Applicants from other states, than the Member State of the European Union have to get their certificates assessed for equivalence to the German matriculation standard. This is done by the HE Institutions themselves.

In conclusion, it is to be noted that, the admission from VET to HE is possible, if the applicant has worked for at least three years in a field which is accepted by the respective university. Each HE institution states in their own admission and matriculation order (Zulassungs- und Immatrikulationsordnung), which VET qualifications are accepted as admission requirements for the respective study programs.

Additional to these regulations, it is possible for persons without Abitur and without VET qualification to attend an advanced college course¹ (technical, economic, social or art) for two years and to pass the exams (similar to the A-Levels, but more specified). When passing the advanced college exam they get the admission to universities of applied sciences, but only in specified sectors. Which specifications of applied colleges are accepted as admission requirements to respective study programs is regulated by the admission and matriculation order (Zulassungs- und Immatrikulationsordnung) of the respective university of applied science.

¹Ordinance of SMK for advanced colleges in Saxony/ Verordnung des Sächsischen Staatsministeriums für Kultus über die Fachoberschule im Freistaat Sachsen (Schulordnung Fachoberschule – FOSO)
SächsGVBl. Jg. 1998 Bl.-Nr. 16 S. 434 Fsn-Nr.: 710-1.50 Fassung gültig ab: 01.08.1998

For persons without Abitur, but with VET qualification, who did not work for at least 3 years, it is also possible to attend a one year course at an advanced college (technical, economic, social or art) and to get the admission to universities of applied sciences, as mentioned before.

There is still a difference between admission regulations to universities and to universities of applied sciences, although the academic certifications (Bachelor, Master degrees), which are awarded by both types of institutions are equal according to Bologna process.

4.3 Criteria for HE admission for non-traditional target groups in Romania

In Romania, according to the law, traditional target group to enter HE is represented by *graduates of high school*.

Non-traditional target groups, as defined in RELATE project (e.g. adult learners coming from AE and VET education) could be:

- Persons (Romanians or foreigners) with a VET or AE qualification
- Foreign citizens (persons with legal stay permit in Romania: with double citizenship, with study visa, married with Romanian citizens, etc.)
- Immigrants, refugees

The current Law of National Education no. 1/2011 clearly stipulates:

“Art. 142. (1) Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports elaborates every year a framework-methodology regarding the organisation of admission to public and private HEIs in Romania. (2) Each HE institution develops and applies its own regulation for organizing the admission to the provided programs of study. This regulation is developed according to the framework-methodology provided in par. (1).

Art. 142 (4) On admission to HE, public and private, for each cycle and academic study program, citizens of Member States of the European Union, of the states belonging to the European Economic Area and the Swiss Confederation may apply under the same conditions provided by law for Romanian citizens, including regarding tuition fees.

Art. 151. (1) *May attend the admission to 1st university cycle (Bachelor) the high school graduates holding Baccalaureate degree or its equivalent*.² (2) In their methodology, the HEIs may establish facilities or special conditions for admission of candidates to the undergraduate degree programs who have achieved distinctions in high school during school competitions and / or other national or international competitions.

Art. 156. May attend the admission to master programs the graduates with Bachelor degree or equivalent.

Art. 163. Have the right to attend the admission competition for doctoral study programs only the graduates holding a master degree or equivalent.“

In Romanian HE systems there are also specific forms of HE:

- Health and veterinary medicine education³;
- Military Higher Education and education for *intelligence*, public order and national security
- Higher education for arts and sports

In summary, the basic criteria for the admission to HE are:

- high school graduates holding Baccalaureate degree or its equivalent
- original diploma or attestation issued by the high school
- for foreign citizens: linguistic proficiency certificate for the Romanian language, issued by institutions authorized by the Ministry of National Education.

- those who did not graduate the high school in Romania: must have, among other acts required to any candidate for admission to HE, scanned copies of the Baccalaureate Diploma (notarized copy, in Romanian language).

² The specialized terminology explains: a document *equivalent* with the Baccalaureate Diploma represents any provisional attestation, which is issued before the issuing of Baccalaureate Diploma in original, and that is no longer valid when the latter is provided; any copy of the original Baccalaureate Diploma, notarized by a public notary is also considered as “equivalent” of Baccalaureate Diploma.

³ This is the only which mentions: *“Higher education in health and veterinary medicine is conducted in compliance with the general and sectoral regulations of the European Union”* (Art. 174.)

In conclusion, it is to be noted that, due to the fact that Law of National Education no. 1/2011 strictly imposes that *only graduates of high school holding a Baccalaureate Diploma or equivalent may attend the admission to 1st university cycle (Bachelor)*, practically, the admission from AE and VET to HE is not possible, except if the candidate, in addition to degrees obtained in AE and/or VET, obtains also a high school degree (Baccalaureate Diploma).

All the non-traditional target groups must meet the same admission criteria as the traditional target groups when entering to the HE.

5 List of abbreviations

RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
VET	Vocational Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
LO	Learning Outcomes
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
LA	Learning Agreement
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
ECTS	European Credit Transferable System