



Europass at the interface of education and labour market

When the European Commission and Cedefop created Europass in 2005, following a decision by the European Parliament and the Council in December 2004 to develop a 'personal, coordinated portfolio of documents' which people can use to improve the way they 'communicate and present their qualifications and skills throughout Europe', the potential for success of what was then a new tool was unclear. Would this electronic way of presenting divergent documents and certifications from the academic or professional worlds really help to promote transparency and cross-border understanding of qualifications and skills? Would the job seekers and employers see any advantage in it? Would it help to boost mobility and job opportunities?

Seven years on, the latest Europass figures show how well founded the original decision was. The most iconic Europass document, the European CV, has been used by almost 20 million people since 2005. More than 300 000 Europass Diploma Supplements¹ are issued each year.

The Europass site is currently averaging 43 000 visitors per day. The figures are steadily rising year by year demonstrating that the Europass framework is becoming increasingly well-known and its documents proving useful throughout Europe.

Both the Europe 2020 'Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' and the recent European Commission's Communication „Towards a job-rich recovery“ underline how close cooperation between the worlds of education and work and better recognition of skills and qualifications is essential to boost employability and fighting unemployment. By setting out one's skills and qualifications — acquired by formal and non-formal learning — in a clear and understandable way throughout Europe, Europass facilitates communication between jobseekers and employers and acts as mediator between the worlds of education and training and the realities of the labour market. In times of economic uncertainties, this is a considerable asset.

The changes soon to be made to the framework, in particular the new European Skills Passport, will add new dimensions. This new newsletter, to be published by the Commission three times a year, will keep interested parties informed of the most recent developments regarding Europass, showcase successful experiences and share lessons learned. We hope it can play a role in broadening the debate among policymakers, experts, practitioners and stakeholders alike as well as in promoting what has become a valuable European tool with a proven track record in supporting mobility and helping jobseekers.

Jan Truszczyński | Director-General for Education and Culture, European Commission

¹The Europass document linked to higher education



Zusammenfassung

Diese Veröffentlichung ist die erste Ausgabe eines Europäischen Newsletters mit Nachrichten und Beiträgen über Entwicklungen bei der Implementierung der Europass-Initiative. Einleitend beschreibt Jan Truszczyński die Vision und die Grundidee von Europass auf Seite 1.

Das zentrale Thema dieser Ausgabe wird in mehreren Artikeln über den Beitrag von Europass zum Übergang vom Bildungssystem in die Arbeitswelt für Lernende und Sozialpartner umrissen (Seiten 2-3). Informationen über den Europass Lebenslauf, seine Implementierung und Anwendung sind auf Seite 4 zu finden, Kurznachrichten und Statistiken auf Seite 5.

Viel Spaß beim Lesen!

En bref

Cette brochure est le premier numéro d'un bulletin d'information européen consacré à Europass. Vous y trouverez une sélection d'informations et d'articles reflétant les progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre de cette initiative. En guise d'introduction (page 1), Jan Truszczyński précise la vision d'Europass et sa raison d'être.

Au travers de plusieurs articles (pages 2 – 3), ce numéro donne la parole aux apprenants et aux partenaires sociaux sur la contribution d'Europass au passage du système éducatif vers le monde du travail. La page 4 est consacrée au curriculum vitae Europass, sa mise en œuvre et son utilisation. Enfin, vous trouverez en page 5 des flashes d'actualité et des données statistiques.

Bonne lecture!

Page 2-3: Europass at the interface of education and labour market

Page 4: Zoom on the Europass Curriculum vitae
Page 5: News and statistics

The process of transition from initial education to the workplace has always been a challenging one, and is all the more so amid today's tough economic climate leaving up to half of young people jobless in some parts of Europe. The following two pages reflect on the ability of Europass to facilitate the transition process and help citizens enter a new period of life successfully. This should be done in a concerted effort, both through structural work on key stakeholder level (see Croatian and Danish contributions) and by direct support and guidance to individuals (contributions from Austria, Finland and Germany).

Building stakeholder networks for Europass in Croatia

Croatia joined the 'Europass family' in early January 2011 following full participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme which has been implemented and promoted at national level by the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes, also officially designated as the National Europass Centre Croatia.

At that point Europass had been long known to European citizens, so we have put our efforts into promoting the initiative among Croatian citizens and into raising their awareness of many benefits that the Europass documents might have for them both nationally and transnationally. NEC Croatia has established contact and collaboration with the education community, diverse economic sectors, the media and other stakeholders in order to make Europass a relevant set of services on the Croatian labour market.

In addition to the usual promotional activities and direct contact with the current and potential Europass users, who have readily embraced the opportunities posed by the portfolio, the Europass Advisor has participated regularly in the meetings of the Working Group for the Establishment of the National Forum for Lifelong Career Guidance, which is a project implemented by the Croatian Employment Service at national level. This has enabled us to intensify our collaboration with stakeholders such as the national authorities, private recruitment agencies, VET schools, the Croatian Agency for VET and Adult Education, the Education and Teacher Training Agency, the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, social partners and many others, thus enhancing the visibility of Europass among a variety of target groups.

The advice and feedback given by educational institutions and by those familiar with the current trends on labour market have proved to be invaluable contribution to an efficient use of the Europass documents, especially when it comes to creating new examples of the Europass CV and Language Passport, bearing in mind a variety of different purposes and professional situations, and to making the Europass Certificate Supplement available to the graduates from VET schools.

Here is what some of our partners say about their experiences with the Europass services...

'The employment advisors recommend to job seekers to register at the portal of the Croatian Employment Service in order to create their Europass CVs, which are then saved in the database and accessible to the advisors, who are, together with job seekers, also referred to the website of the NEC Croatia for further information about Europass.'
Kristina Alerić, Head of the Department for Recruitment and Active Employment Policies at the Croatian Employment Service

'The members of our professional associations and chambers believe that the Europass Mobility contributes considerably to the recognition of the skills and competences they have acquired, thus perceiving it as an added-value to their personal development.'
Darija Čukelj, a project coordinator at the Zagreb Chamber of Trades and Crafts

'Enhanced knowledge of the Europass CV and Language Passport has further encouraged our students to apply successfully for student mobility schemes as part of the Erasmus sectoral programme.'

Danijele Vnućec Grdović, a coordinator of the Higher Education Information Management System at the Zagreb University Centre for Croatian Studies

Vlasta Jelašić Kerec | NEC Croatia

Study on sustainability of Europass Mobility

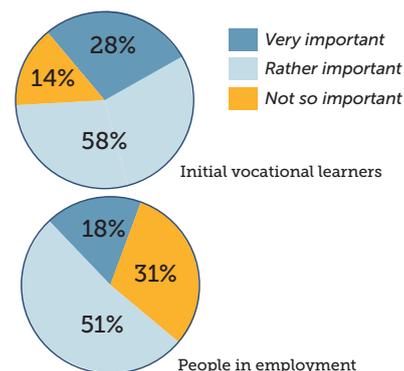
With more than 100.000 Europass Mobility documents (EM) issued in Germany since 2005, there remained the question whether Europass had been actually able to help those people find jobs on European labour markets.

Via an online questionnaire of 48 questions, 26.244 holders of an EM were contacted in 2011. They had been participants in the Leonardo da Vinci mobility action either during their initial vocational training (IVT) or as people on the labour market (PLM). In the 4 weeks of the survey, 1.858 valid questionnaires were returned: 1.315 from IVT, and 543 from PLM.

The results show that a great majority of the holders see EM as useful, and state that it is a valuable recognition of their individual skills gained abroad. They judge it important for their future vocational development. As expected, mostly young people attach their EM to job applications. People at the beginning of their work history embrace EM as a supplement that can help them stand out from the mass of applicants. A special quality of EM is seen in the fact that besides describing professional competences it also mirrors "soft skills" that may not be reflected anywhere else.

Uta-M. Behnisch | NEC Germany

How important is Europass Mobility for your vocational development?



Facilitating graduate employability through Europass in Finland

A major Finnish University of Applied Sciences, HAAGA-HELIA sends its graduates to the labour market with solid employability skills and a decent document portfolio including the Europass documents. HAAGA-HELIA thus aims actively to develop both the skills required in the workplace and the ways they are communicated to employers.

Every graduate from HAAGA-HELIA receives a Europass Diploma Supplement. The university also encourages students to compile their Europass CVs and a Language Passports during their studies.

"Students receive support and guidance on how to fill-out and use Europass documents effectively. Our graduates get a head-start on the labour market," Dr Liisa Vuori explains.

HAAGA-HELIA has been coordinating an international project named [ELPiPL](#) - European Language Portfolio on Student's Journey through Studies into Professional Life. The aim of the initiative is to promote the Language Portfolio, the Europass CV and the Language Passport, and enhance their use in co-operation with employers and educational institutions.

Stand out with Europass

The labour market is becoming ever more competitive, and employees are expected to have more versatile skills. "For example language skills are becoming increasingly important, as workplaces become more culturally diverse," says Dr Vuori. The Language Portfolio and the Language Passport are great for learning languages – as they are for communicating the learned skills to the employer.

"It may be difficult for job seekers to stand out when many applicants have similar skills. One way of differentiating oneself is to use the Europass documents," Dr Vuori points out. For with Europass, the whole range of person's skills and experiences get visualised and communicated, including e.g. social skills and competences. All in all, Europass being just a tool, it is through the individual complexity of its user that it gets to make a difference.

Susanna Kärki | NEC Finland

Simulating school-to-work transition with Europass

Knowledge about the Europass portfolio helps you to find out more about going abroad, entering the national and European labour market, and preparing yourself for continuing education. That is why NEC Austria organises workshops for learners in their final year of upper-secondary school.

Participants receive information on the portfolio and can complete their Europass CVs. They get in touch with real-life labour market conditions by using the EURES platform. Eventually, they have the opportunity to take part in short simulated job interviews conducted with HR experts. For the learners to experience the atmosphere of international career opportunities the workshops are held in English.

Lydia Rössler | NEC Austria

Bridging the gap between business and education

The conference „Skills for the Future“ held in Copenhagen in May 2012 brought together experts from across Europe to debate present labour market challenges. Carlo Scatoli (European Commission) addressed three issues of particular importance:

Recognition of skills: Validating skills acquired outside the formal systems needs harmonisation. A related Commission proposal for a Recommendation will be presented.

Innovative learning environments: Learning progress is better achieved through skill-rich and creative learning contexts.

Cooperation between education and business: the gap between developing skills and using them is still too broad.

The conference was organised by the [New Skills Network](#) that has pooled results of related LLP projects, organised events and made future work recommendations to the Commission. The initiative has published a number of [articles](#), [reports and studies](#) that aim to inspire creation of better links between education and business.

Iben Böhling With | Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation

Further Reading

For more information on recent European developments in the area of transition between learning and work, you may want to consult the following books and websites:

Europe in figures
Eurostat yearbook
2011 >
by Eurostat
Seven hundred pages
of up-to-date empirical
information. Data on
education and labour
market on pages
193–267.

Cedefop >
Cedefop's forecasts of
skill supply and demand
in Europe.

Guiding at-risk
youth through
learning to work >
by Cedefop
A study addressing
the current challenge
of facilitating young
people's integration into
working life.

EURES >
The European job
mobility portal.

Transferability of
skills across
economic sectors >
by Jiri Balcar et al.
Which skills contribute
to employability and
mobility of people in the
labour market?

Erasmus for All >
The new EU programme
for education, training,
youth and sports.

Europass Curriculum Vitae

Individualise your Europass CV

The Europass CV is a tool with harmonised structure and outfit. It is so because the instrument's primary goal is to make the featured information transparent and comparable. This, however, does not necessarily imply that all Europass CVs will look the same. For one thing, every user will make the CV unique (all headings of the CV are optional) by presenting information according to his or her preferences and needs: choice of personal data displayed, order of the sections 'Work experience' and 'Education and training', depending on the individual's background, picture, etc. To make the best of your Europass CV, go to the [CV online web application](#) or get inspired by this [video tutorial in German](#).

Latvian university graduates supported with Europass CV

In 2011 NEC Latvia and Riga Technical University cooperated in developing a tool that allows for students to create and save Europass CV through the university online system. The idea arose when the university, frequented by almost 16.000 students, looked for criteria by which to categorise information on students in order to follow their employment progresses. The students now create Europass CV when they apply for a study programme and when they graduate from it – this allowing for the university to help graduates integrate in the labour market, and mediate in finding their jobs.

The university's Career Centre encounters various types of CVs from which either specific information or general transparency is missing, whereas, in their opinion, Europass CV is well structured and contains all information an employer might require.

The practical tool gets well appreciated by students, too. Baiba says: „A great way not to lose your CV in the twists and turns of the memory of a computer.” Girls likes that a standard template is offered so he doesn't have to rack his brain to create his CV. Liva adds: “Very easy to use! The additional opportunity to save it is great because my CV will be available to me any time I log into the system. Who knows what opportunities the world opens up tomorrow?”

Marta Valdmane | NEC Latvia

Personal skills and competences	English			
	Understanding		Speaking	
Mother tongue(s)	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production
Other language(s)	C1 Proficient user	C2 Proficient user	B2 Independent user	C1 Proficient user
Self-assessment	A2 Basic user	A2 Basic user	A2 Basic user	A2 Basic user
European level (*)				
French				
German				
Social skills and competences	<p>(*) Common European Framework of Reference (CEF) level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team work: I have worked in various types of teams from research team to hockey. For 2 years I coached my university hockey team; - Mediating skills: I work on the borders between young people, youth train researchers, for example running a 3 day workshop at CoE Symposium 'Change', and my continued work on youth training programmes; - Intercultural skills: I am experienced at working in a European dimension rapporteur at the CoE Budapest 'youth against violence seminar' and w 			

Nearly 20 million Europass CVs have been completed through the Portal since 2005. The CV's ability to record various kinds of skills and experience in a structured way is one of the key success factors.



Questions and Answers about Europass CV

- Q** Is it obligatory for European citizens to use the Europass CV?
- A** No, the Europass CV is neither a regulation nor a directive. It is rather a tool of choice for those who seek a comprehensive CV format that reflects both the heterogeneity and complexity of individual experience, skills and competences. Some institutions may, however, ask applicants to provide their CVs specifically in the Europass format.
- Q** Are all other forms of CV incorrect?
- A** No. Curriculum vitae is a context-bound tool whose form should correspond with its purpose. Different concepts of CV may serve different aims. For that matter, the Europass CV does allow for flexible individualisation of its format. By adapting and tailoring the structure, craftsmen as well as scholars can find it fit their purposes.
- Q** Does my Europass CV pose any real advantage on the labour market?
- A** Yes, in several ways so. It will make you realise the different facets of your professional, educational and personal profile. It will then help you inform the employer about all these while maintaining an organised approach. Encouraging transparent and structured comparison of candidates, it will also help the employer discover just what it is that makes you the right person.

Do you have any other questions concerning the Europass CV? Visit the [Europass Portal](#), or consult your [National Europass Centre](#).

The Vale! Project

In recent years, various studies have investigated the systems available to assess and present individual linguistic competence. [The Vale! Project](#), funded under the European Commission LLP programme, will provide a critical overview of past and current research, and develop innovative tools to promote the use and recognition of the alternative approaches. In particular, the iPhone application originally developed in the [elp-DESK](#) project will be extended to the Android platform, while a web-based application will integrate a portfolio system with the Europass Language Passport.

To indicate relevant work or best practice to the project team, please contact mike.hammersley@fav.it.

Learning by Leaving II – a joint conference for European mobility networks

Three years have passed since the first joint conference for European mobility networks including Eurodesk, Euroguidance, Europass and EURES in Uppsala, Sweden. Now it is time to reflect upon success factors and good practices in the past, and discuss how we can work together for the future.

The main topic of Learning by Leaving II is to find out how the mobility network can work together to combat youth unemployment, one of today's major European challenges. The conference will take place on 5 and 6 December 2012 in Uppsala, Sweden. More information: bengt.landfeldt@programkontoret.se

Europass Mobility breaks through 100.000 documents distributed in Germany

In February 2012 it happened: Europass Mobility no. 100.000 had been applied for in Germany. The jubilee document was issued to Ms Julia Kunz, a student at Walter-Gropius-Schule, Hildesheim.

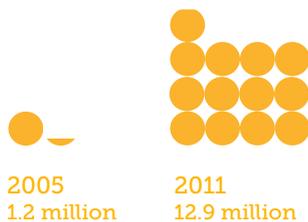
She made a 4-week placement in a hotel restaurant at Bassac in France within a Leonardo da Vinci mobility and learned how to deal with guests, got to know French food and drinks, and even learned to treat French wines.

[Read the success story in German.](#)

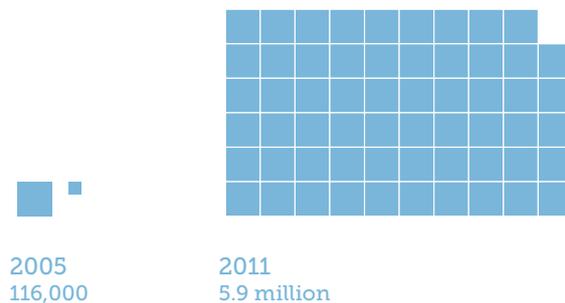
Europass in multimedia and social networks

Europass communication specialists have created a [promotional video](#) explaining in an entertaining way the portfolio's main objectives and features. Watch and laugh (and learn), or play it to the audience of your own project! You can also follow Europass news and bits by liking its [Facebook profile](#).

Yearly visits to the Europass Portal Tenfold increase



Yearly Europass CVs completed online Fiftyfold increase



Source: Cedefop



Education and Culture

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<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>

