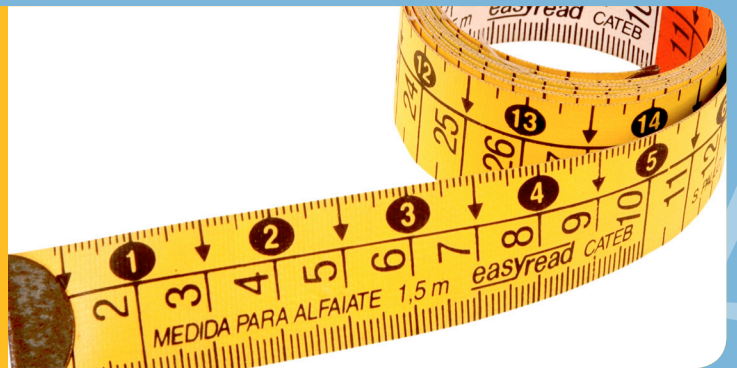




How is Europass doing, anyway?

Results of the external evaluation of Europass
Page 2-4



Local or European? Both!
National Europass Centres
networking
Page 5-9

Closer to citizens.
Europass policy
developments in
Spain, in Hungary, and
at the EU level
Page 10-11



News and bits.

Czech contest for
Europass users, event on
Europass/EQF in Austria,
and 2013 European Year
of Citizens
Page 12-13



Zusammenfassung

Liebe Leserinnen, liebe Leser,

drei Aspekte stehen im Fokus der ersten Ausgabe des Europass-Newsletters 2013: die Arbeitsweise, wie Europass seine Mission in den letzten vier Jahren in die Tat umgesetzt hat, transnationale Kooperationen innerhalb des Europass-Netzwerks sowie die neuesten Entwicklungen auf dem Gebiet der Transparenz von Qualifikationen und Kompetenzen. Auf den Seiten 2 bis 4 werden die Ergebnisse der zweiten externen Evaluation des Europass vorgestellt. Ziel der Evaluation war es, die Funktionsweise des Europass zwischen 2009 und 2012 zu bewerten, seine Auswirkungen auf das Leben der BürgerInnen zu untersuchen und Empfehlungen für die Weiterentwicklung zu formulieren. Besonders hervorgehoben wurden dabei die Arbeitsgruppen und die regionalen Cluster, die von den nationalen Europass-Zentren ins Leben gerufen wurden – auf Seite 5 bis 9 wird beschrieben, wie diese für flexible und themenbezogene Zusammenarbeit sorgen. Aktuelle politische Entwicklungen und andere Neuigkeiten aus ganz Europa finden Sie auf Seite 10 bis 13.

Das Europass Netzwerk wünscht Ihnen eine blühende Frühlingszeit!

En bref

Chers lecteurs,

Ce bulletin d'information Europass, le premier publié en 2013, aborde trois thèmes principaux: l'analyse de la manière dont Europass a rempli sa mission au cours des quatre dernières années, la coopération au sein du réseau Europass, et les changements politiques en matière de transparence des compétences et des qualifications. En pages 2 à 4: découvrez les résultats de la deuxième évaluation externe d'Europass pour la période 2009 à 2012: son impact sur la vie des citoyens, et les recommandations pour les prochaines étapes. Les pages 5 à 9 décrivent le rôle des groupes de travail et clusters mis en place par les centres nationaux Europass en vue d'une coopération ciblée et flexible. Enfin, pour tout savoir sur l'actualité Europass en Europe: rendez-vous en pages 10 à 13.

Le réseau Europass vous souhaite un excellent printemps.

Second external evaluation of Europass

The 2004 Europass Decision foresees that every four years, the Commission shall assess the implementation of the initiative, based on an evaluation carried out by an independent body. A first evaluation was made in 2008. In March 2012, the Commission carried a second evaluation of Europass. Final report was delivered in March 2013.

The purpose of the evaluation was to analyse the role and tasks of Europass and its different documents within the European policy framework with particular focus on the period of 2009–2012 and to suggest future Europass developments. To achieve these goals, the evaluation team conducted desk research, national and European level interviews, and four surveys – of representatives of National Europass Centres, national Europass stakeholders, international Europass stakeholders, and actual and potential individual end-users of Europass documents. The latter survey had over 17 000 respondents from all Europass countries.

Findings

According to evaluation findings, Europass was a highly successful European initiative with direct reach and effects on European citizens and residents. It was strongly embedded within EU strategic policy framework for education and training and has become ever more relevant to its intended users and stakeholders. The related European transparency and mobility tools and initiatives are complementary and coherent with Europass, although full synergies with EQF, ECVET and ESCO were yet to be achieved.

The success of Europass is evidenced by a sharp rise in the awareness, use and appreciation of Europass documents (particularly Europass CV) for their professional look, international recognition and convenience. Overall Europass documents increased the transparency of skills and qualifications and positively influenced international and domestic mobility alike.

"According to evaluation findings, Europass is highly successful European initiative with direct reach and effects on European citizens and residents."

Despite great advances, the Europass Diploma Supplement and Certificate Supplement were still unknown by many of their intended users – comprehensive coverage of their large target groups will take years of sustained progress. Planned developments in Europass, including the European Skills Passport (a portfolio to document the skills and competences listed in the CV) for all documents, the Europass Experience (a record of skills acquired for instance during a summer job, a placement or a period in a NGO) and the new ICT module (a self-assessment tool for IT basic skills) in the Europass CV are welcomed by National Europass Centres, stakeholders and users.

Recommendations

Europass has been a generally well-run initiative apart from some gaps in the monitoring arrangements. Monitoring should be efficiently resourced and more systematic use of quantified targets should be pursued. Other recommendations urged responsible organisations to review layout, design and content of Europass documents on a regular basis so that the documents remain contemporary and attractive to users (note from the editor: the Europass website and CV have been completely redesigned in December 2012). National Europass Centres in co-operation with national stakeholders should look for alternative ways of reaching disadvantaged individuals lacking computer skills and/or experience in documenting and presenting their skills and qualifications.

The Europass Mobility and Youth Pass could be subsumed within the newly developed Europass Experience. The implementation of the EQF, ECVET, ECTS, ESCO, and the activities of Euroguidance could be closely followed by Europass centres serving the citizens. Better convergence could be sought between Europass, EURES and other relevant portals (e.g. PLOTEUS, see page 11 below) for the users to access all useful tools related to their transparency and mobility needs through a one-stop shop. Where possible national governments should place National Europass Centres (if they are not already placed) within the national organisations running other European programmes, initiatives and centres related to transparency and comparability of qualifications and skills.

Europass has to be maintained as a European initiative and adequate funding as well as availability of matching national co-financing is necessary to guarantee its sustainability. The evaluation team also recommended an increase of funding for promotion of Europass so that its documents could reach even greater numbers of their potential users faster and bring them the benefits of greater transparency and comparability of qualifications and skills.

Donatas Pocius and Rimantas Dumcius | Public Policy and Management Institute, Lithuania

Evaluation results: selected evidence on the use and relevance of Europass

The level of awareness and use of Europass documents has steadily increased since the last evaluation in 2008. The number of visits to the Europass website reflects an increasing knowledge and usage of the Europass documents, as shown by the table below: between 2006 and 2012 visits to the Europass website have increased by 419.4%.

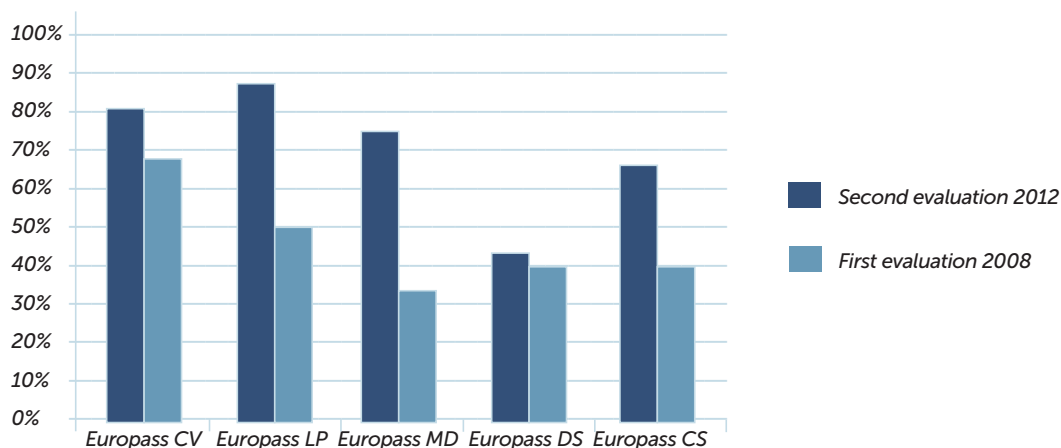
Increase in visits to the Europass website between 2006 and 2011

| Year | Total Visits | % Increase |
|-----------|--------------|------------|
| 2006 | 3 098 532 | - |
| 2007 | 4 713 154 | 48.6% |
| 2008 | 6 047 691 | 31.3% |
| 2009 | 7 487 763 | 23.8% |
| 2010 | 10 091 597 | 34.8% |
| 2011 | 12 993 978 | 28.8% |
| 2006-2011 | - | 419.4% |

End-users reported they use Europass documents most often for job applications and traineeships / internships - 43.6% and 40.5% respectively. Convenience, recognition and reliability are the main reasons for using the Europass documents.

Compared to the first evaluation in 2008, the Europass documents became more relevant to the job-seekers by 2012. A significant rise in the attributed relevance was reported mainly for the Europass Language Passport, the Europass Mobility and the Europass Certificate Supplement, suggesting that Europass were better serving the specific needs of job-seekers. No significant change is reported by users concerning the Europass Diploma Supplement.

Relevance of Europass documents to job-seekers, 2008 - 2012



Europass documents also proved to be useful to other stakeholders, e.g. businesses and employers' associations, trade unions, educational institutions, public administration, public and private employment services, volunteer organisations, etc. Stakeholders pointed out the usefulness of Europass documents to:

- present individual knowledge, skills and qualifications in a clear way;
- compare individual competences between countries and sectors;
- make selection processes easier for employers and/or educational institutions.

Usefulness of Europass documents as assessed by stakeholders:

| Survey Questions | | Europass Document | % of stakeholders that agree to a moderate, large or very large extent |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <i>To what extent, in your view, has the Europass document made the competences of individuals more comparable across:</i> | Countries | ECV | 78.8% |
| | | ELP | 70.0% |
| | | ECS | 58.8% |
| | | EDS | 62.8% |
| | | EM | 57.6% |
| | Sectors | ECV | 70.8% |
| | | ELP | 58.8% |
| | | ECS | 52.8% |
| | | EDS | 52.8% |
| | | EM | 53.6% |
| <i>To what extent, in your view, has the following Europass document made the candidate selection process easier for:</i> | Employers | ECV | 75.6% |
| | | ELP | 66.4% |
| | | ECS | 54.0% |
| | | EDS | 56.4% |
| | | EM | 52.8% |
| | Educational Institutions | ECV | 60.4% |
| | | ELP | 55.6% |
| | | ECS | 49.2% |
| | | EDS | 56.8% |
| | | EM | 47.2% |

Summary

Overall, the Europass initiative was very effective over the period between 2008 and 2012, as proven by increased use and awareness of Europass documents. Each document also proved to be successful at least in three ways (albeit to a varying extent). First, they were useful for presenting individual knowledge, skills and qualifications in a clear way. Second, all Europass documents were successful in making the individual competences more comparable across countries and across sectors. Finally, they were helpful in making the candidate selection processes for employers and educational institutions easier.

The analysis also revealed that further development of layout, design and content of Europass documents is necessary to increase the success by better meeting the newly emerging needs of users. Several foreseen changes in Europass such as the introduction of 'Europass Experience', a new ICT module in the Europass CV, and a new structure of the documents in a form of European Skills Passport were viewed positively while others, such as the suggestion to extend the Diploma Supplement for doctorates, lacked comprehensive support.

The texts, tables and charts on pages 3 and 4 were compiled and adapted from: European Commission and PPMI (2013), Second Evaluation of Europass. Final Report.

Local or European? Both!

National Europass Centres networking in work groups and regional clusters

Europass is a European initiative governed at the EU level but brought to the citizens at the level of states according to national programmes and reflecting different socio-economic settings. Currently, there are 32 National Europass Centres (NECs) in the network, 27 in EU Member States and 5 in candidate countries and the countries of the European Economic Area and the European Free Trade Area.

To establish a flexible middle ground between the European dimension and the national particularities, the NECs can choose to become members of transnational work groups and regional clusters. Whereas work groups serve to NECs as platforms for topic-based initiatives such as the development of the current and new Europass documents or pooling resources for promotion and dissemination activities, the regional clusters reflect the geographical, social and cultural proximity of certain NECs, strengthen regional reciprocity and enable effective sharing of good implementation practices.

The following pages introduce these sub-units of the Europass network and give overview of their objectives and outcomes. 6 work groups and 4 regional clusters are or were in operation within the Europass network:

Work groups (WG)

WG Communication and Promotion
WG Certificate Supplement
WG Europass Mobility/Experience
WG Inland mobility/Volunteering
WG Twinning
WG Skills Passport and e-Portfolios
(to be started in May 2013)

Regional clusters (RC)

RC Central Europe
RC Mediterranean
RC Nordic-Baltic
RC Nordic-Baltic West



Susanna Kärki
NEC FI, Helsinki,
January 2013



Indira von Oven
NEC NL, Helsinki,
January 2013



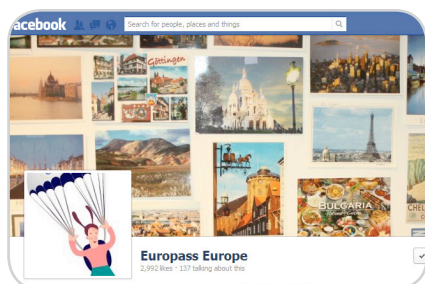
Meeting of the chairs of work groups in Helsinki, January 2013. From left: Dik van der Wal – NEC NL, Špela Pogačnik Nose – NEC SI, Susanna Kärki – NEC FI, Alexandra Enzi – NEC AT, Indira von Oven – NEC NL, Frazer Wallace – NEC UK, Mads Flyvholm – NEC DK

Work Group on Communication and Promotion

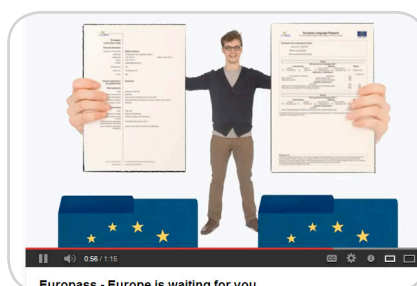
| | |
|---------------|---|
| Member NECs | Austria, Belgium (French speaking community), Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain |
| Current chair | Austria, Denmark, Finland |
| Active from | October 2010 |
| Last meeting | December 2012 |
| Next meeting | May 2013 |



The mission of this work group is to support the communication and promotion of Europass to citizens and organisations by sharing NECs' best practises and combining resources towards joint initiatives. The WG has served for more than two years now as a platform for the exchange and pooling of experience, ideas and information. It has produced and administered the common European Facebook profile of the Europass initiative, and created a joint promotion video available on Youtube. The future objective of the WG is to continue developing shared promotional materials and to further enhance the presence of Europass in social media.



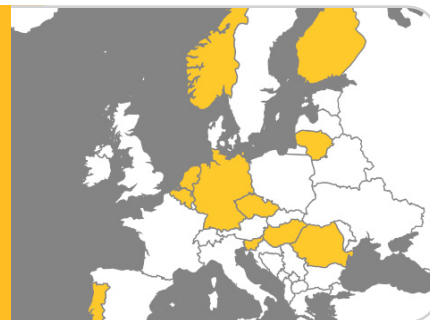
Facebook



YouTube

Work Group on Europass Certificate Supplement

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Member NECs | Belgium (Flemish speaking community), Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia |
| Current chair | Netherlands |
| Active from | January 2011 |
| Last meeting | October 2012 |
| Next meeting | May 2013 |



| Europass certificate supplement | |
|--|--|
| 1. Title of the certificate (NL) | |
| Ervaringsbewijs: podiumtechnicus (m/v) | |
| In the original language | |
| 2. Translated title of the certificate | |
| Certificate of professional competence: performing arts technician (m/f) (EN) | |
| Titre de compétence professionnelle: régisseur de spectacle (m/f) (FR) | |
| This translation has no legal status. | |
| 3. Profile of skills and competences | |
| The occupational standard was developed and approved by the sectoral social partners. | |
| The holder of the certificate of professional competence can: | |
| install technical stage equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work according to the requirements of the technical documentation and the environmental factors; select microphones, cables and sensors based on the technical documentation; fit up technical equipment in a logical order; connect technical equipment ensuring it functions; the cables are not twisted and the connections can be tested; fit up lighting, cable, prop and sound equipment on the fly, ensuring the maximum distributed load and point load is not exceeded; secure all items on the fly bar with a safety cable that is strong enough to secure the weight; minimises the fall height and doesn't obstruct the moving parts; place a hold fire warning in the, not attached, and the stage pin perfectly; | |
| setup technical stage equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus a profile spot with a maximum light output; prepare a signal light board according to the technical documentation; adjust the sound on a sound desk with two control; no voices are well understood in the auditorium and no feedback occurs; determine the places of the meeting (sign and location); make a timeline for projection and back projection from a laptop; so the image is sharp and the edges of the projection fit the screen; | |
| operate technical stage equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follow visual and verbal cues; ensure light cues are adapted to the live performance; provide an alternative to the failure of a particular system in order to have a similar result; adjust the sound on a sound desk with two control; when something is not well understood or when feedback occurs; provide an alternative to the failure of a microphone or monitor in order to have a similar result; operate the fly bar with an agreed signal to the corresponding level marks; | |
| Explanatory note This document is designed to provide additional information about the specific certificate and does not have any legal status in itself. The format of the description is based on the following texts: Council Resolution 95/C 4001 of 3 December 1992 on the transparency of qualifications; Council Resolution 95/C 224 of 12 July 1998 on the transparency of vocational training certificates; and Recommendation 2001/613/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 July 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and learners. More information available at: http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu © European Commission 2007 | |

The work group was established to raise awareness of the Europass Certificate Supplement among a variety of stakeholders, and to improve the quality and transparency of the document.

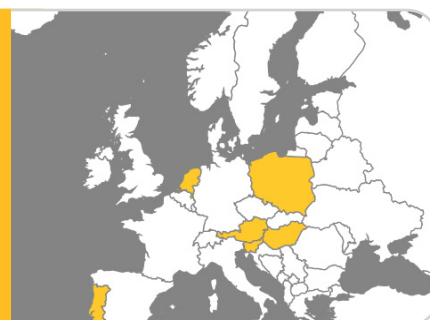
The group conducted an international series of stakeholder surveys inquiring about the relevance and usage of the Certificate Supplement in private companies as well as public institutions. The members of the group have also exchanged experience with the development of digital solutions for the management of the document through online database systems.

As a next step, the group will review the common guidelines for the creation of Certificate Supplements to increase the transparency and usability of the document as well as its distribution mechanisms.



Work Group on Europass Mobility/Experience

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Member NECs | Austria, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia |
| Current chair | Netherlands, Slovenia |
| Active from | 2012 |
| Last meeting | October 2012 |
| Next meeting | May 2013 |



Drawing on lessons learned in the implementation of the Europass Mobility document on both transnational and country level, the purpose of this work group is to support the launch and operation of the upcoming new document: Europass Experience (EX). EX will record the skills and competences acquired through periods of formal as well as non-formal learning, working or volunteering.

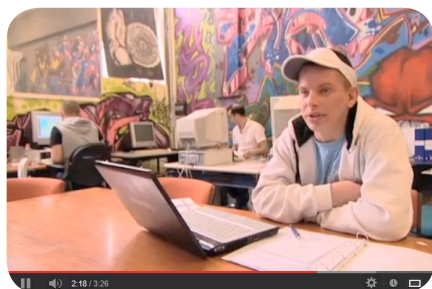


The group has been conducting comparative analysis of the differences in the practices of, and the needs related to, issuing and using Europass Mobility in various countries. The analysis is used to inform the development of the Europass Experience template, as well as to improve the implementation of the current Europass Mobility instruments. The group will also consult the creation and testing of an online application for the management of EX and Mobility.

| Europass Experience | |
|---|--|
| A record of knowledge and skills | |
| Bergen Institute of Technology | |
| Alexis Papadopoulos born on 12 June 1986, held the position of Clinical Research Assistant from 20/01/2012 to 30/06/2012 (total: 6 months), at The Bergen Institute of Technology Study Centre for the Visually Impaired Students (SZS), Bergen, Germany | |
| KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS GAINED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive Developments in Psychosocial Intervention Research New Developments in Non-Pharmacological Interventions Using Technology to Support Social Engagement in People with Dementia Interventions to Promote Well-being for People with Dementia and their Caregivers Behavioral Alternatives to Anti-Psychotic Prescribing for People with Dementia | |
| ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive Developments in Psychosocial Intervention Research New Developments in Non-Pharmacological Interventions Using Technology to Support Social Engagement in People with Dementia Interventions to Promote Well-being for People with Dementia and their Caregivers Behavioral Alternatives to Anti-Psychotic Prescribing for People with Dementia | |
| DOCUMENT ISSUED BY Dr B. Hoffman Director | |

Work Group on Inland Mobility (Europass Mobility for volunteers)

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Member NECs | Belgium (French speaking community), Netherlands, Poland, United Kingdom |
| Current chair | Netherlands |
| Active from | January 2011 |
| Last meeting | October 2012 |
| Next meeting | ... |



<http://youtube.com/F3c-k5LloGY>

Originally, the Europass Mobility document was designed for the purposes of recording skills and competences gained through international mobility. This work group introduced the concept of adapting the use of Europass Mobility for recording the learning outcomes acquired through domestic mobility periods as well. The idea was piloted in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom with young people gaining first work experience in voluntary work placements in their own country. Particularly in the Netherlands, the initiative was very successful among the volunteers as well as the organizations involved, as demonstrated in a video clip created by the group. Another result of the group's work was the development of an online tool for completing the Europass Mobility document. This instrument has been used



to consult similar developments for the new Europass documents: European Skills Passport and Europass Experience. Due to a shared focus with the WG on Mobility/Experience, the two groups will now merge to pool resources and join future efforts.

Work Group on Twinning

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Member NECs | Germany, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal |
| Current chair | None - work completed |
| Active from | March 2011 |
| Last meeting | June 2012 |
| Next meeting | ... |



The objective of the Twinning WG, whose activities were concluded in 2012, was to share experienced NECs' knowledge with NECs that were starting up their activities. The main proceeding of the group is an online good-practice guide: a collection of examples of best practices in Europass implementation from around Europe for all NECs to use as inspiration and source of learning.

The guide has been made available on the internet and will be regularly updated and extended.



www.proalv.pt/Eventos/Europass/Best_Practices/index.html

Regional Cluster Central Europe

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Member NECs | Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovenia |
| Current chair | Croatia |
| Active from | 2010 |
| Last meeting | June 2012 |
| Next meeting | June 2013 |



The Central European Regional Cluster has been recently focusing on the cooperation between Europass and other European networks in the areas of education, training and employment support. For this purpose, the meeting of the cluster was co-organized with Eures and Euroguidance of Slovenia and attended by their representatives. A cluster meeting is a unique opportunity for the member NECs to engage in detailed discussions about their experiences with the implementation of each of the Europass documents, and to find solutions to common challenges.



The NEC representatives get to know each other better and thus cooperate more dynamically. In the future, the cluster intends to continue on working closely together particularly on the topics of promotion of Europass, survey-based analysis of the benefits the Europass documents bring to the citizens, and putting forward proposals for revamping Europass documents in accord with the new CV and the recently introduced European Skills Passport.

Regional Cluster Mediterranean

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Member NECs | Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain |
| Current chair | Joint |
| Active from | April 2011 |
| Last meeting | October 2012 |
| Next meeting | May 2013 |



The Mediterranean Regional Cluster was established to exchange experience and good practices between the member NECs, especially taking into account the geographic and cultural proximity as well as the continuous mobility of workers and students that exists between the countries in the Mediterranean area.



The main activities of the cluster focus on the Europass CV, an instrument that proves extremely popular among the citizens of Southern Europe.

The results of the cluster's work include elaboration of an online manual providing user-friendly guidelines on the completion of the new Europass CV template; a promotion poster highlighting the advantages of the CV; an international mobile phone video competition for the CV users.

Regional Cluster Nordic/Baltic

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Member NECs | Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden |
| Current chair | Joint |
| Active from | 2006 |
| Last meeting | August 2012 |
| Next meeting | September 2013 |

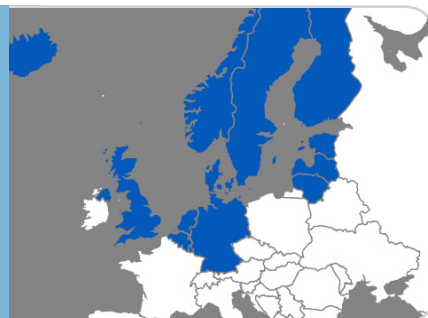


While the general objective of this longstanding cluster remains in peer learning among the member NECs from the Nordic and Baltic areas of Europe, the specific recent focus has been put on improvements in administrative structures of the NECs as well as on the conjunction of Europass and the European Credit System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

The member NECs have learned much from each other over the existence of this cluster platform, facilitated the ways for disseminating information to citizens through joint publications and promotional material, and established transnational contacts with relevant institutions and stakeholders.

Regional Cluster Nordic/Baltic West

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Member NECs | Belgium (all communities), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom |
| Current chair | Lithuania |
| Active from | August 2008 |
| Last meeting | May 2012 |
| Next meeting | March 2013 |



This cluster is in its nature a "cluster of clusters" where colleagues from different regional clusters meet. The cooperation, initially launched by NEC Germany, was joined eventually by a number of countries not strictly determined in terms of region but in terms of productive diversity and added value. The current concern of the group is the strengthening of quality management within the Europass network in general and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of cluster and work group meetings in particular.

Another topic of the cluster is observing productive cooperation between Europass and other European and national policies (the validation of non-formal and informal learning, EQF, ECVET, ESCO). As the main benefit of clustering, the members see the opportunity for national Europass representatives to get directly involved in latest developments and decisions on matters relevant for the European dimension of the implementation of Europass.



Policy developments

Europass and Spanish regions: a model of cooperation and coordination

Spain is not a classical **Federation** but a highly decentralized **unitary state** that has **devolved powers** to the communities, which in turn exercise their right to self-government within the limits set forth in the Constitution. Currently, there are 17 Autonomous Communities and 2 Autonomous Cities (Ceuta and Melilla) that are collectively known as "Autonomies".

"We must take advantage of the benefit that working as a network implies. We are sure that this is the best way to attract new users to Europass"

The National Europass Centre in Spain maintains a very close relationship with the Autonomous Communities. Each region has appointed a Europass representative to carry out information, dissemination and promotion of the tool. Collaboration between the Spanish NEC and the regions is essential to make Europass a success at national level.

This steady cooperation is translated into an ongoing exchange of information and good practices, joint events and publications and idea-sharing. All this is coordinated under the direction of the Spanish NEC, located in Madrid, which is in charge of centralizing the information, updating relevant background, distributing tasks and resolving possible technical problems

that may arise. "We must take advantage of the benefit that working as a network implies. We are sure that this is the best way to attract new users to Europass", says Fernando Pascual, Europass representative in the Autonomous Community of Madrid.

In order to maintain effective communication, we have created a "blog", which is our gathering point to keep each other informed and updated. Each Europass representative can insert information that he/she wishes to share with other regional reference points. "We managed to create a network at national and regional level following the example of the Europass Virtual Community at the European level", says Pablo Franco from the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

"We managed to create a network at national and regional level following the example of the Europass Virtual Community at the European level"



Besides our contacts along these lines, the network established two working committees with a work agenda focused on Europass documents and their upcoming developments. The committee meetings usually also include topics such as synergies between Europass and other tools for mobility, e.g. EURES, Eurodesk or Euroguidance, and transparency instruments such as ECTS, ECVET and EQF. As María Pascual from Catalunya says, "most of us work as advisors in European educational programmes in the Departments of Education of the Autonomous Communities, so we are certainly the key stakeholders to promote all these tools in synergy".

We should particularly highlight the role played by the Autonomous Communities in the validation of the Europass Mobility documents. In this regard, they are responsible for checking and reviewing the EM documents generated by LLP programmes they have promoted and, finally, validating and registering them.

NEC Spain would like to thank the entire team that takes part in the Spanish regional network for their relentless effort and cooperation to promote and disseminate Europass in their busy daily work.

Sadia Khokhar | NEC Spain

| Visits from Spain to the Europass website (2005 – 2013) | ECVs and ELPs completed online in Spanish; Castilian (2005 – 2013) | Documents downloaded in Spanish; Castilian (2005 – 2013) |
|---|--|--|
| 4 521 633 | 1 798 517 | 3 126 654 |

Source: Cedefop, <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>; state of play February 2013

Exploring synergies between European tools: Survey on PLOTEUS and EQF Portals

The recent external periodic evaluation of Europass concluded, inter alia, that “better convergence could be sought between Europass, EURES, EQF, ESCO and other relevant portals (e.g. PLOTEUS - The Portal on learning opportunities throughout the European space) for the users to access all useful tools related to their transparency and mobility needs through a one-stop shop,” (see page 2 above). To explore the usability of related European information services, the European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture recently commissioned a survey on user consultation of the PLOTEUS and the EQF Portal. 3s Unternehmensberatung, together with ICF GHK, are conducting the survey asking current and potential users about their information needs and satisfaction with the portals. Questions are asked about the information and services provided by the portals, about the usability and functionality of the websites, and the options for future developments.

The purpose of the survey is to collect the users' views on the EQF Portal – a platform that brings together information on the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and how member states have linked their qualifications to this common framework – and on PLOTEUS, which aims to help students, job seekers, workers, parents, guidance counsellors and teachers to find information about studying in Europe. The results of the questionnaires will contribute to improving and further developing the PLOTEUS and EQF portals towards better functionality and cooperation between related European tools and initiatives.

If you would like to participate in the survey for the EQF portal, please follow this link: [EQF](#). For the survey on PLOTEUS, please click at [PLOTEUS](#). The questionnaires are available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, and the surveys are online from 20 March until the end of April 2013.

If you have any questions with regard to the survey, please do not hesitate to contact the project manager at ziegler@3s.co.at.

Petra Ziegler | 3s Unternehmensberatung GmbH, Vienna

Make your CV work!

Hungarian NEC surveys employers' views on the Europass CV

The National Europass Centre Hungary launched a survey in the autumn 2012 about the reputation and the usage of the Europass CV from the employers' point of view. HR specialists in different companies were asked, involving various sectors and company sizes from SMEs to multinationals. Altogether, 62 companies replied. 98% of the respondents were familiar with the Europass CV format even though they were not asking for it specifically when recruiting new workers. On average, 42% of the CVs received by companies were in the Europass format, and based on the experience of the HR specialists the tendency is increasing. Almost 60% of the companies liked the format.

The survey also asked the respondents about specific pros and cons of the Europass CV. They mostly felt positively about the structure which helps job-seekers not to leave out any important information. As for the challenges with the format, the following views were recorded: the language reference system might be too complicated for some companies; the level of detail in the CV is high, which can make the document too long; the standardised structure may sideline users' individual input.

Another section of the survey dealt with typical mistakes made in CVs. It was confirmed that the Europass format was effective in supporting a comprehensive information value of CVs. The format also ensures that the level of language knowledge is included, and that previous work experience is described with the relevant information on activities and responsibilities. More than a half of the HR specialists affirmed that the personal skills and competences section is a good source of topics for personal interviews. However, another 40% of the respondents warned against filling this section with general stereotypes such as “good team-player”.

As regards HR specialists' recommendations for the future development of the Europass CV, they would welcome more examples of completed CVs on the Europass websites, as well as increasing the flexibility of the format. The respondents supported putting the name of the employer before main tasks and responsibilities in the work experience section: one of the changes brought about by the new Europass CV. More orientation on work results within the description of experience was recommended, as were more individual focus and precision in filling personal skills and competences.

These statements and results refer to the old format of the Europass CV as the survey was conducted in the autumn 2012. It will be interesting to launch another survey about the new CV format, and to explore how the changes are perceived by employers.

Csilla Szabo | Tempus Public Foundation / NEC Hungary

Lessons from the Hungarian employer survey:

- The Europass CV structure will inspire you. It will also help you organise your inspiration.
- Choose appropriate level of detail. Keep your CV to-the-point and accurate.
- Beware of general phrases and stereotypes.
- Make sure to promote concrete outcomes of your work or study.
- Give the reader something they will want to hear more about in an interview.
- Be you. That's who gets the job.

News

An essay contest supports promotion of Europass in the Czech Republic

As a part of its promotional activities, the National Europass Centre Czech Republic organized in November 2012 an essay contest named „How did Europass help you to get a job, volunteer work or internship abroad?” The contest that ran until January 2013 was aimed at making Europass usage visible in the media through collecting the experiences of international internship participants and their authentic reflexions on the use of Europass documents.

NEC CZ promoted the contest by a digital leaflet containing a link to an online questionnaire. The contest call was published on the NEC's website, on its Facebook page, in a press release released in December 2012, and through articles that appeared in the media. The participants were asked to give details about themselves and their foreign internship, the organisations involved, about their first contact with Europass and about the way Europass had helped them before, during or after their international mobility experience and in their further professional and personal life.

The contest's home page was viewed by some 500 unique visitors, about 30 of whom decided to take active part, even though not all of them met the contest terms. Approximately half of those involved attached photos from their internship to the questionnaire. NEC CZ was thus able to collect quite a few interesting quotes that will be cited as authentic user reflexions in this season's informational outputs and promotional articles. For example, in response to the question „Why did you use the Europass document?”, 25-year-old Petra Stehliková, who completed a four-month internship in Germany in 2011, answered: „I found the document very illustrative and well structured. The information provided by my host University on the skills I had gained was made conveniently available to other parties through Europass.”

The winner of the contest, 33-year-old teacher Jiří Šedivý who completed a five-month internship in Turkey last year, summarised the positive impact of the internship on his professional career: „The stay in Turkey helped me realise that one shouldn't have to become just another narrow-minded teacher. With the European initiatives, including Europass, it is possible to travel and get to know countries all over the world, to compare perspectives and gain deeper insights. The internship has strongly enhanced my motivation for further development and progress in my teaching practice.”

The winning contribution was rewarded with an educational board game called “Europe: Questions & Answers”, and all participants received a set of promotional items. In principle a mapping and awareness-raising activity, the contest has also contributed to establishing new co-operation modes between NEC CZ and a number of associated online initiatives that will certainly continue through similar projects in the coming years.

Lucie Šnajdrová | NEC Czech Republic



Mr Jiří Šedivý, a Czech teacher during his internship in a school in Turkey; the winner of the Europass contest.

Transparency in educational and career guidance: Europass and the European Qualifications Framework

On 28 May 2013, Europass Austria will organise an event in cooperation with Euroguidance Austria and the Coordination Point for the National Qualifications Framework. The half-day workshop will target at practitioners and stakeholders engaged in educational and career guidance.

The objective of the event is to provide a practical overview on the Euroguidance initiative and the European transparency instruments represented by Europass and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). After a general overview, a series of parallel workshops will provide the participants with the opportunity to obtain in-depth information on the potential and the development of the EQF and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Austria. This will be followed by a discussion on the implementation of the NQF in educational and career guidance counseling, giving the participants the opportunity to voice their needs and expectations. As an outcome of the event, the participants will have the means to apply the information in their daily consultancy work.

The programme and registration form can be found on the website of the [Austrian Lifelong Learning Agency](#).

Alexandra Enzi | NEC Austria

2013 is the European Year of Citizens

One of the principle objectives of Europass is to support citizens in the pursuit of their right to be mobile and to seek learning and work opportunities across the European Union. As European citizens we have a number of other distinctive rights. Now we have a chance to learn more about them and debate them, too.

„We need the direct involvement of citizens in building a stronger and more political Union. That is why 2013 is the European Year of Citizens – a year dedicated to you and your rights as Europeans,” said Vice-President Viviane Reding, the EU’s Justice Commissioner. „Union citizenship is more than a concept. It is a practical reality that brings tangible benefits to citizens. The European Commission wants to help people understand how they can directly benefit from their rights and listen to their views about where Europe is headed. European citizens’ must be able to voice their concerns and prepare the ground for future European elections. It’s time we all took ownership of our common future.”

To mark the European Year of Citizens 2013, a range of events, conferences and seminars will be organised across the EU at Union, national, regional or local level ([see the calendar of events here](#)). The Commission will also strengthen the visibility of the multilingual Europe Direct and Your Europe web portals as key elements of a ‘one-stop-shop’ information system on Union citizens’ rights, as well as the role and visibility of problem solving tools, such as [SOLVIT](#), to allow Union citizens to better make use of and defend their rights.

Throughout the year 2013, Vice-President Reding and other EU Commissioners will join forces with national and local politicians to hold debates with citizens all across Europe – to listen to them and answer their questions. Vice-President Reding has already held debates in Cadiz (Spain), Graz (Austria) and Berlin (Germany) and Commissioner Andor held a debate in Naples (Italy). Many more will be held throughout European municipalities in 2013 and will see European and local political decision makers engage in a debate with citizens from all walks of life across the whole EU. [Follow all the debates here](#).

To prepare the ground for the European Year, the Commission held a broad public consultation between 9 May and 9 September 2012 asking citizens what problems they have encountered in exercising their rights as EU citizens ([see IP/12/461](#)). Respondents made clear that they are very attached to their EU rights – especially free movement and political rights. They would like to see a true European area in which they can live, work, move, study and shop without facing red tape or discrimination. But they also pointed out that there is still some way to go. They highlighted various problems, notably in getting EU rights respected at local level – issues which the Commission will be taking up in the next EU Citizenship Report, planned during 2013. [See the results here](#).

Source of the text: European Commission, 2013, Press release: [European Commission kick-starts the 2013 European Year of Citizens](#).



Take a look at the [previous editions](#) of the Europass Newsletter, too!

[Europass Newsletter Nr. 1, May 2012](#)

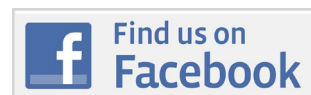
(Main story: Europass at the interface of education and labour market)

[Europass Newsletter Nr. 2, September 2012](#)

(Main story: European tools and principles for skills and qualifications)

[Europass Newsletter Nr. 3, December 2012](#)

(Main story: Europass 2012 – 2014: What is going to change?)



Education and Culture

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