

# Recognition of prior learning in higher education

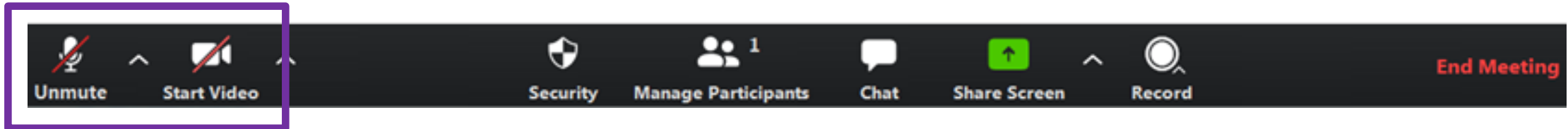


# Today's programme

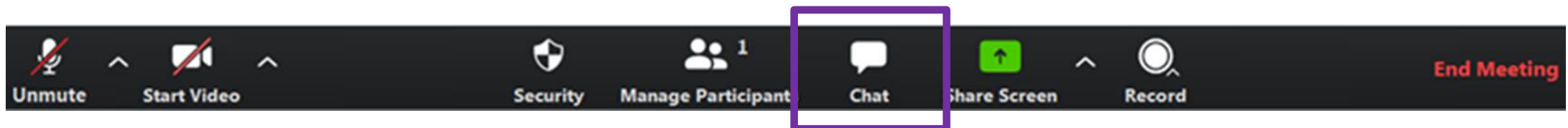
- 9.30 – 9.40**      **Welcome and introduction**
- 9.40 – 10.00**    **Main conclusions of the RPL in practice project**  
**Anders Ahlstrand**, Coordinator of the RPLip project, The Swedish Council for Higher Education
- 10.00 – 10.20**    **Current status of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**  
**David Crosier**, Education System Analyst, EACEA, Eurydice
- 10.20 – 10.30**    **Break**
- 10.30 – 10.50**    **Firm foundations for RPL practices – institutional commitment**  
**Irene Sheridan**, Head of Extended Campus, Munster Technological University (MTU)
- 10.50 – 11.50**    **The four phases of validation – practical peer-learning**  
Group discussions based on the four phases of validation and a self-assessment template developed in the project.
- 11.50 – 12.30**    **Lunchbreak**
- 12.30 – 13.30**    **Firm foundations for RPL practices –  
programme design, learning outcomes, Qualifications Framework and RPL**  
**Susanna Björklund**, Education Coordinator, Lund University  
**Ann Toebes**, Curriculum Development Facilitator, Munster Technological University (MTU)
- 13.30 – 13.40**    **Break**
- 13.40 – 14.30**    **Present and future perspectives on RPL; Panel discussion**  
**Moderator: Michal Karpíšek**, Secretary-General, EURASHE  
**Cecilia Christersson**, Vice-Rector, Malmö university  
**Diane Freiburger**, Managing Director, FIBAA - Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation  
**Koen Nomden**, Team Leader, DG Employment, European Commission  
**Pegi Pavletić**, Executive Committee Member, The European Students' Union (ESU)  
**Jean-Philippe Restoueix**, Administrator, Education Policy Division, Council of Europe
- 14.30 – 14.45**    **Sum-up and goodbye**

## Some housekeeping rules

- Remain muted during the plenary parts of the event;
- Switch off your camera;



- Write your comments and questions in the chat.



## A quick poll

1. What kind of organisation do you represent?

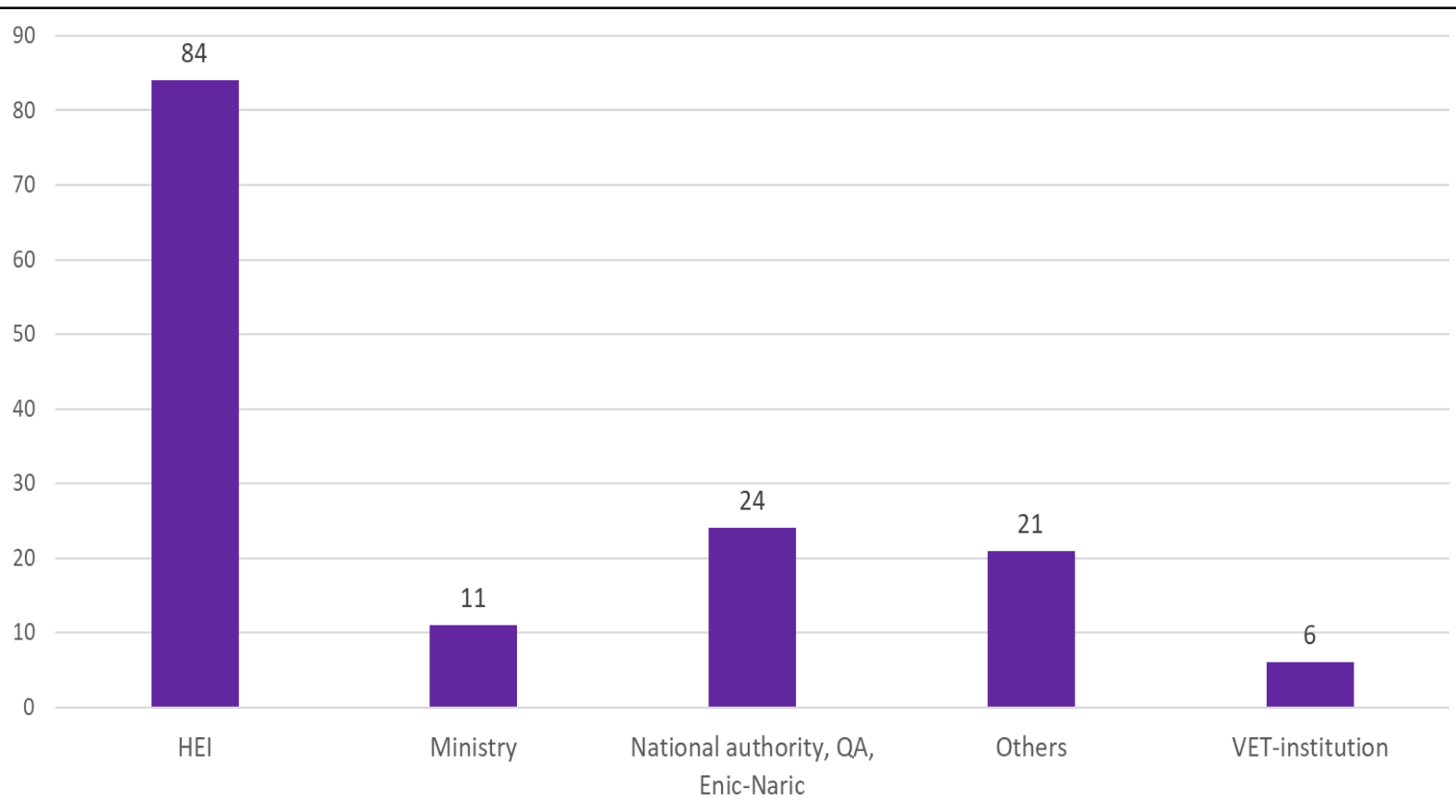
- a. HEI
- b. VET-institution
- c. Ministry
- d. National authority, e.g. QA, Enic-Naric
- e. Others

2. Do you have hand's on experience in working with RPL?

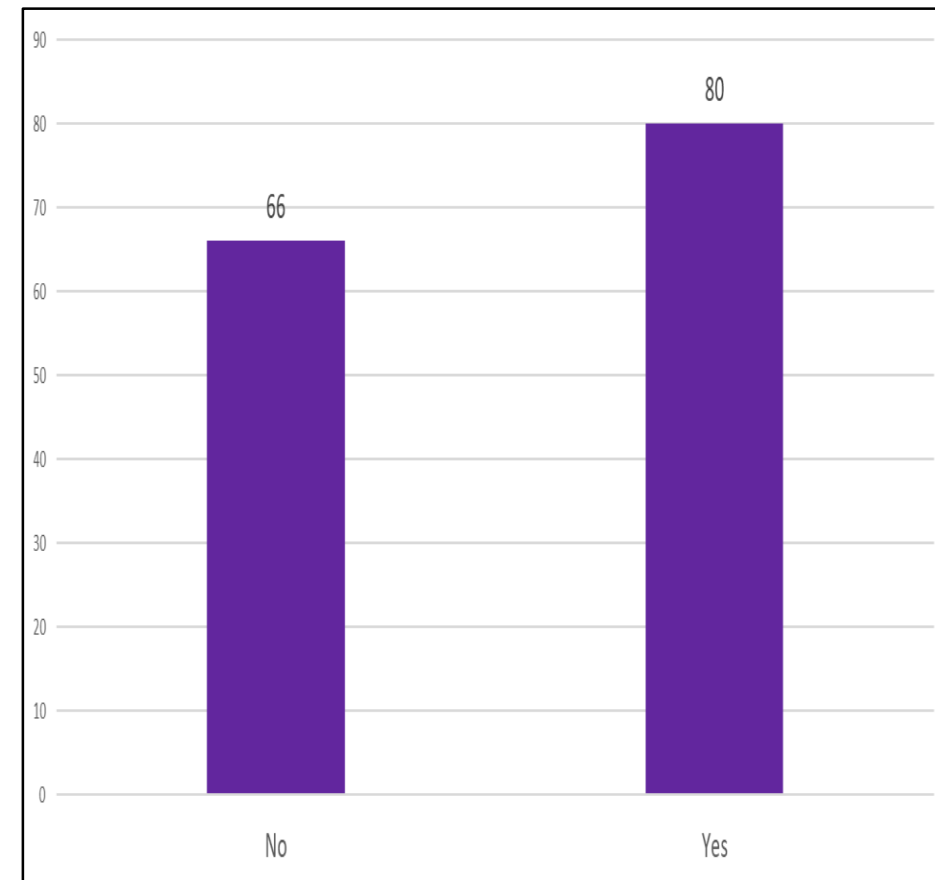
- a. Yes
- b. No

# The responses by the audience

## What kind of organisation do you represent?



## Do you have hands-on experience in working with RPL?



## The RPL in practice project

- EU funded "Support to the implementation of the EHEA reforms"  
Erasmus + - Key action 3: Support for policy reforms.
- Swedish Ministry of Education and Research contractor
- The Swedish Council for Higher Education, UHR, is designated by the ministry to coordinate
- Contract period April 15, 2019 – April 14, 2021

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/607050-EPP-1-2018-1-SE-EPPKA3-BOLOGNA>

Project website: <https://www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice>

## The objective of the project

...is to encourage, through structured peer learning, the participating countries/institutions to develop quality assured and consistent processes to recognise non-formal and informal learning that suit the conditions of the participating countries/institutions.

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Focus on **Higher Education**

# Participants: authorities, ministries and HEI:s in 5 countries and EURASHE



Swedish Council for  
Higher Education



QQI

Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and Qualifications Ireland



IRISH  
UNIVERSITIES  
ASSOCIATION



CIT CORK  
INSTITUTE OF  
TECHNOLOGY  
ITÍUID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA CHORCAÍ



MTU

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan  
Munster Technological University



BRIATHAR DÉ HO LÓCHRANN  
MIC  
MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE  
COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL



Government of Iceland  
Ministry of Education, Science and Culture



rannís



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS



LISTAHÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS  
Iceland University of the Arts



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Ministry of Science and  
Education



UNIRI



ALGEBRA  
UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE



EURASHE  
European Association of Institutions in Higher Education



Government Offices of Sweden



GÖTEBORGS  
UNIVERSITET



Swedish Council for  
Higher Education



KTH  
VETENSKAP  
OCH KONST



BOKU



Agentur für  
Qualitätssicherung  
und Akkreditierung  
Austria



FH  
CAMPUS  
WIEN  
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



die pädagogische  
hochschule  
oberösterreich

## Basic documents and background

*Validation:  
"a process of confirmation by an  
authorised body that an individual  
has acquired learning outcomes  
measured against a relevant  
standard"*

- The Council recommendation, of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32012H1222%2801%29>

# Validation of non-formal and informal learning - the four phases of validation

The European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning

[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073_en.pdf)



Identification

Documentation

Assessment

Certification

## Outcomes

- Materials:
  - Information leaflet on basic facts of validation
  - Tested self-assessment template
  - Survey on Institutional Experiences of Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education, Report
  - 2 webinars, Why validation and How validation
  - Film clips with project participants
  - This conference

## Outcomes

- Institutional and national project were going on in parallel to the RPL in practice project
- Crossbreeding between them
- A lot has happened during the project period
  - New legislation
  - New institutional processes and routines
  - Pilot projects at institutions have started
- Film clips on the project website <https://www.uhr.se/en/rplconference>

# Conclusions 1

- Peer learning works
- Ideal conditions:
  - when the peers are in the process of developing practices
  - with a mix of actors, HEIs, Ministries, QA-agencies, Enic-Naric's and other national and European agencies/organisations
  - with participants on different stages of implementation
  - beneficial with a champion – gives insight and confidence

## Conclusions 2

- It's not "one-size-fits-all"

"I expected to get cookbooks...Now I know that if we were "given" best practices examples ready for "policy copying" at the very beginning, we would have skipped discussions on the RPL concepts, deep analysis and real understanding of the national contexts...We would have gotten tools but would potentially skipped acquiring skills and understanding to develop them by ourselves."



## Conclusions 3, Crucial points for implementation

- Institutional and programme level commitment
- Transparent procedures and guidelines including agreed standards and definitions
- Learning outcomes-oriented curricula related to a national qualifications' framework
- Information, student guidelines and support
- Committed and well-informed academic and administrative staff
- Appropriate funding
- Clear legal provisions/legislation
- Need for networks and information sharing
- ...and more

## Recommendations, Ministries/national authorities

- Provide necessary frameworks for HEIs to work with RPL.
  - Legal provisions need to be in place.
  - A functional qualifications framework facilitates the implementation of RPL.
  - Consider how additional costs for RPL should be covered.
- If needed, revisit the Council Recommendation
- Initiate a discussion with national authorities, quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions, which can facilitate cooperation, networking and peer-learning.

## Recommendations, Higher education institutions

- Use the information and the tools which are already there, get inspiration from what has been done earlier.
- Make use of the self-assessment template developed within this project.
- Revisit the learning outcomes of courses and programmes with validation in mind and reference them clearly to a qualification's framework.
- Initiate an internal discussion to involve all staff categories in RPL, from senior management to faculty to student counselling and administration.
- Learn from previous experience – save and use previous decisions to improve and quality assure practice.
- Continuous peer learning and cooperation with other HEIs, nationally and/or internationally

## Recommendations, European level – EU commission and BFUG

- Continue support peer-learning on European level
- Make sure that peer-learning projects involve different actors

# Current status of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

**David Crosier**, Higher Education System Analyst, EACEA, Eurydice

**Break**  
**We resume at 10.30**

# **Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education**

# Firm foundations for RPL practices – institutional commitment

**Irene Sheridan**, Head of Extended Campus, Munster Technological University (MTU)

# The four phases of validation – practical peer-learning

Group discussions based on the four phases of validation and the self-assessment template developed in the project.



# Introduction to the group discussions

- The **purpose** with the group discussions is to:
- Provide peer learning and networking
  - Spread the self-assessment template
  - Get feedback on the self-assessment templates
  - Get input to the final report

## Introduction to the group discussions

The purpose of developing the self-assessment template:

- To have a common focus when looking at the different phases of validation,
- Provide a tool for achieving structured peer learning in the project.
- Participating HEIs were asked to fill in the template whilst working in practice with a validation case in order to:
  - facilitate the institutions in looking at their own process to see if it was in line with recommendations and guidelines
  - extract the fundamental building blocks for RPL and the most crucial points for successful implementation of RPL practices

## Introduction to the group discussions

The purpose of developing the template (external):

- Function as an instrument to self-assess an institution's own RPL practice.
- But also serve as a basis for focused discussion about RPL within the institution.
- The importance of transparent procedures and guidelines were stressed both within the project but also in the answers in the survey and during the webinars. The template can help to implement such procedures.
- However, the template can gain on translation and it should be adapted to the national or institutional context.

# Validation of non-formal and informal learning - the four phases of validation

The European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning

[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3073_en.pdf)



Identification

Documentation

Assessment

Certification

## Introduction to the group discussions, definitions

1. **IDENTIFICATION** through dialogue of particular experiences of an individual; A model to identify knowledge, skills and competences of a potential candidate for RPL.
2. **DOCUMENTATION** to make visible the individual's experiences; The provision of evidence of the knowledge, skills and competences.
3. a formal **ASSESSMENT** of these experiences; The phase in which the documented evidence of the individual's knowledge, skills and competences are compared against specific standards/learning outcomes.
4. **CERTIFICATION** of the results of the assessment which may lead to a partial or full qualification; The official recording confirming the achievement of learning outcomes against a specified standard.

# Introduction to the group discussions, the self-assessment template

## Part 2. Self-assessment template – to be filled in parallel to working with an RPL case

1. Identification	Short description	Crucial points for successful implementation	Challenges	Links to examples
<p>Has the purpose of the validation and the different phases of the process been clearly defined and communicated to the candidate?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear information and support to candidates.</li> <li>- Clear role definitions and responsibilities.</li> <li>- Clear definitions of how validation can be used.</li> <li>- Clear information about the process and what kind of information the candidate has to present.</li> <li>- Guidance/mentoring to candidates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The candidates' understanding of their responsibility and the effort they must put into the process – including the reflection on their learning.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.cit.ie/rpl">https://www.cit.ie/rpl</a>  <a href="https://www.cit.ie/rpl/bookaworkshop">https://www.cit.ie/rpl/bookaworkshop</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.kth.se/en/studies/master/recognition-of-prior-learning-1.786469">https://www.kth.se/en/studies/master/recognition-of-prior-learning-1.786469</a></p>
<p>Which tools and procedures support identification?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidelines</li> <li>- Easy access to information on Learning Outcomes on programme and course level linked to a qualification framework.</li> <li>- Templates and forms.</li> <li>- Examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poorly constructed Learning Outcomes.</li> <li>- Know when all the relevant evidence is identified.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="https://www.cit.ie/courses/findacourse">https://www.cit.ie/courses/findacourse</a>  <a href="https://www.cit.ie/rpl/usefulforms">https://www.cit.ie/rpl/usefulforms</a>  <a href="http://courses.cit.ie">http://courses.cit.ie</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.algebra.hr/visokouciliste/en/studij/">https://www.algebra.hr/visokouciliste/en/studij/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.studera.nu/startpage/road-to-studies/admission-to-university-studies/prior-learning-and-exemptions/">https://www.studera.nu/startpage/road-to-studies/admission-to-university-studies/prior-learning-and-exemptions/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.kth.se/utbildning">https://www.kth.se/utbildning</a></p>

# Introduction to the group discussions, the self-assessment template

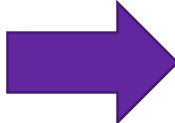
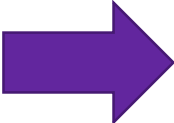
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# Introduction to the group discussions, the self-assessment template

**Part 2. Self-assessment template** – to be filled in parallel to working with an RPL case

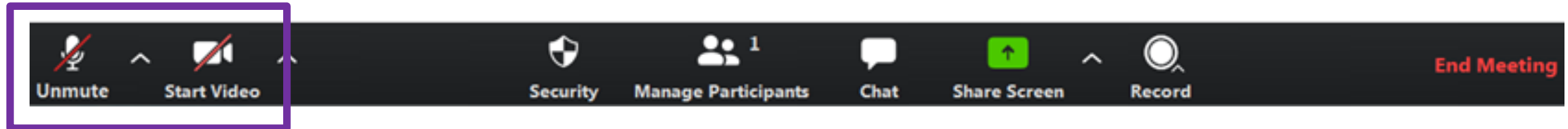
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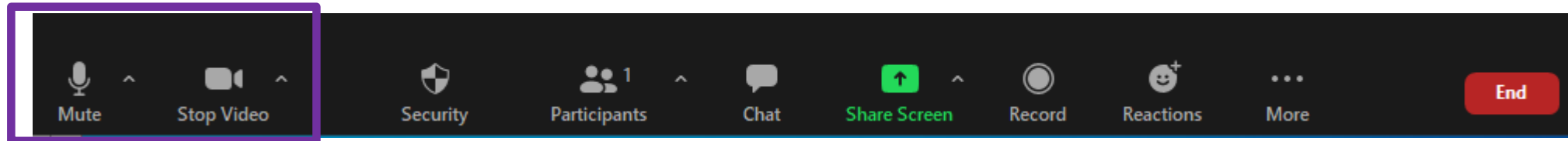
## In the break-out rooms

- Unmute when you want to speak;
- Switch on your camera;



## In the break-out rooms

- Unmute when you want to speak;
- Switch on your camera;



## Introduction to the group discussions

- Mentimeter
- Yes/No questions
- Written open ended questions
- Room for discussions
  
- [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com)
- In your break-out room you'll get the code to use



Please enter the code

Submit

The code is found on the screen in front of you

**Lunch break**  
**We resume at 12.30**

# **Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education**

# Firm foundations for RPL practices – programme design, learning outcomes, Qualifications Framework and RPL

**Susanna Björklund**, Education Coordinator, Lund University

**Ann Toebes**, Curriculum Development Facilitator, Munster Technological  
University (MTU)



**Break**  
**We resume at 13.40**

# **Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education**

# Present and future perspectives on RPL; Panel discussion

Moderator: **Michal Karpíšek**, Secretary-General, EURASHE

**Cecilia Christersson**, Vice-Rector, Malmö university

**Diane Freiburger**, Managing Director, FIBAA - Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation

**Koen Nomden**, Team Leader, DG Employment, European Commission

**Pegi Pavletić**, Executive Committee Member, The European Students' Union (ESU)

**Jean-Philippe Restoueix**, Administrator, Education Policy Division, Council of Europe

# Materials

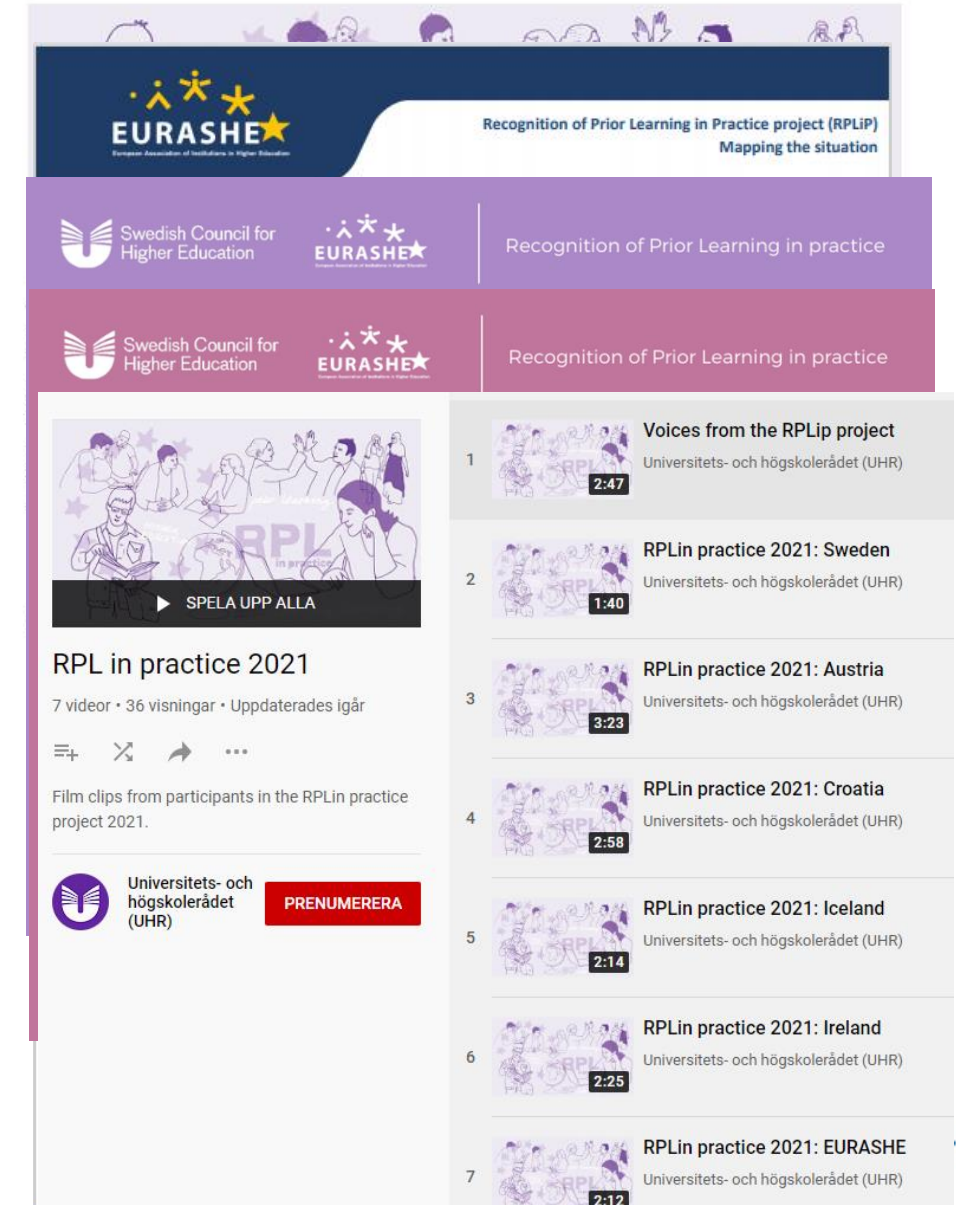
- Information leaflet on basic facts of validation
- Self-assessment template
- Report, Mapping Institutional Experiences of Recognition of Prior Learning in Higher Education
- Presentations and films from this and previous seminars
- Film clips with project participants
- Final report of the project (available within a month)

Project website: <https://www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice>

## Validation of non-formal and informal learning in higher education

## The four phases of validation

RPL in practice. Self-assessment template – The four phases of validation



The screenshot shows a YouTube playlist interface. At the top, there is a banner for the 'Recognition of Prior Learning in Practice project (RPLip) Mapping the situation' with the EURASHE logo. Below the banner, the playlist title 'RPL in practice 2021' is displayed, along with the number of videos (7) and views (36). The playlist contains seven video entries, each with a thumbnail, a title, and a duration. The videos are:

1. **Voices from the RPLip project** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 2:47
2. **RPLin practice 2021: Sweden** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 1:40
3. **RPLin practice 2021: Austria** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 3:23
4. **RPLin practice 2021: Croatia** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 2:58
5. **RPLin practice 2021: Iceland** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 2:14
6. **RPLin practice 2021: Ireland** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 2:25
7. **RPLin practice 2021: EURASHE** (Universitets- och högskolerådet (UHR)) - 2:12



# Evaluation

- 4 – 5 questions
- Your input will be appreciated

## One final question in Mentimeter

- [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com)
- In one or two words, what does RPL contribute to?

# In one or two words, what does RPL contribute to?



# Thank you!

[www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice](http://www.uhr.se/en/rplinpractice)