

Equal Value Principle in Recognition of Prior Learning: Concept Differently Perceived by Providers and Other Stakeholders in Higher Education

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Abstract

The recommendation of the Council of European Union of December 2012 introduced the concept of equal value of standards used to obtain qualifications through validation of non-formal and informal learning and standards used in formal education, with recommended implementation of such validation systems in all EU member states by 2018. This triggered policy development in a number of EU member states including Croatia in order to propose new legislation, quality assurance recommendations and support to such provision. This article presents the results of three quantitative research studies in higher education which involved a total of 2027 participants from different stakeholder groups relevant for the recognition of prior learning in higher education. The results reveal general support to the concept with lack of understanding of its full implications and significant differences in approaches and attitudes of higher education institutions and other stakeholders, especially users of validation, towards assessment standards, assessment methods and use of learning outcomes. This implies that changes in assessment concepts and more use of summative methods based on standards linked to national qualifications framework might be slower and harder to implement in Croatia than EU level policy makers might expect.

Key words: *assessment; framework; qualification; validation.*

Introduction

There are a number of terms used to name the process of extraction and documenting competences of individuals, based on their prior learning in non-formal and informal settings. The two present-day dominantly used concepts are: recognition of prior learning (RPL) used mostly in the USA, the UK, Australia and New Zealand (Day, 2011) and validation of non-formal and Informal learning (VNFIL) mostly used in EU formal documents and recommendations. Starting from one of the commonly used definitions of validation (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2009):

The confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification.

It is clear that validation should be organized against predefined criteria and validation standards. Other definitions, such as the one provided by the OECD (Werquin, 2008) also mentions “required learning outcomes” as a reference point for the validation standards. Successful implementations of validation systems respecting such definitions exist today in a number of countries, in some they have existed for decades, mostly using different approaches to assessment and access to qualifications in formal programmes and through validation. The global trend of implementation of national qualifications frameworks (NQFs), currently being implemented in some 150 countries (European Training Foundation, Cedefop, UNESCO, & UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2013), brought on board new reference points and potentially new standards: qualification and occupational standards, that could support certain changes in existing validation practices and approaches. One such change, introduced for the first time formally by the Council of European Union’s recommendation, in its article 3(h) (Council of the European Union, 2012) was the concept of “*equal value*” defined as:

Qualifications or, where applicable, parts of qualifications obtained by means of the validation of non-formal and informal learning experiences comply with agreed standards that are either the same as, or equivalent to, the standards for qualifications obtained through formal education programmes.

In a nutshell, the idea behind the concept is to discontinue the current practice of “A” and “B” “*level*” of qualifications (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015), depending on the way they have been achieved. Instead, in order to fully develop its human capital and empower its citizens, the EU initiated policy initiative which promotes equal benefits (value) from certified qualifications and parts of qualifications, regardless of the way they were achieved. To advocate used terminology and adequacy of the term “*value*” within the scope of validation, it might be useful to point out three distinctive and dominant types of use of validation results (being qualifications, partial qualifications or units of learning outcomes) that

present value for individuals. The first is career development, used in most cases for employment or personal/social purposes. Next is access to educational programmes that would not otherwise be accessible due to lack of formal qualification possessed by the candidate. The third common use of validation and its results are exemptions from the obligation to attend part of the formal programme and take exams for already validated (certified) learning outcomes (LOs).

The main vehicle and supporting mechanism required for the implementation of such policy concept is the development of NQFs (Allais, 2012), for example, in enabling comparison of qualifications across countries, improving the recognition of prior learning and improving educational quality. The claims made for the role of learning outcomes rest on the assumption that outcomes can be transparent, or that they can capture or represent the essence of what a learning programme or qualification represents. But in practice, either learning outcomes are open to dramatically different interpretations, or they derive their meaning from being embedded in a curriculum. In both instances, learning outcomes cannot play the roles that are claimed for them. I draw on insights from South Africa, where learning outcomes were a major part of curriculum and education policy reform. I suggest that outcomes cannot disclose meaning within or across disciplinary or practice boundaries. They did not enable the essence of a programme to be understood similarly enough by different stakeholders and they did not facilitate judgements about the nature and quality of education and training programmes. Learning outcomes do not carry sufficient meaning, if they are not embedded in knowledge within a curriculum or learning programme. But if they are thus embedded, they cannot play the roles claimed for them in assisting judgements to be made across curricula and learning programmes. The notion of transparency (or even, a more moderate notion of sufficient transparency, and for easier international recognition, its harmonization with some international framework of common qualifications or referencing to some meta framework (i.e. in Europe to European Qualifications Framework – EQF) (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2008). Finally, through development of qualifications based on qualifications standards and LOs the stated idea of “*same as, or equivalent standards for qualifications*” could be implemented, promoting qualifications standards also as standards for validation. Still, there is much to research and develop at the national level due to the fact that quality assurance principles (Annex III to the 2008 Recommendation on EQF) refer to VET and higher education only, and do not apply to qualifications obtained through validation (European Commission, 2016). Increased awareness of this problem partially contributed to EU level policy initiative of July 2016 to further revise and broaden EQF and its quality assurance principles.

Equal Value Concept and Its Implications

Although the concept sounds simple and straightforward, its implementation has profound implications, not only to the use of qualifications and their parts by

individuals, but even more so on validation providers, validation processes, assessment practices, validation practitioners and quality assurance of the process. This change in approach significantly challenges existing validation practices in many countries which today often conceptually differ in different educational sectors (i.e. VET vs. higher education) and use different standards and different assessment criteria in formal education and in validation. As a result of such practices, candidates are often presented with different certificates or are sometimes unable to achieve whole or partial qualification through the validation process, but are only entitled to exemptions from parts of, or access to, certain educational programmes (Konrad, 2010). The theoretical model behind the idea of equal value (Dželalija, 2011) originates from the analysis of four basic independent measurable properties of LOs which cascade further to units of LOs and finally to qualifications within NQF. They are: reference level, designating complexity of acquired competences; volume of LOs, measured by credit points; profile of LOs, defining field of work (or study) and finally quality of LOs. Unlike others, quality is a more complex property demonstrating reliability and credibility of certified LOs (Raffe, 2011) and it has two domains. Institutional domain of quality is linked to accreditation results and hence quality of a “*competent body*” which issued a certificate testifying that LOs or the qualification has been achieved by the candidate. On the other hand, the personal dimension of quality denotes reliability that certified LOs are really possessed by individuals. When equal value policy requirement is analysed using four measurable properties of LOs, it implies that for any given LO, as a minimum, same assessment criteria, same criteria for accreditation of the awarding institution and same criteria of assessors should be in place in validation and in formal education. On the other hand, to get full usefulness of the certificates for individuals and to avoid “*A*” and “*B*” qualifications, “*A*” and “*B*” certificates should also be avoided. Specifically, this means that certificates issued as a result of validation should be identical to those presented to successful formal programme candidates, not indicating information on how specific LOs, units of LOs or qualifications have been achieved (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015).

Current State of Play in EU

Current state of play in EU is best depicted by extensive research done by Cedefop (European Commission, Cedefop, & ICF International, 2014) stating as one of its main conclusions that so far none of the EU member states fully implemented this concept:

Twenty country reports noted that at least in some sectors qualifications and part qualifications acquired through validation comply with agreed standards that are the same or equivalent to those obtained through formal education programmes. This means that the qualifications awarded through validation can be identical to those obtained through formal education programmes or be different qualifications of an equivalent standard – at least in some sectors. As such, in these twenty countries, qualifications obtained through validation

may still be different and not of the same standard as qualifications obtained through formal education programmes in some sectors.

Political importance of equal value concept and its implementation might increase even more through policy monitoring and benchmarking at the EU level (European Commission et al., 2014):

A more stringent interpretation of the Council Recommendation principle on equivalence of standards, that could be used in the future to measure progress, is that in order for a country to be ranked as showing a good level of development, equivalence should be the norm in all its education sectors.

More emphasis is thus put on legislation adjustment and development, as well as on changes in the institutions involved in validation in any educational sector across EU.

Incentives for Research

As a new member state which referenced its NQF to EQF in 2013 (Ministry of science, education and sports, 2012), Croatia started to develop its validation legislation in line with EU recommendations and guidelines (Cedefop, 2015; Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2009), simultaneously paying close attention to participative stakeholders involvement in order to respect the national education tradition and specifics. Instead of the relatively popular but also relatively unsuccessful “policy copying” approach used by many transitional countries (Chakroun, 2010; Murphy, Alvarez-Bermudez, & Duchemin, 2014), the Ministry opted for the iterative approach in the development of a validation policy, which proved to be more successful for developing NQFs (Raffe, 2009). It perceived the implementation of validation system and development of corresponding legislation as more political and social than pure technical process (Gallagher, 2010), one that should take into consideration different stakeholders’ interests in order to build full sense of ownership and thus trust. The Agency for Science and Higher Education initiated and executed an EU funded project within which a number of research instruments were designed and used to get insight in stakeholders’ attitudes relevant for validation. The goal of the mentioned research was to propose quality assurance guidelines, implementation principles and a legal framework to support validation in higher education, creating a link between validation standards and qualifications standards in NQF, thus proposing validation based on the equal value principle.

Methods

Research Design

The first step in the design of research instruments that were used to propose a validation model in higher education was extensive research of recent scientific and policy documents. In order to take into consideration EU and UNESCO policy recommendations and relevant guidelines for validation, special focus has been placed on: common European principles for validation (Council of the European

Union, 2004), European guidelines for validation (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2009) and UNESCO guidelines (UNESCO, 2012). As a result, a total of nine preparatory research topics:

- Motivation to use validation
- Value of formal qualification
- Value of knowledge and its formalisation
- Financing validation
- Scope of validation
- Equal value principle
- *Use of certificates and validation results*
- *Organizations*
- *Validation process*
- *Informing and supporting candidates*

have been designed and researched through the use of quantitative instrument I1 with a total of 40 items applied to members of eight different stakeholders' groups.

The results of preliminary quantitative research based on I1, as well as the results of the applied qualitative instruments (focus groups and structured interviews) opened, among others, the question of implementing equal value principles in validation in higher education. As a result, additional research topic: *Quality assurance* has been instanced and additional research in four of the existing topics (shown in italic above) was organized in order to get deeper understanding. The five topics were covered in later stages of research by two additional quantitative instruments (I2 – focusing on validation providers in higher education and I3 – focusing on users of validation in higher education). The distribution of research instruments, research topics and research items in the five topics relevant for the evaluation of equal value principles' implementation are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of research instruments, research topics and items

Research topics	Research instruments and items
I1 – quantitative research instrument	
Organizations	I1/Q18 - What types of organizations would be ideal for validation of non-formal and informal learning?
Validation process	I1/Q26 – What should be used as reference points for certification of non-formal knowledge and skills? I1/Q28 – List all assessment mechanisms you currently use within existing programmes and indicate which of them would be useful for validation.
Use of certificates and validation results	I1/Q33 – I believe that the entire course and corresponding credits should be recognized for the student who got all LOs within the course certified using validation in the same institution. I1/Q34 – I believe that the entire course and corresponding credits should be recognized to the student who got all LOs within the course certified using validation in some other accredited validation institution.

Informing and supporting candidates	<p>I1/Q19 – Within the informing phase which precedes assessment, the candidate should be informed through direct consultations with a counsellor on the validation process and check which knowledge and skills he/she possesses so that the candidate can select topics for validation according to his/her knowledge.</p> <p>I1/Q20 – Within the informing phase the candidate should be informed about the list of LOs required to obtain the aimed certificate and exam examples that will be used.</p>
I2 – quantitative research instrument	<p>Accreditation for validation in higher education should be awarded to:</p> <p>I2/Q1 – Any physical or legal person who complies with required standards.</p> <p>I2/Q2 – Only to higher education institution which complies with required standards.</p> <p>I2/Q3 – Only to higher education institution which already has an accredited formal programme in the same scientific field and complies with required standards.</p>
Organizations	<p>I2/Q4 – Only to higher education institution which already has an accredited formal programme in the same scientific field, complies with required standards and has fully positive reaccreditation results.</p> <p>I2/Q5 – Only to higher education institution which already has an accredited formal programme in the same scientific field, complies with the required standards and has a certificate for fully developed quality assurance system in formal education.</p>
Validation process	<p>I2/Q8 – If nothing else is specified in respect to learning outcomes, minimal learning outcomes being minimal required thresholds to pass are referred to.</p> <p>I2/Q9 – If student passes 3 out of 4 LOs within the Unit of LOs, he/she still should get a certificate for successful pass of the Unit.</p>
Use of certificates and validation results	<p>I2/Q6 – Validation system following equal value principle should be implemented in Croatia.</p> <p>I2/Q7 – In order to secure equal value of certificates and diplomas provided as a result of validation, exams with the same content and the same procedures as in formal programmes should be organized.</p> <p>I2/Q11 – Units of LOs passed and certified in accredited validation institution should be automatically recognized and exemptions from the programme should be provided in any institution which uses the same units in its programme.</p> <p>I2/Q12 – A student who has $\frac{3}{4}$ of LOs within the course certified through validation should be automatically exempted for the whole course.</p> <p>I2/Q13 – If a student has 4 out of 5 LOs within the course certified through validation, he/she should still pass remaining LO to get certification for the course.</p> <p>I2/Q15 – While designing programmes in higher education, institutions should aim at using the same units of LOs in their different programmes to foster horizontal mobility.</p>
Quality assurance	<p>I2/Q16 – Validation is more endangered by potential institutional misuse than formal educational process.</p> <p>I2/Q17 – Validation should be better protected by quality assurance than formal education, including more documenting.</p> <p>I2/Q20 – A national student survey ICT system should also be used by validation candidates as one of the inputs in external quality evaluation.</p> <p>I2/Q22 – If external evaluation of a validation process provided by HEI which also organizes a formal programme in the same field and uses same assessors and staff, is negative, that result should also have implications on the corresponding formal programme.</p>

I3 – quantitative research instrument

Organizations	I3/Q19 – In order to assure quality, validation in higher education should only be provided by education institutions with an already accredited formal programme in the same field.
Use of certificates and validation results	I3/Q10 – same as Q6 in I2
	I3/Q11 – same as Q7 in I2
	I3/Q12 – same as Q11 in I2
	I3/Q13 – same as Q12 in I2
	I3/Q14 – same as Q13 in I2
Quality assurance	I3/Q15 - same as Q15 in I2
	I3/Q16 - same as Q16 in I2
	I3/Q17 - same as Q17 in I2
Informing and supporting candidates	I3/Q18 - same as Q20 in I2
	I3/Q6 – Validation should be promoted by the Ministry of Education through national campaigns.
	I3/Q7 – Accredited validation providers should inform potential candidates of all aspects of the validation process, provide them with assessment examples and have person / persons trained to provide information.
	I3/Q8 - I think that I need a career advisor / validation consultant to help me assess whether I'm ready to pass validation for a certain unit of LOs or not.

Research Instruments, Population and Methodology

The research instrument I1 had a total of 40 items, 37 covering eight research topics and three used to determine demographic characteristics of the sample. Out of seven items covering four topics focused on equal value principle, presented in this article, three of them had four, five and seven predefined answers while the remaining four used a four-point Likert-type (bipolar) scale ranging from (4) strongly agree through (3) somewhat agree and (2) somewhat disagree to (1) strongly disagree. Such scales have been used due to the fact that validation is a new concept in Croatia, still not well known by the general public, so forced choice was a better option than the typical five-point Likert with its inherent tendency towards modal value (Muthén & Kaplan, 1985).

The research instrument I2 had 22 Likert-type five point scale items (1- strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree) plus 2 additional questions used to get a better understanding of respondents' demography. Instrument I3 had 18 Likert-type five point scale items, one item used to determine the price the candidates are willing to pay for validation and two additional demographic questions.

All three studies have been organized by the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education, starting with preparatory research instrument I1 using the on-line survey system and followed some 8 months later by I2 and 3 months after that by I3, both using paper based survey forms. Instrument I1 involved a total of 1881 respondents representing stakeholder groups as follows: 2.1% of unemployed, 62.7% employed, 0.4% representatives of trade unions, 5.8% employers, 8.2% formal education institutions, 2.8% non-formal education providers, 1.1% NGO representatives and 16.9% students. Instrument I2, as part of the descriptive research, involved 71 representatives of all Croatian Universities and most Universities of

applied sciences and University colleges. The structure of respondents was as follows: teacher in higher education 66.20%, administrative representative of institution 14.08%, employer or trade union 4.23%, student 8.45% and representative of ministry or agency 2.82%. Instrument I3 involved 75 persons attending for the first time pilot validation organized using equal value principle, seeking to certify units of LOs and/or get one of six available different partial qualifications at EQF levels 5 and 6 in two HEIs (University and University of applied sciences). Demographic information of stated respondents group reveals that 44% finished just secondary education, 25% had bachelor level qualification, 29% had master level qualification while 1% had PhD. In respect to their work experience, 60% had less than one year of formal (documented) work experience, 23% had one to three years, 9% had three to seven years and 8% had more than seven years of formal work experience.

Statistical analysis of all acquired data was done using SPSS software. For I1, frequencies and percentage of answers for each group of respondents were calculated for each research item. Differences between frequencies provided by groups of respondents were calculated using Chi square analysis (Pallant, 2007). For I2 and I3, frequencies and percentage of answers for each group of respondents were calculated for each research item as well as arithmetic means, standard deviations, min/max result and coefficients of asymmetry and skewness. Validity of I2 and I3 was calculated using factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation of main components. Cronbach's Alpha and Guttman's Lambda coefficients of reliability were calculated. Other metric characteristics of I2 and I3 (reliability, representativeness and homogeneity) were calculated in Statistica Basic software using RTT7.stb (Programme for the metric characteristics determination of the composite measuring instruments) (Dizdar, 1999).

Metric properties of research instruments I2 and I3 (validity, reliability, homogeneity and representativeness) showed their high usability with reliability coefficients higher than 0.7 (Pallant, 2007) with detailed results as follows: 1) for I2 validity was good due the fact that 4 significant factors were extracted, Guttman-Nicewander's reliability coefficient λ_6 was 0.874, Cronbach-Kaiser-Caffrey's α was 0.763 and reliability standard (Spearman-Brown-Kuder- Richardson-Cronbach) RTT was 0.721. Homogeneity was 0.105 and representativeness was 0.763; 2) for I3, validity was good due the fact that 2 significant factors were extracted, Guttman-Nicewander's reliability coefficient λ_6 was 0.901, Cronbach-Kaiser-Caffrey's α was 0.836 and reliability standard (Spearman-Brown-Kuder- Richardson-Cronbach) RTT was 0.827. Homogeneity was 0.21 and representativeness was 0.802. Validity of both instruments was calculated as factor validity (Mejovšek, 2013).

Results and Discussion

Organizations That Should Be Able to Provide Validation in Higher Education

Provision of validation should be organized by a "competent body" (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2009) and since the

stated process might finish with issuance of formal certificates and diplomas (as in formal education), such institutional competence should be formally acknowledged by some form of accreditation process. We researched attitudes and expectations of key stakeholder groups to learn more about their expectations towards institutional requirements for validation. The results of preliminary research I1/Q18 showed that 29.2% of respondents think that any organization which has adequate assessors and resources, and complies with other requirements should be accredited as a validation provider. Further 48.4% would support accreditation for validation only for education institutions with formal programmes in related areas and educational levels, if such an institution complies with other requirements. Next, 13.1% would support accreditation of employers as validation providers if they are active in fields related to validation and comply with other requirements, and finally, some 9.3% of respondents would support professional chambers and similar professional organizations to become validation providers, if they comply with other requirements. In order to analyse differences between answers provided by different stakeholder groups, log likelihood ratio (G-test) test of independence with Williams' correction has been applied with the results: $G=52.523$, $X\text{-squared } df=6$, $p<0.0001$, showing statistically significant differences between answers provided by different groups. Fisher's exact test with Holm adjustment of p-value (p adjusted <0.001) showed most significant differences in attitudes between representatives of formal education institutions and non-formal training providers. Specifically, while only 20.8% of formal education institutions think any institution can become a validation provider, 52.9% of non-formal training providers think the same. Adversely, while 62.3% of formal education institutions support the idea that validation should be available only to formal education institutions with formal programmes in related areas and education level, just 43.1% of non-formal training providers support such idea.

A significant percentage of respondents within the overall research sample who opted for the idea that only education providers should be able to become validation providers triggered two more studies specifically targeting higher education. Within I2, items Q1-Q5 covered a range of institutional requirements questions inspired by I1/Q18 with the results shown in Table 2, suggesting that representatives of HEIs would not support as validation provider "any institution" (I2/Q1), but would strongly support (I2/Q5) as validation provider an HEI with accredited formal programme in the same scientific field and which has a certificate for fully developed quality assurance system in formal education. Such a result provided by HEI representatives is interesting and somewhat unexpected due to the fact that only 13 out of 129 HEIs currently hold a certificate for fully developed quality assurance system.

Attitudes and expectations of validation users towards institutional requirements were researched in I3/Q19, showing almost identical support to the idea that validation in higher education should only be provided by HEIs with an already accredited formal programme in the same field (Table 2). The presented results showing key stakeholders' attitudes towards institutional requirements for validation providers

reveal a certain degree of prudence in respect to who shall be able to provide validation in higher education. High coherence between providers and users requiring, as precondition for validation, existence of accredited formal programme in the same field, could be understood as an equal value approach somewhat contextualized to institutional requirements.

Table 2
Which organizations should be able to get accreditation for validation in higher education?

Item	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
I2/Q1	2.08	1.31	1	5	0.87	-0.71
I2/Q2	3.06	1.32	1	5	-0.11	-1.1
I2/Q3	3.79	1.11	1	5	-0.80	0.01
I2/Q4	3.30	1.13	1	5	-0.12	-0.68
I2/Q5	4.31	0.99	1	5	-1.4	1.17
I3/Q19	4.19	0.87	2	5	-0.87	-0.01

Informing and Supporting Candidates

Provision of information and support to validation candidates was first researched in the preparatory phase through I1/Q19 and I1/Q20, showing significant support to the provision of direct consultations with counsellor (49.2% somewhat agree and additional 45.7% strongly agree) and use of LOs and assessment examples during the preparation process (46.1% somewhat agree and additional 46.6% strongly agree). In order to gain better understanding of users' requirements, research of validation candidates (I3) has been organized with research results shown in Table 3, suggesting equally strong support to the use of LOs, assessment examples and counselling in preparation for validation, backed by adequately strong support for the promotion of validation by national campaigns organized by the Ministry of Education.

Table 3
Validation users' attitudes towards informing and supporting validation candidates

Item	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
I3/Q6	4.41	0.77	2	5	-1.24	1.04
I3/Q7	4.76	0.54	3	5	-2.22	4.03
I3/Q8	4.21	0.90	1	5	-1.00	0.74

The presented results, although not tackling the question of equal value directly, show strong support of validation candidates towards the use of LOs and towards assessment examples being part of qualifications and units of LOs standards as well as towards listing them within NQF. This speaks clearly, although indirectly, of the idea of equal value applied early (during the information phase) to assessment standards and assessment content, due to the fact that same LOs and assessment examples are the foundation for development and initial accreditation of formal educational programmes, if they are in line with NQF.

Validation Process

The first research of validation process elements was done through preliminary research items I1/Q26 showing potential validation reference points and I1/Q28 showing assessment instruments used in formal programmes and those that providers find useful in validation. In respect to validation references (I1/Q26), the results revealed two groups of respondents. The larger one recognizing formal standards listed within NQF as validation reference, with the results as follows: 30.5% of respondents would award a certificate for units of LOs within qualifications standards, 20.6% would award a certificate for any single LO and 25.4% would award a certificate for the whole qualification listed in NQF. The second, smaller group, consisted of respondents who would award a validation certificate using modules within existing formal courses as a reference (14.9%) and additional 8.6% who would award certificate for the whole formal course as a validation reference. Analysis of differences between answers provided by different stakeholder groups using Log likelihood ratio test (G-test) of independence with Williams' correction with results: $(G)=10.212$, $X\text{-squared } df=8$, $p\text{-value}=0.2505$ showed no statistically significant differences between answers provided by different stakeholder groups. Research of assessment instruments used in formal education and assessment instruments/approaches providers would use in validation (I1/Q28) revealed eight instruments and intensity of its current (formal programmes) and intended (validation) use is shown in Table 4. A significant research result that should be emphasized here is relatively weak support for using the classical portfolio approach (Brinke, Sluijsmans, & Jochems, 2010; Ng Curtise, 2011) this article explores assessors' approaches to portfolio assessment. Through this portfolio assessment, candidates had requested exemptions from specific courses within an educational programme or admission to the programme based on their prior learning. The assessors judged the portfolios according to set rating criteria, and subsequently discussed their approaches. Their decision-making processes, perception of portfolio use in the Assessment of Prior Learning (APL in validation, where the validation result is often based also on declarative methods. Such an approach was one of the first to be developed and is currently widely used in the EU (Souto-Otero, 2014) although in some countries only as a way to present other evidence of competences extracted also through summative instruments. Put simply, avoiding the use of declarative assessment methods, normally not being often used in formal education, is a step towards the use of same standards and approaches in formal programmes and in validation, and hence a step to implementing the equal value principle.

The latter, more focused research of validation process elements in higher education through survey of HEIs representatives (I2) with research results presented in Table 5, showed a slightly positive attitude towards provision of certificate to a candidate who did not successfully pass all LOs within the Unit of LOs. This attitude is in direct opposition with the idea of full use of standards within NQF and the concept of LOs, although I2/Q8 reveals that respondents understand the concept of minimal LOs

being minimal required thresholds for passing. If the stated results are compared to those provided by a wider population of stakeholders (I1), it is clear that the equal value principle through the use of qualification standards provided within NQF, and applied to assessment might be currently hardly fully implemented in higher education, although it is strongly supported by other stakeholder groups (users, employers, students, trade unions...).

Table 4

Current use of assessment instruments in formal education and their intended use in validation

Assessment instrument	Percentage of current use in formal programmes	Percentage of intended use in validation
Final written exam	31.0%	19.5%
Mid-term exam	14.9%	8.4%
Homework	16.2%	6.2%
Assessment of skills and applicative knowledge	28.9%	27.0%
Thesis	3.4%	10.0%
Oral exam	4.0%	15.0%
Recognition of certificates obtained outside formal programme instead of exam	1.6%	10.6%
Recognition of knowledge through the use of evidence within portfolio (list of projects, references of achievements, third party testimonials...).	0%	3.3%

Table 5

Validation users' attitudes towards informing and supporting validation candidates

Item	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
I2/Q8	3.77	1.10	1	5	-0.87	0.12
I2/Q9	3.49	1.35	1	5	-0.58	-0.94

Use of Certificates and Validation Results

Preliminary research items I1/Q33 and I1/Q34 tackled the question of trust in accredited validation providers. The results show an overall strong support for using validation for exemptions, if validation is organized in the same education institution where exemptions are used (45.1% somewhat agree and 37.6% fully agree) and almost equally strong support to using validation for exemptions, if a validation certificate is provided by another institution (45.0% and 31.1%). Still, when Kruskal-Wallis rank sum test was applied to answers provided by different groups of respondents it showed statistically significant (1%) differences between groups of answers ($\chi^2(2)=8.964$, $p<0.001$), while post hoc tests (Mann – Whitney U-test with Holm adjusted p-value) revealed most differences between students and representatives of formal education institutions (adjusted p-value=0.0038). Specifically, while 42.9% of students strongly

support the idea of exemptions as a result of validation in the same institution, only 25.3% of formal educational providers' representatives think the same. Even less support is provided by formal education institution representatives towards the use of certificates issued by other accredited validation provider for exemptions (16.9% strongly support the idea), while students' support also slightly decreased (36.8% strongly support the idea).

The use of certificates and validation results have been researched more thoroughly with two groups of stakeholders in higher education (I2 – HEIs and I3 - users) using the same research questions, with results shown in Table 6. They show significant support to the principal use of equal value in validation by validation users and relatively low support to the same idea by HEIs. Almost equal differences in attitudes were found in respect to using exams with the same content and the same assessment procedures in validation and in formal programmes in higher education. Strangely, although such an idea got strong support from validation candidates, it received relatively weak support of HEI representatives who would, in such a scenario, have less additional work to prepare such assessment materials compared to developing different assessment approach for validation candidates. Automatic recognition of validated units of LOs and its use for exemptions in formal programmes got almost equal support by users and HEIs, as well as the idea of using the same units of LOs in different formal programmes in higher education to promote horizontal student mobility between different programmes.

Table 6

Different attitudes towards the use of validation results by HEIs (I2) and validation users (I3)

Item	Arithmetic mean		Standard deviation		Min		Max		Skewness		Kurtosis	
	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3
I2/Q6 - I3/Q10	3.77	4.40	1.05	0.89	1	1	5	5	-0.85	-1.58	0.13	2.25
I2/Q7 - I3/Q11	3.70	4.39	1.10	0.80	1	2	5	5	-0.90	-1.31	0.02	1.30
I2/Q11 - I3/Q12	4.27	4.64	0.97	0.62	1	2	5	5	-1.7	-1.89	2.99	3.82
I2/Q12 - I3/Q13	3.10	3.73	1.11	0.98	1	1	5	5	-0.14	-0.63	-1.1	0.15
I2/Q13 - I3/Q14	3.85	4.09	1.10	1.05	1	1	5	5	-0.80	-1.04	-0.18	0.18
I2/Q15 - I3/Q15	4.27	4.40	0.74	0.89	2	1	5	5	-0.91	-1.58	0.95	2.25

Quality Assurance of Validation in Higher Education

In order to develop quality assurance criteria for validation in higher education, this topic researched attitudes of both HEIs and validation users in respect to the level of documentation and external quality assurance approach that would assure trust in the validation results. The results of the stated research are shown in Table 7, with three out of four questions being used in both studies.

Table 7

Different attitudes towards the use of validation results by HEIs (I2) and validation users (I3)

Item	Arithmetic mean		Standard deviation		Min		Max		Skewness		Kurtosis	
	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3	I2	I3
I2/Q16 - I3/Q16	3.54	3.60	1.14	1.11	1	1	5	5	-0.71	-0.65	-0.24	-0.22
I2/Q17 - I3/Q17	4.21	4.20	0.91	0.80	2	2	5	5	-1.0	-0.86	0.28	0.40
I2/Q20 - I3/Q18	4.15	4.25	0.87	0.68	1	3	5	5	-1.2	-0.36	1.97	-0.80
I2/Q22	3.92		1.00		1		5		-0.90		0.26	

The presented results reveal highly similar attitudes toward all presented elements relevant to quality assurance (QA) of validation, expressed by HEIs and users. While both groups of respondents find validation only slightly more endangered with institutional misuse compared to formal education, they both agree that the process should be more protected by QA than formal education and that more documenting for ex-post evaluation should be collected and archived. Both groups also support the idea of using the national student survey system and its results in the accreditation processes of validation providers and their provision. Finally, HEIs support the idea that negative accreditation results of validation programmes, if organized by the same assessors and staff as corresponding formal programmes, should have some implications also on formal programmes.

Conclusions

In order to implement a validation model in line with recent recommendations of the Council of the European Union 2012 in its higher education, the Republic of Croatia tasked the Agency for Science and Higher Education to support policy development in this field. By development and organization of three quantitative studies presented in this article, attitudes and requirements of key stakeholders have been researched in order to propose a politically feasible validation model that could be incorporated in the national educational context and tradition. The results of the first preliminary research revealed that all stakeholders support the idea of equal benefits available to candidates certifying competences through validation and through formal programmes, but do not support corresponding ideas of using equal certificates and equal assessment standards. Further research covering institutions in higher education and validation candidates provided deeper insight in specific elements of the concept, through five research topics. No significant differences between stakeholder groups have been found in respect to quality assurance requirements that should be more rigorous in validation than in formal educational programmes and should be supported with more documentation for ex-post evaluation. Similarly, high coherence of both groups could be found with respect to the idea that validation providers in higher education should be only HEIs already having accredited formal

programme in the same field. The use of qualification standards, their LOs and corresponding assessment examples in order to inform and prepare validation candidates for successful validation was also supported by both groups, as well as the use of validation results and certificates as a basis for exemptions in higher educational programmes. Finally, the most significant difference that put in question the overall implementation of the equal value principle in higher education in Croatia originates from the assessment approach, where HEIs do not share the same attitudes as candidates (and other stakeholder groups). Their weak support to using the same standards in assessing candidates in formal programmes and in validation (exams with the same content and the same assessment procedures) and “misuse” of LOs concept as minimal required thresholds to pass exam and obtain certificate for the unit of LOs (and hence qualification) might partially explain why none of the EU member states fully implemented this concept so far (European Commission et al., 2014). This result, obtained in a country that did not previously have validation provisions, and especially not one focusing mostly on declarative assessment methods as many other EU countries had, implies that changes in assessment concepts and more use of summative methods similar to those used in formal programmes and based on standards linked to NQF might be slower and harder to implement than the EU level policy makers might expect (till 2018) (Council of the European Union, 2012).

Further research of appropriate assessment approaches and methods for validation of candidates in higher education, as well as deeper insight in teachers’ understanding of the full implications of learning outcomes used in assessment and grading in higher education is required in order to set up a sustainable and credible validation model in Croatian higher education.

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Načelo jednake vrijednosti u priznavanju neformalnog i informalnog učenja: Koncept koji različito percipiraju ključni dionici u sustavu visokog obrazovanja

Sažetak

Preporuka Vijeća Europske unije iz prosinca 2012. uvela je koncept jednake vrijednosti standarda koji se koriste za stjecanje kvalifikacije putem vrednovanja neformalnog i informalnog učenja i standarda koji se koriste u formalnom obrazovanju, s preporukom da se takvi sustavi vrednovanja implementiraju u svim zemljama članicama EU do 2018. To je potaknulo razvoj politika u više zemalja članica EU, uključujući i Hrvatsku, s ciljem donošenja prijedloga novih zakona, preporuka za osiguravanje kvalitete i pružanja potpore takvim odredbama. Ovaj članak predstavlja rezultate triju kvantitativnih istraživanja u visokom obrazovanju koja su uključivala ukupno 2027 sudionika iz različitih interesnih skupina relevantnih u području priznavanja prethodnog učenja. Rezultati otkrivaju općenito podupiranje koncepta, s nedostatkom razumijevanja njegovih cjelovitih implikacija, kao i značajne različitosti u pristupima i stavovima visokoobrazovnih institucija i drugih dionika, posebno korisnika vrednovanja, prema standardima i metodama provjere znanja i upotrebi ishoda učenja. Sve to implicira da će se promjene vezane uz koncepte provjere znanja i veću upotrebu sumativnih metoda utemeljenih na standardima vezanim uz nacionalni kvalifikacijski okvir potencijalno sporije i teže implementirati u Hrvatskoj nego što to kreatori politika na razini EU očekuju.

Ključne riječi: provjera znanja; okvir; vrednovanje; kvalifikacija.

Uvod

Postoji nekoliko pojmova koji se koriste za imenovanje procesa ekstrakcije i dokumentiranja kompetencija pojedinaca stečenih na temelju njihova prethodnog učenja u neformalnim i informalnim okruženjima. Dvije od njih koje se danas dominantno koriste su: priznavanje prethodnog učenja (engl. RPL), koristi se uglavnom u SAD-u, Velikoj Britaniji, Australiji i Novom Zelandu (Day, 2011) i

vrednovanje neformalnog i informalnog učenja (engl. VNFIL), koristi se uglavnom u službenim dokumentima i preporukama Europske unije. Počevši od jedne od najčešće korištenih definicija vrednovanja (Cedefop, 2009):

‘Potvrda nadležnog tijela da su ishodi učenja (znanje, vještine i/ili kompetencije), koje je pojedinac stekao u formalnom, neformalnom ili informalnim okruženju, provjereni u skladu sa zadanim kriterijima i da su usklađeni sa zahtjevima standarda vrednovanja. Vrednovanje u pravilu vodi do certificiranja.’

jasno je da vrednovanje treba organizirati u skladu sa zadanim kriterijima i standardima vrednovanja. Druge definicije, poput one koju nudi OECD (Werquin, 2008), spominju i „potrebne ishode učenja” kao referentne točke za standarde vrednovanja. Uspješne implementacije sustava vrednovanja koje poštuju takve definicije postoje danas u nekoliko država, u nekima čak i desetljećima, a većinom se koriste različitim pristupima provjeravanja znanja i dodjele kvalifikacija u formalnim programima i putem vrednovanja. Globalni trend implementacije nacionalnih kvalifikacijskih okvira (NKO), koji se trenutno implementiraju u približno 150 država (European Training Foundation et al., 2013), donio je nove referentne točke i potencijalno nove standarde: standard kvalifikacija i zanimanja, koji bi mogli doprinijeti određenim promjenama u postojećim praksama i pristupima vrednovanju. Jedna od takvih promjena, prvi put službeno uvedena u okviru Preporuke Vijeća Europske unije, članak 3(h) (Vijeće Europske unije, 2012), odnosi se na koncept „jednake vrijednosti” koji se definira kao:

„Kvalifikacije, ili, gdje je primjenjivo, dijelovi kvalifikacija stečeni putem vrednovanja neformalnog i informalnog učenja usklađeni s dogovorenim standardima koji su istovjetni ili jednaki standardima za kvalifikacije stečene putem formalnog obrazovnog programa.”

Ukratko, smisao takvog koncepta jest prekinuti trenutnu praksu „A” i „B” „vrste” kvalifikacija (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015), koje ovise o načinu na koji su bile stečene. Umjesto toga, u cilju cjelovitog razvoja njezina ljudskog kapitala i osnaživanja njezinih građana, EU je pokrenula političku inicijativu koja promovira jednake dobrobiti (vrijednosti) certificiranih kvalifikacija ili dijelova kvalifikacija, neovisno o načinu na koji su stečene. Kako bi podržali upotrijebljenu terminologiju i prikladnost pojma (vrijednost) unutar konteksta vrednovanja, poželjno je istaknuti tri karakteristična i dominantna načina upotrebe rezultata vrednovanja (kvalifikacije, djelomične kvalifikacije ili skupovi ishoda učenja) koje predstavljaju vrijednost za pojedince. Prvi je razvoj karijere, a koristi se najčešće sa svrhom zapošljavanja ili za osobne/društvene svrhe. Sljedeći je pristup obrazovnom programu koji inače ne bi bio omogućen s obzirom na to da kandidat nema stečenu formalnu kvalifikaciju koja je nužna za pristupanje takvom programu. Treća i najčešća upotreba rezultata vrednovanja jest oslobođenje obaveze pohađanja dijela formalnog obrazovnog programa i polaganja ispita za već vrednovane (certificirane) ishode učenja (engl. LO).

Glavni pokretač i mehanizam podrške potreban za implementiranje takvog koncepta jest razvoj NKO-a (Allais, 2012). On je pak podloga za lakše međunarodno priznavanje kvalifikacija, omogućuje usklađivanje nacionalnih kvalifikacija s određenim međunarodnim okvirom zajedničkih kvalifikacija ili pak za povezivanje nacionalnog sustava kvalifikacija s nekim meta okvirom (konkretno u Europi s Europskim kvalifikacijskom okvirom - EKO) (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2008). Na kraju, putem razvoja kvalifikacija utemeljenih na standardima kvalifikacija i ishodima učenja, ideja „*jednaki kao ili istovjetni standardi za kvalifikacije*” mogla bi se implementirati promovirajući standarde kvalifikacija kao standarde vrednovanja. Ipak, potrebno je još dosta istraživanja i razvoja na nacionalnoj razini s obzirom na činjenicu da se načela osiguravanja kvalitete unutar EKO (Aneks III Preporuka za EKO iz 2008.) odnose samo na strukovno i visoko obrazovanje i ne primjenjuju se na kvalifikacije stečene vrednovanjem (European Commission, 2016). Povećana osviještenost tog problema djelomično je doprinijela političkoj inicijativi na razini EU iz srpnja 2016. koja podrazumijeva daljnju reviziju i širenje EKO-a i njegovih načela osiguravanja kvalitete.

Koncept jednake vrijednosti i njegove implikacije

Iako koncept zvuči jednostavno i jasno, njegova provedba ima značajne implikacije ne samo na korištenje kvalifikacija i njihovih dijelova od pojedinaca, već i na provoditelje

vrednovanja, procese vrednovanja, prakse provjere znanja, praktičare vrednovanja i osiguravanje kvalitete čitavog procesa. Ta promjena u pristupu predstavlja značajan izazov za postojeće prakse vrednovanja u mnogim zemljama koje se danas često konceptualno razlikuju u različitim obrazovnim sektorima (konkretno strukovno / visoko obrazovanje) i koriste se različitim standardima i kriterijima provjere u formalnom obrazovanju i prilikom vrednovanja. Kao rezultat takvih neujednačenih praksi, kandidatima se često daju različiti certifikati (u odnosu na one koje bi za istu kvalifikaciju dobili kandidati u formalnom programu), a ponekad su u nemogućnosti steći cijelu ili djelomičnu kvalifikaciju putem procesa vrednovanja. U takvim okolnostima za njih takav proces vrlo često završava jedino pravom oslobođenja od obveze pohađanja dijela obrazovnih programa (Konrad, 2010). Teorijski model na kojem se temelji ideja jednake vrijednosti (Dželalija, 2011) potječe iz analize četiriju osnovnih neovisnih mjerljivih svojstava ishoda učenja koji se dalje dijele na skupove ishoda učenja i na kraju na kvalifikacije unutar NKO-a. To su: referentna razina, koja označava kompleksnost stečenih kompetencija odnosno ishoda učenja, obujam ishoda učenja, koji se mjeri u kreditnim bodovima, profil ishoda učenja, koji označava polje rada (ili studija) i na kraju kvaliteta ishoda učenja. Za razliku od ostalih, kvaliteta je kompleksnije svojstvo koje pokazuje pouzdanost i kredibilitet provjerenih i potvrđenih ishoda učenja (Raffe, 2011) i ima dvije domene. Institucionalna domena kvalitete

povezana je s rezultatima akreditacije, a time i s kvalitetom "nadležnog tijela" koje izdaje potvrdu da je kandidat ostvario ishode učenja ili kvalifikaciju. S druge strane, osobna dimenzija kvalitete odnosi se na pouzdanost da pojedinac uistinu posjeduje certificirane ishode učenja. Kada analiziramo zahtjev koncepta jednake vrijednosti koristeći se mjerljivim svojstva ishoda učenja, dolazimo do zaključka da za bilo koji ishod učenja kao minimum, u procesu vrednovanja odnosno u formalnom obrazovanju moraju vrijediti isti kriteriji provjere znanja, isti kriteriji akreditacije ovlaštenih tijela i isti kriteriji kod ispitivača. S druge strane, kako bi postigli potpunu iskoristivost certifikata za pojedince i kako bi izbjegli „A” i „B” kvalifikacije „A” i „B” certifikate također treba izbjegavati. Konkretno, to znači da certifikati koji su proizašli iz procesa vrednovanja trebaju biti identični onima koji se dodjeljuju kandidatima koji su uspješno završili formalni program, bez navođenja kako su određeni ishodi učenja, skupovi ishoda učenja ili kvalifikacije stečeni (Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015).

Trenutno stanje u EU

Trenutno stanje u EU najbolje se može opisati opsežnim istraživanjem koje je proveo Cedefop (European Commission et al., 2014) u kojem navodi, kao jedan od svojih glavnih zaključaka, da do sada ni jedna članica EU nije potpuno implementirala taj koncept:

„Izvrještaji iz dvadeset država pokazuju da, barem u nekim sektorima, kvalifikacije i djelomične kvalifikacije stečene u procesu vrednovanja odgovaraju dogovorenim standardima koji su isti ili istovjetni onima koju su stečeni putem formalnih obrazovnih programa. To znači da kvalifikacije dodijeljene putem vrednovanja mogu biti identične onima koje su stečene putem formalnog obrazovanja, ali to je tako samo u nekim sektorima. Slijedom navedenog, u tih dvadeset država u nekim sektorima kvalifikacije stečene vrednovanjem mogu biti i različite odnosno drugačijeg standarda od kvalifikacija stečenih putem formalnih programa obrazovanja.”

Politička važnost koncepta jednake vrijednosti i njegove implementacije mogla bi se povećati putem političkog nadgledanja i sustavne usporedbe uspješnosti implementacije vrednovanja unutar država na razini EU (European Commission et al., 2014):

„Oštrija interpretacija Preporuke Vijeća o principu istovjetnosti standarda, a koja se može koristiti u budućnosti za mjerenje napretka, jest da bi se država rangirala na zadovoljavajuću razinu razvoja ako je koncept istovjetnosti norma u svim njezinim obrazovnim sektorima.”

stavljajući time naglasak na zakonsku prilagodbu i razvoj, kao i na promjene u institucijama koje su uključene u vrednovanje u bilo kojem obrazovnom sektoru u okviru EU.

Poticaji za istraživanje

Kao nova država članica koja je povezala svoj NKO s EKO 2013. godine (Ministry of science, 2012), Hrvatska je započela razvijati svoju zakonsku podršku vrednovanju u skladu s EU preporukama i smjericama (Cedefop, 2009; Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015), istodobno obrađujući posebnu pozornost na uključivanje dionika u taj proces, sve s ciljem poštivanja nacionalne obrazovne tradicije i specifičnosti. Umjesto

relativno popularne, ali i neuspješne „politike kopiranja” kojom se koriste mnoge tranzicijske zemlje (Chakroun, 2010; Murphy et al., 2014), Ministarstvo se odlučilo za iterativni pristup razvoju sustava vrednovanja koji se pokazao uspješnijim u razvoju NKO-a (Raffe, 2009). Taj pristup sagledava implementaciju sustava vrednovanja i razvoj odgovarajuće zakonske regulative ponajprije kao politički i društveni, a ne samo kao tehnički proces (Gallagher, 2010). Takav pristup uzima u obzir različite dionike i njihove interese kako bi izgradio potpun osjećaj vlasništva, a time i povjerenja. Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje provela je projekt financiran iz EU fondova u okviru kojeg je osmišljen i iskorišten velik broj istraživačkih instrumenata sa svrhom stjecanja uvida u stavove dionika mjerodavnih za vrednovanje. Cilj navedenog istraživanja bio je predložiti smjernice za osiguravanje kvalitete, načela implementacije i zakonodavni okvir za podršku vrednovanju u visokom obrazovanju, stvarajući poveznicu između standarda vrednovanja i standarda kvalifikacija u HKO-u, te predlažući na taj način vrednovanje utemeljeno na načelu jednake vrijednosti.

Metode

Plan istraživanja

Opsežno istraživanje znanstvene i stručne dokumentacije bilo je prvi korak u izradi istraživačkih instrumenata koji su se koristili za izradu prijedloga modela vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju. Kako bi uzeli u obzir preporuke Europske unije i UNESCO-a i mjerodavne smjernice za vrednovanje, poseban naglasak stavljen je na: Zajednička europska načela za vrednovanje (Council of the European Union, 2004), Europske smjernice za vrednovanje (Cedefop, 2009) i UNESCO-ove smjernice (UNESCO, 2012). Kao rezultat je prepoznato ukupno devet pripremnih istraživačkih tema:

- Motivacija za korištenje vrednovanja
- Vrijednost formalne kvalifikacije
- Vrijednost znanja i njegove formalizacije
- Financiranje vrednovanja
- Opseg vrednovanja
- Načelo jednake vrijednosti
- *Upotreba certifikata i rezultata vrednovanja*
- *Organizacije za provedbu*
- *Proces vrednovanja*

- *Informiranje i podrška kandidatima.*

Nadalje, provedeno je preliminarno istraživanje upotrebom kvantitativnog instrumenta I1 s ukupno 40 tvrdnji distribuiranih članovima osam različitih grupa dionika. Rezultati preliminarnog kvantitativnog istraživanja temeljenog na I1, kao i rezultati korištenih kvalitativnih instrumenata (fokus grupe i strukturirani intervjui) otvorili su, između ostalih, pitanje implementacije načela jednake vrijednosti u visokom obrazovanju. Kao rezultat, u idućem je istraživanju dodana i nova istraživačka tema: *osiguranje kvalitete*, zajedno s daljnjom provedbom dodatnog istraživanja u okviru četiri postojeće teme (prikazane gore u kurzivu), sve s ciljem dubljeg razumijevanja tog područja. Svih pet tema pokriveno je u kasnijim istraživačkim fazama s pomoću dva dodatna kvantitativna instrumenta (I2 – usmjeren na provoditelje vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju i I3 – usmjeren na korisnike vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju). Distribucija istraživačkih instrumenata, istraživačkih tema i tvrdnji u navedenih pet tema mjerodavnih za evaluaciju implementacije načela jednake vrijednosti prikazana je u Tablici 1.

Tablica 1

Distribucija istraživačkih instrumenata, istraživačkih tema i tvrdnji

Istraživačke teme	Istraživački instrumenti i tvrdnje
I1 – kvantitativni istraživački instrument	
Organizacije	I1/Q18 – Koje bi vrste organizacija bile idealne za provođenje vrednovanja neformalnog i informalnog učenja?
Proces vrednovanja	I1/Q26 – Što bi se trebalo koristiti kao referentne točke za certifikaciju neformalno stečenih znanja i vještina? I1/Q28 – Navedite sve mehanizme provjere znanja koje trenutno koristite unutar postojećih programa i označite koji se od njih mogu iskoristiti za vrednovanje?
Upotreba certifikata i rezultata vrednovanja	I1/Q33 – Vjerujem da cijeli kolegij i svi pripadajući bodovi trebaju biti priznati studentu koji je stekao sve ishode učenja tog kolegija vrednovanjem u istoj instituciji koja provodi kolegij i vrednovanje. I1/Q34 – Vjerujem da cijeli kolegij i pripadajući bodovi trebaju biti priznati studentu koji je stekao sve ishode učenja unutar tog kolegija vrednovanjem u nekoj drugoj instituciji akreditiranoj za vrednovanje (koja ne provodi kolegij).
Informiranje i podrška kandidatima	I1/Q19 – U okviru faze informiranja koja prethodi provjeri znanja, kandidat treba biti upoznat putem izravnih konzultacija sa svojim savjetnikom s procesom vrednovanja i provjeriti koja znanja i vještine on/ona posjeduje kako bi kandidat mogao odabrati teme vrednovanja u skladu s njegovim/njezinim znanjem. I1/Q20 – U okviru faze informiranja kandidat treba biti informiran o popisu ishoda učenja potrebnih za stjecanje ciljanog certifikata i primjerima ispita koji će se koristiti.
I2 – kvantitativni istraživački instrument	
Organizacije	Akreditaciju za provođenje vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju trebala bi moći dobiti: I2/Q1 – Svaka fizička ili pravna osoba koja provodi postupak u skladu s propisanim standardima. I2/Q2 – Samo visokoobrazovne institucije koje provode postupak u skladu s propisanim standardima.

Organizacije	<p>I2/Q3 – Samo visokoobrazovna institucija koja već ima akreditirani program u istom znanstvenom polju i provodi postupak u skladu s propisanim standardima.</p> <p>I2/Q4 – Samo visokoobrazovna institucija koja već ima akreditirani program u istom znanstvenom polju i provodi postupak u skladu s propisanim standardima pa ima u potpunosti pozitivne rezultate reakreditacije.</p> <p>I2/Q5 – Samo visokoobrazovna institucija koja već ima akreditirani program u istom znanstvenom polju i provodi postupak u skladu s propisanim standardima te ima certifikat kojim potvrđuje posjedovanje potpuno razvijenog sustava osiguranja kvalitete u formalnom obrazovanju.</p>
Proces vrednovanja	<p>I2/Q8 – Ako ništa drugo nije navedeno vezano uz ishode učenja, koriste se minimalni ishodi učenja, kao minimalni zahtjev za prijelaz praga traženog znanja.</p> <p>I2/Q9 – Ako student položi 3 od 4 ishoda učenja unutar određenog skupa ishoda učenja, on/ona bi trebala dobiti certifikat za uspješno položen skup.</p> <p>I2/Q6 – Sustav vrednovanja koji slijedi načelo jednake vrijednosti trebao bi se implementirati u Hrvatskoj.</p> <p>I2/Q7 – Kako bi osigurali jednaku vrijednost certifikata i diploma dodijeljenih kao rezultat vrednovanja, potrebno je organizirati ispite s istim sadržajima i procedurama kao i u formalnom obrazovanju.</p>
Upotreba certifikata I rezultata vrednovanja	<p>I2/Q11 – Skupovi ishoda učenja koji su položeni i certificirani u ustanovi akreditiranoj za provođenje vrednovanja trebali bi se automatski priznati i provesti oslobođenje od obveze pohađanja programa u bilo kojoj instituciji koja se koristi istim skupovima u svojim programima.</p> <p>I2/Q12 – Student koji ima $\frac{3}{4}$ ishoda učenja unutar kolegija certificirane u postupku vrednovanja treba automatski ostvariti pravo oslobođenja od obveze pohađanja cijelog kolegija.</p> <p>I2/Q13 – Ako student ima 4 od 5 ishoda učenja unutar kolegija certificirano u postupku vrednovanja, on/ona svejedno treba položiti preostali ishod učenja da bi dobio certifikat za taj kolegij.</p> <p>I2/Q15 – Prilikom osmišljavanja programa u visokom obrazovanju institucije trebaju imati za cilj upotrebu istih skupova ishoda učenja u njihovim različitim programima u cilju promicanja horizontalne mobilnosti.</p>
Osiguranje kvalitete	<p>I2/Q16 – Potencijalna institucionalna zloupotreba predstavlja veću opasnost za vrednovanje nego što to čini za formalni obrazovni proces.</p> <p>I2/Q17 – Vrednovanje treba biti zaštićenije u smislu osiguravanja kvalitete od formalnog obrazovanja, uključujući više dokumentiranja.</p> <p>I2/Q20 – Nacionalnim anketnim ICT sustavom za studente trebali bi se koristiti i kandidati za proces vrednovanja kao jedan od ulaznih podataka u vanjskoj evaluaciji kvalitete provoditelja.</p> <p>I2/Q22 – Ako je vanjska evaluacija vrednovanja provedenog od visokoobrazovne institucije koja organizira i formalni program u istom polju i koristi se istim ispitivačima i osobljem negativna, takav bi rezultat trebao imati utjecaj i na rezultate akreditacije odgovarajućeg formalnog programa.</p>
I3 – kvantitativni istraživački instrument	
Organizacije	<p>I3/Q19 – S ciljem osiguravanja kvalitete, vrednovanje u visokom obrazovanju trebaju provoditi samo obrazovne ustanove s već akreditiranim formalnim programom u istom polju.</p>
Upotreba certifikata I rezultata vrednovanja	<p>I3/Q10 – isto kao i Q6 u I2</p> <p>I3/Q11 – isto kao i Q7 u I2</p> <p>I3/Q12 – isto kao i Q11 u I2</p> <p>I3/Q13 – isto kao i Q12 u I2</p> <p>I3/Q14 – isto kao i Q13 u I2</p> <p>I3/Q15 – isto kao i Q15 u I2</p>

Osiguranje kvalitete	I3/Q16 - isto kao i Q16 u I2 I3/Q17 - isto kao i Q17 u I2 I3/Q18 - isto kao i Q20 u I2
Informiranje i podrška kandidatima	I3/Q6 – Ministarstvo obrazovanja treba promicati vrednovanje putem kampanja na nacionalnoj razini. I3/Q7 – Akreditirani provoditelji vrednovanja trebaju informirati potencijalne kandidate o svim aspektima procesa vrednovanja, osigurati im primjere provjere znanja i imati osobu/osobe osposobljene za informiranje. I3/Q8 – Smatram da trebam karijernog savjetnika/savjetnika za vrednovanje kako bi mi pomogao u procjeni spremnosti uspješnog prolaznja postupka vrednovanja za određene jedinice ishoda učenja.

Istraživački instrumenti, populacija i metodologija

Istraživački instrument I1 ima ukupno 40 tvrdnji, od kojih 37 pokriva osam istraživačkih tema, a 3 su bile iskorištene za određivanje demografskih karakteristika uzorka. Od sedam tvrdnji koje pokrivaju četiri teme usmjerene na načelo jednake vrijednosti, prikazane u ovom članku, tri su imale četiri, pet i sedam predefiniраних odgovora, a u preostale četiri koriste se četiri stupnja Likertove (bipolarne) ljestvice koji variraju od: (4) – u potpunosti se slažem preko (3) – donekle se slažem, (2) – donekle se ne slažem i (1) – uopće se ne slažem. Takva ljestvica koristila se zbog činjenice da je vrednovanje novi koncept u Hrvatskoj, još uvijek nepoznat široj javnosti. Stoga je „prisiljeni“, izbor bio bolja mogućnost od klasičnih pet Likertovih stupnjeva sa svojom inherentnom tendencijom prema modalnoj vrijednosti (Muthén i Kaplan, 1985).

Istraživački instrument I2 imao je 22 tvrdnje u skladu s Likertovom skalom od pet stupnjeva (od 1 – u potpunosti se ne slažem do 5 – uopće se ne slažem) plus 2 dodatna pitanja upotrijebljena s ciljem stjecanja boljeg razumijevanja demografije ispitanika. Instrument I3 imao je 18 tvrdnji u skladu s Likertovom skalom od pet stupnjeva, od toga je jedna tvrdnja upotrijebljena za utvrđivanje cijene koju su kandidati voljni platiti za provedbu vrednovanja i dva dodatna demografska pitanja.

Sva tri istraživanja organizirana su od Agencije za znanost i visoko obrazovanje (AZVO), počevši od pripremnog istraživačkog instrumenta I1 koristeći se *on-line* anketnim sustavom. Nakon osam mjeseci uslijedio je istraživanje I2, a potom i I3, tri mjeseca nakon njega. U oba instrumenta koristio se papirnati anketni upitnik. Instrument I1 uključivao je ukupno 1881 ispitanika okupljajući dionike kako slijedi: 2,1% nezaposleni, 62,7% zaposleni, 0,4% predstavnici sindikata, 5,8% poslodavci, 8,2% formalne obrazovne ustanove, 2,8% pružatelji neformalnog obrazovanja, 1,1% predstavnici strukovnih udruga i 16,9% studenti. Instrument I2, kao dio deskriptivnog istraživanja, uključivao je 71 predstavnika sa svih hrvatskih sveučilišta i većine veleučilišta i visokih učilišta. Struktura ispitanika bila je kako slijedi: nastavnik u visokom obrazovanju 66,20%, nenastavno osoblje 14,08%, predstavnik sindikata 4,23%, student 8,45% i predstavnik ministarstva ili agencije 2,82%. Instrument I3 uključivao je 75 osoba koje su po prvi put sudjelovale u pilot-vrednovanju organiziranom poštujući

načelo jednake vrijednosti, sve s ciljem certificiranja skupa ishoda učenja i/ili stjecanja jedne od šest dostupnih djelomičnih kvalifikacija na HKO razini 5 i/ili 6 u dvije visokoobrazovne institucije (Sveučilište i Visoka škola). Demografske informacije o navedenim grupama ispitanika otkrivaju da njih 44% ima samo srednju stručnu spremu, 25% ima prvostupničku razinu kvalifikacije, 29% ima magistarsku razinu kvalifikacije, njih 1% ima završen doktorski studij. Uzimajući u obzir njihovo radno iskustvo, 60% ih ima manje od jedne godine formalnog (dokumentiranog) radnog iskustva, 23% ima do tri godine, 9% ima od tri do sedam godina i 8% ima više od sedam godina formalnog radnog iskustva.

Statistička analiza svih dobivenih podataka napravljena je upotrebom „SPSS” softvera. Za I1 frekvencije i postotci odgovora za svaku grupu ispitanika izračunati su za svaku istraživačku tvrdnju (česticu). Razlike frekvencija između grupa ispitanika izračunate su upotrebom hi-kvadrat analize (Pallant, 2007). Za I2 i I3 frekvencije i postotci odgovora za svaku grupu ispitanika izračunate su za svaku istraživačku tvrdnju, zajedno s aritmetičkom sredinom, standardnom devijacijom, min./max. rezultatima i koeficijentima asimetrije. Valjanost I2 i I3 izračunata je upotrebom faktorske analize s izravnom (engl. Oblimin) rotacijom glavnih komponenti. Izračunati su i koeficijenti: Cronbachova alfa i Guttmanova lambda. Ostale metričke karakteristike I2 i I3 (pouzdanost, reprezentativnost i homogenost) izračunate su u „Statistica Basic” softveru koristeći se RTT7.stb (Program za određivanje metrijskih karakteristika kompozitnih mjernih instrumenata) (Dizdar, 1999).

Metrička svojstva istraživačkih instrumenata I2 i I3 (valjanost, pouzdanost, homogenost i reprezentativnost) pokazali su njihovu visoku iskoristivost, s koeficijentima pouzdanosti većim od 0,7 (Pallant, 2007) s detaljnim rezultatima kako slijedi; Za I2 valjanost je dobra uz ekstrahirana 4 značajna faktora, Guttman-Nicewanderov koeficijent pouzdanosti λ_6 iznosi 0,874, Cronbach-Kaiser-Caffreyev α iznosi 0,763 i standardni koeficijent pouzdanosti (Spearman-Brown-Kuder- Richardson-Cronbach) rtt iznosi 0,721. Homogenost iznosi 0,105, a reprezentativnost je 0,763. Za I3 je valjanost također dobra uz ekstrahirana 2 značajna faktora, Guttman-Nicewanderov koeficijent pouzdanosti λ_6 iznosi 0,901, Cronbach-Kaiser-Caffreyev α iznosi 0,836, a standardni koeficijent pouzdanosti (Spearman-Brown-Kuder- Richardson-Cronbach) rtt iznosi 0,827. Homogenost je 0,21, a reprezentativnost je 0,802. Valjanost oba instrumenta izračunata je kao faktor valjanosti (Mejovšek, 2013).

Rezultati i rasprava

Organizacije koje bi trebale biti u mogućnosti provoditi vrednovanje u visokom obrazovanju

Provođenje vrednovanja trebaju organizirati „nadležna tijela” (Cedefop, 2009), a budući da takav proces može završiti izdavanjem formalnih certifikata i diploma (kao u formalnom obrazovanju), takva institucionalna kompetencija trebala bi biti formalno

priznata nekim oblikom akreditacijskog procesa. Mi smo istražili stavove i očekivanja ključnih dionika kako bi saznali više o njihovim očekivanjima od institucionalnih zahtjeva vezanih uz vrednovanje. Rezultati preliminarnog istraživanja I1/Q18 pokazali su da 29,2% ispitanika misli da bi bilo koja organizacija koja ima odgovarajuće ispitivače, resurse i usklađena je s ostalim zahtjevima mogla biti akreditirana kao provoditelj vrednovanja. Nadalje, 48,4% njih podržalo bi akreditaciju za provođenje vrednovanja samo obrazovnih institucija koje već provode formalne programe u odgovarajućim poljima i na odgovarajućoj obrazovnoj razini, pod uvjetom da je ta institucija usklađena s ostalim zahtjevima. 13,1% podržalo bi akreditiranje poslodavaca kao provoditelja vrednovanja, ako su aktivni u područjima relevantnim za vrednovanje i ako su usklađeni s ostalim zahtjevima, i na kraju, 9,3% ispitanika podržalo bi strukovne komore i slične strukovne organizacije kao provoditelje vrednovanja, pod uvjetom da su usklađeni s ostalim zahtjevima. U cilju analize razlika između odgovora koje su dale različite grupe dionika primijenjen je test neovisnosti, s Williamsovom korekcijom logaritma omjera vjerojatnosti (G-test), koji je dao sljedeće rezultate: $(G)=52.523$, X^2 -kvadrat $df=6$, $p<0,0001$, ukazujući na statistički značajne razlike između odgovora različitih grupa dionika. Fisherov egzaktni test s podešavanjem Holm p-vrijednosti (p prilagođen $<0,001$) pokazao je najznačajnije razlike u stavovima između predstavnika formalnih obrazovnih institucija i neformalnih pružatelja usluga obrazovanja. Konkretno, dok samo 20,8% formalnih obrazovnih institucija misli kako bilo koja institucija treba moći postati provoditelj vrednovanja, 52,9% neformalnih pružatelja obrazovanja misli isto. Suprotno tome, dok 62,3% formalnih obrazovnih institucija podupire ideju da vrednovanje treba biti dostupno samo u formalnim obrazovnim ustanovama s akreditiranim obrazovnim programima iz srodnih polja i jednake razine obrazovanja, samo 43,1% neformalnih pružatelja obrazovanja podržava takvu ideju.

Značajan postotak ispitanika unutar cjelokupnog uzorka istraživanja koji su se odlučili za ideju da samo već sada akreditirani pružatelji usluga obrazovanja trebaju biti u mogućnosti postati provoditelji vrednovanja pokrenuo je još dva istraživanja posebno pripremljena za visoko obrazovanje (I2 i I3).

Tako su u okviru I2 tvrdnje Q1 – Q5 obuhvatile set pitanja o institucionalnim zahtjevima, inspirirane rezultatima iz I1/Q18 prikazanim u Tablici 2, koji ukazuju na predstavnike visokoobrazovnih institucija koji ne bi podržali „bilo koju instituciju” kao provoditelja vrednovanja (I2/Q1), ali bi u toj ulozi snažno podržali (I2/Q5) visokoobrazovnu instituciju s akreditiranim formalnim programom u istom znanstvenom polju koja ima certifikat kojim potvrđuje da posjeduje potpuno razvijen sustav osiguravanja kvalitete u formalnom obrazovanju. Takav rezultat od predstavnika visokoobrazovnih institucija je zanimljiv i pomalo neočekivan budući da samo 13 od ukupno 129 visokoobrazovnih institucija trenutno posjeduje takav certifikat koji potvrđuje posjedovanje potpuno razvijenog sustava osiguranja kvalitete.

Tablica 2

Stavovi i očekivanja korisnika vrednovanja prema institucionalnim zahtjevima istraženi u I3/Q18 ukazuju na gotovo identičnu podršku ideji da vrednovanje u visokom obrazovanju trebaju provoditi samo visokoobrazovne institucije s već akreditiranim formalnim programom u istom polju (Tablica 2). Prikazani rezultati koji pokazuju stavove ključnih dionika prema institucionalnim zahtjevima za provoditelje vrednovanja otkrivaju određen stupanj opreza u odnosu na to tko će biti u mogućnosti provoditi vrednovanje u visokom obrazovanju. Visoka koherentnost između provoditelja i korisnika koji zahtijevaju, kao preduvjet za vrednovanje, postojanje akreditiranog formalnog programa u istom polju, može se shvatiti kao pristup jednake vrijednosti koji je donekle kontekstualiziran u institucionalnim zahtjevima.

Informiranje i podrška kandidatima

Pružanje informacija i podrška kandidatima vrednovanja prvi se put istraživala u pripremnoj fazi kroz I1/Q19 i I1/Q20, pokazujući značajnu podršku pružanju izravnih konzultacija sa savjetnikom (49,2% se donekle slaže i dodatnih 45,7% se u potpunosti slaže) i korištenju ishoda učenja i primjera provjere znanja tijekom procesa pripreme za vrednovanje (46,1% se donekle slaže i dodatnih 46,6% se u potpunosti slaže). Kako bi se dobio bolji uvid u zahtjeve korisnika, istraživanje kandidata u postupku vrednovanja (I3) provedeno je s rezultatima istraživanja prikazanim u Tablici 3, ukazujući na jednako snažnu podršku korištenju ishoda učenja, primjera provjere znanja i savjetovanja u pripremi za vrednovanje, te potkrijepljeno s odgovarajuće snažnom podrškom promicanja vrednovanja putem nacionalnih kampanja u organizaciji Ministarstva obrazovanja.

Tablica 3

Prikazani rezultati, iako se izravno ne tiču pitanja jednake vrijednosti, pokazuju da kandidati za provedbu vrednovanja snažno podržavaju upotrebu ishoda učenja kao i ideju da primjeri provjere znanja budu dio standarda kvalifikacija i skupova ishoda učenja, te da budu navedeni u HKO-u. To jasno, iako neizravno, govori o ideji jednake vrijednosti rano primijenjenoj (u fazi informiranja) na standarde i sadržaj provjere znanja, s obzirom na činjenicu da su isti ishodi učenja i primjeri provjere znanja temelj za razvoj i početnu akreditaciju formalnih obrazovnih programa, ako su oni pripremljeni u skladu s HKO.

Proces vrednovanja

Prvo istraživanje procesa vrednovanja provedeno je putem preliminarnih istraživačkih tvrdnji I1/Q26, pokazujući potencijalne referentne točke vrednovanja, i I1/Q28 koje su ukazale na instrumente koji su se koristili u formalnom obrazovanju i na one koje provoditelji smatraju korisnima u procesu vrednovanja. Uzimajući u obzir referentne točke za provedbu vrednovanja (I2/Q26), rezultati su otkrili dvije grupe ispitanika. Veća grupa, koja prepoznaje formalne standarde navedene u HKO-u kao referentne

točke vrednovanja, ima sljedeće rezultate: 30,5% ispitanika bi dodijelilo certifikat za bilo koji zasebni ishod učenja, a 25,4% bi dodijelilo certifikat za cjelokupnu kvalifikaciju navedenu u HKO-u. Druga, manja grupa, sastojala se od ispitanika koji bi dodijelili certifikat na temelju vrednovanja, koristeći se modulima unutar postojećih formalnih kolegija kao referentnu točku (14,9%) i dodatnih 8,6% ispitanika koji bi dodijelili certifikat za cjelokupni formalni kolegij kao referentnu točku vrednovanja. Analiza razlika između odgovora koje su dale različite grupe dionika, koristeći se testom neovisnosti logaritma omjera vjerojatnosti (G-test), s Williamsovom korekcijom, (rezultat: (G)=10.212, X-kvadrat df=8, p-vrijednost=0,2505) pokazao je nepostojanje statistički značajne razlike između odgovora koje su dale različite grupe dionika. Istraživanje instrumenata provjere znanja koji su se koristili u formalnom obrazovanju i instrumenata/pristupa provjeri znanja kojima bi se provoditelji koristili u vrednovanju (I1/Q28), otkrilo je osam instrumenata i učestalost njihove trenutne (formalnim programi) i namjeravane (vrednovanje) upotrebe, kako je prikazano u Tablici 4. Značajni rezultat istraživanja koji je potrebno naglasiti jest relativno slaba podrška upotrebi klasičnog portfelja (Brinke i sur., 2010; Ng Curtise, 2011) u vrednovanju, gdje je rezultat vrednovanja često utemeljen na deklarativnim metodama. Pristup korištenjem portfelja bio je jedan od prvih koji se razvio i trenutno se koristi širom EU (Souto-Otero, 2014), iako se u nekim zemljama koristi samo za dokumentiranje dodatnih dokaza o kompetencijama koje su ekstrahirane putem sumativnih instrumenata. Jednostavno rečeno, izbjegavanje primjene deklarativnih metoda provjere znanja, koje nisu uobičajene u formalnom obrazovanju, korak je prema upotrebi istih standarda i pristupa u formalnim programima i u procesu vrednovanja, a time i korak prema implementaciji načela jednake vrijednosti.

Tablica 4

Potnije istraživanje, usmjerenije na elemente procesa vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju s pomoću anketiranja predstavnika visokoobrazovnih institucija (I2), s rezultatima prikazanim u Tablici 5, pokazalo je nešto pozitivniji stav prema dodjeljivanju certifikata kandidatu koji nije uspješno položio sve ishode učenja unutar skupa ishoda učenja. Taj se stav izravno suprotstavlja ideji potpune upotrebe standarda unutar HKO-a i koncepta ishoda učenja, iako I2/Q8 otkriva da ispitanici razumiju koncept minimalnih ishoda učenja kao minimalno očekivani prag za prolaz. Ako navedene rezultate usporedimo s rezultatima šire populacije dionika (I1), jasno je da je načelo jednake vrijednosti, putem upotrebe standarda kvalifikacija utemeljenih na HKO-u, potencijalno vrlo teško u potpunosti primijeniti u visokom obrazovanju, iako ga snažno podupiru ostale grupe dionika (korisnici, poslodavci, studenti, sindikati itd.).

Tablica 5

Upotreba certifikata i rezultata vrednovanja

Preliminarne istraživačke tvrdnje I2/Q33 i I2/Q34 dotakle su se pitanja povjerenja u akreditirane provoditelje vrednovanja. Rezultati pokazuju sveobuhvatnu i snažnu

podršku vrednovanju sa svrhom izuzeća od obveze pohađanja dijela nastave, ako je vrednovanje organizirano u istoj obrazovnoj instituciji gdje će se izuzeće iskoristiti (45,1% se djelomično slaže i 37,6% se u potpunosti slaže). Nadalje, ispitanici pokazuju gotovo jednako snažnu podršku upotrebi vrednovanja sa svrhom izuzeća od obveze pohađanja dijela nastave, ako je certifikat na temelju vrednovanja izdala druga institucija (45,0% i 31,1%). Ipak, Kruskal-Wallis test, primijenjen na odgovorima različitih skupina ispitanika, pokazao je statistički značajne (1%) razlike između skupina odgovora ($\chi^2(2)=8,964, p < 0,001$), a post hoc testovi (Mann – Whitney U-test s prilagođenom Holm p-vrijednosti) većinom otkrivaju razlike između studenata i predstavnika formalnih obrazovnih ustanova (prilagođena p-vrijednost=0,0038). Konkretno, dok 42,9% studenata snažno podupire ideju izuzeća na temelju rezultata vrednovanja u istoj ustanovi, samo 25,3% predstavnika pružatelja formalnog obrazovanja misli isto. Predstavnici formalnih obrazovnih institucija pružaju još manje podrške uporabi certifikata izdanih od drugih akreditiranih provoditelja vrednovanja sa svrhom izuzeća od obveze pohađanja nastave i polaganja ispita (16,9% snažno podupire ideju), a podrška je studenata u tom slučaju također blago pala (36,8% snažno podupire ideju).

Korištenje certifikata i rezultata vrednovanja temeljito je istraženo kod dvije grupe dionika u visokom obrazovanju (I2 – visokoobrazovne institucije i I3 - korisnici), primjenom istih istraživačkih pitanja, a rezultati prikazani u Tablici 6 pokazuju da korisnici značajno podupiru osnovnu uporabu jednake vrijednosti u vrednovanju, a visokoobrazovne ustanove pokazuju relativno nisku podršku toj ideji. Pronađene su gotovo jednake razlike u stavovima u odnosu na korištenje ispita s istim sadržajem i istim postupcima provjere znanja u procesu vrednovanja kao i u formalnim programima u visokom obrazovanju.

Takva je ideja dobila snažnu podršku kandidata za proces vrednovanja, a relativno je slabu podršku dobila od predstavnika visokoobrazovnih ustanova koje bi, u takvom scenariju, imale manje dodatnog rada za pripremu ispitnih materijala u odnosu na razvoj drugačijeg pristupa provjeri znanja kandidata za proces vrednovanja od onog koji primjenjuju kod formalnih programa. Ideja automatskog priznavanja vrednovanih jedinica ishoda učenja i njihova upotreba sa svrhom izuzeća od obveze pohađanja dijela formalnih programa dobila je gotovo jednaku podršku od korisnika i visokoobrazovnih institucija, kao i ideja korištenja istog skupa ishoda učenja u različitim formalnim programima u visokom obrazovanju za promicanje horizontalne mobilnosti studenata između različitih programa.

Tablica 6

Osiguranje kvalitete vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju

S ciljem razvijanja kriterija osiguravanja kvalitete procesa vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju, ta je tema istraživala stavove visokoobrazovnih institucija i korisnika vrednovanja u odnosu na razinu dokumentacije i vanjskog pristupa osiguravanju kvalitete,

koji bi osigurao povjerenje u rezultate vrednovanja. Rezultati navedenog istraživanja prikazani su u Tablici 7, a tri od četiri pitanja koriste se u oba istraživanja (I2 i I3).

Tablica 7

Prikazani rezultati pokazuju vrlo slične stavove visokoobrazovnih institucija i korisnika prema svim prikazanim elementima relevantnim za osiguravanje kvalitete (QA) vrednovanja. Iako obje skupine ispitanika smatraju kako je vrednovanje malo više ugroženo potencijalnom institucionalnom zlouporabom u odnosu na formalno obrazovanje, obje se skupine slažu da bi proces vrednovanja trebao biti više zaštićen putem osiguravanja kvalitete u odnosu na formalno obrazovanje i da treba prikupljati više dokumentacije za ex-post evaluaciju i arhiviranje. Objе grupe podržavaju ideju korištenja nacionalnog anketnog sustava za studente i njegovih rezultata u akreditacijskim postupcima provoditelja vrednovanja. Na kraju, visokoobrazovne institucije podupiru ideju da negativni rezultati akreditacije programa vrednovanja, ako ga organiziraju isti ispitivači i isto osoblje koje provodi i odgovarajuće formalne programe, trebaju imati implikacije i na akreditaciju pripadajućih formalnih programa.

Zaključci

S ciljem implementacije modela vrednovanja u svoje visoko obrazovanje, u skladu s nedavnim preporukama Vijeća Europske unije (Council of the European Union, 2012), Hrvatska je dijelom zadužila Agenciju za znanost i visoko obrazovanje za pružanje podrške razvoju u tom području. S pomoću razvoja i organiziranja tri kvantitativna istraživanja izložena u ovom članku, istraženi su stavovi i zahtjevi ključnih dionika sa svrhom predlaganja politički izvedivog modela vrednovanja koji bi mogao biti ugrađen u nacionalni obrazovni sustav i tradiciju. Rezultati prvog pripremnog istraživanja otkrili su da svi dionici podupiru ideju jednakih dobiti za kandidate koji certificiraju svoje kompetencije putem vrednovanja i one koji to čine putem formalnih programa, ali ne podržavaju ideju korištenja jednakih certifikata i jednakih standarda provjere znanja. Daljnje istraživanje, koje pokriva institucije u visokom obrazovanju i kandidate za proces vrednovanja, pruža dublji uvid u određene elemente koncepta, putem pet istraživačkih tema. Nema značajne razlike između grupa dionika u pogledu zahtjeva za osiguranjem kvalitete koja bi trebala biti stroža u vrednovanju nego u formalnim obrazovnim programima i podržana s više dokumentiranja sa svrhom ex-post evaluacije. Slično tome, visoka usklađenost obiju skupina (I2 i I3) može se pronaći u odnosu prema ideji da provoditelji vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju trebaju biti samo visokoobrazovne institucije koje već imaju akreditirani formalni program u istom polju. Upotreba standarda kvalifikacija, njihovih ishoda učenja i odgovarajućih primjera provjere znanja s ciljem informiranja i pripreme kandidata za uspješno vrednovanje također je podržana od obiju grupa, kao i upotreba rezultata vrednovanja i certifikata sa svrhom izuzeća od obveze pohađanja i polaganja dijela visokoobrazovnih programa. Na kraju, najznačajnija razlika koja je dovela u

pitanje cjelokupnu implementaciju načela jednake vrijednosti u hrvatskom visokom obrazovanju potječe iz pristupa provjeri znanja pri čemu visokoobrazovne institucije ne dijele iste stavove s kandidatima (i drugim dionicima). Njihova slaba podrška korištenju istih standarda u provjeri znanja kandidata u formalnim programima i u procesu vrednovanja (ispiti s istim sadržajem i istim postupcima provjere znanja) te povremena neispravna upotreba koncepta ishoda učenja kao minimalnog praga za prolazak ispita i dobivanje certifikata za skup ishoda učenja (a time i kvalifikacije) može djelomično objasniti zašto ni jedna od zemalja članica EU do sada nije provela taj koncept u cijelosti (European Commission et al., 2014). Takav rezultat dobiven u zemlji koja prethodno nije uvela proces vrednovanja, a posebno ne vrednovanje usredotočeno uglavnom na deklarativnu metodu provjere znanja kakvo su mnoge druge zemlje EU imale, implicira da će se promjene u konceptima provjere znanja i zahtjevi za većom upotrebom sumativnih metoda, sličnih onima koje se koriste u formalnim programima i utemeljenih na standardima vezanim za HKO, sporije i teže provesti nego što to donositelji odluka u EU očekuju (do 2018.) (Council of the European Union, 2012).

S ciljem uspostave održivog i vjerodostojnog modela vrednovanja u hrvatskom visokom obrazovanju potrebno je daljnje istraživanje odgovarajućih pristupa provjeri znanja i metoda vrednovanja u visokom obrazovanju, kao i dublji uvid u nastavničko razumijevanje sveobuhvatnih implikacija upotrebe ishoda učenja u provjerama znanja u visokom obrazovanju.