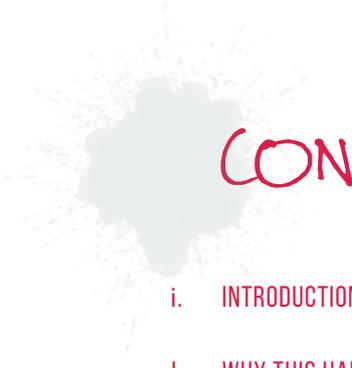


handbook

# VALUED BY YOU, VALUED BY OTHERS

Improving the visibility of  
competences in Youthpass





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# i INTRODUCTION

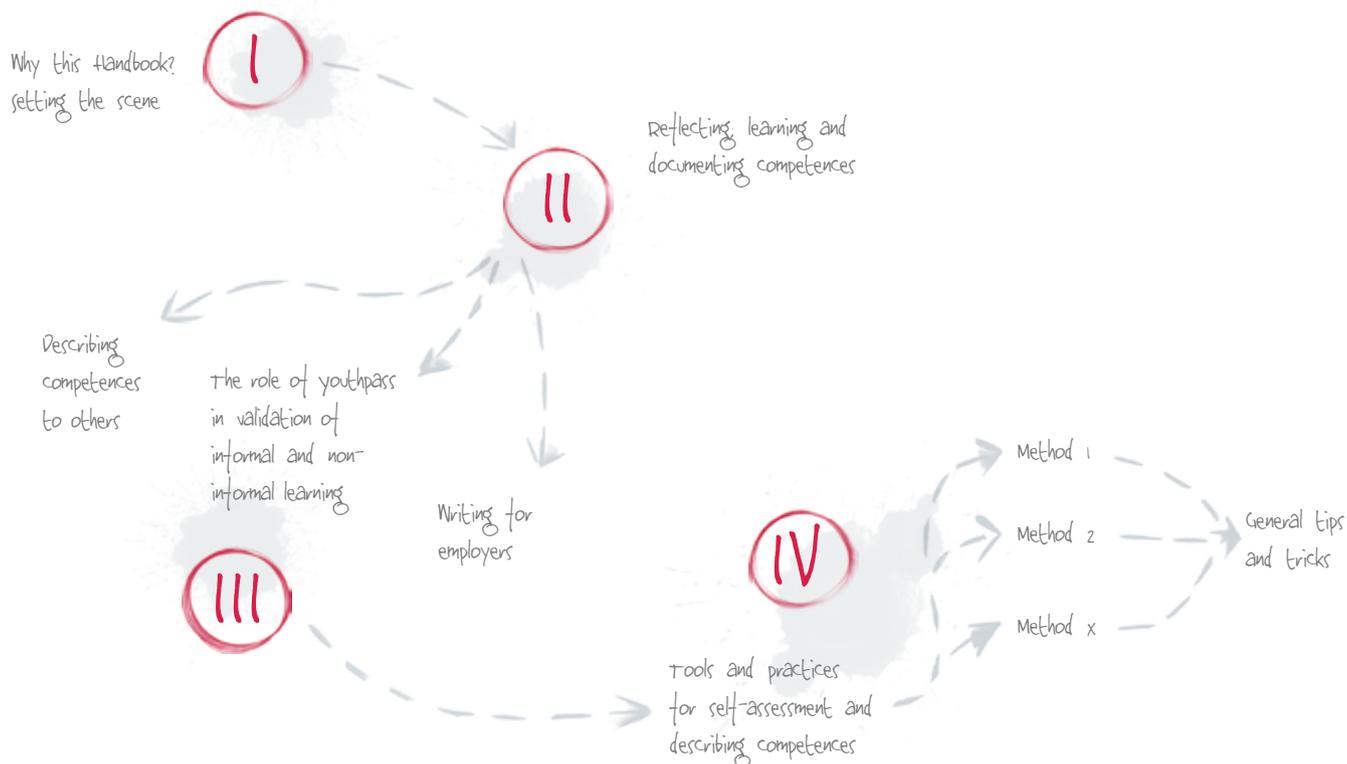
## DEAR READER,

Working on a Youthpass certificate has an important value of its own – it's an educational process giving young people enhanced self-awareness, more confidence and the ability to reflect on what they may want to learn next. However, Youthpass can also be helpful when it comes to presenting their acquired competences to others.

At SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre (SALTO T&C), we are often asked about how the value and transferability of the Youthpass certificate can be ensured in situations when a young person may need to provide proof of their competences and experience. "How can I present my learning outcomes in a way that ensures that they are exchanged for credit points or recognised in job applications?" youth workers ask.

This Handbook focuses on two main contexts in which Youthpass holders may want to present their competences – one, when they are applying for jobs and two, in the context of formal education and validation. Before learning outcomes are communicated, they need to be collected and meaningfully documented, so we have dedicated a large section of the Handbook to reflection.

We invite you to start by sitting down with the participant(s) to discuss the context in which they want to use Youthpass as evidence of their acquired competences. This reflection exercise may determine which parts of the Handbook are most relevant for you. The structure of the Handbook is outlined in the following roadmap:



Hopefully, this Handbook and the roadmap will guide you and the (young) people you work with towards a certificate that they will present to others with pride.

*I wish you a pleasant journey!*

Kristiina Pernits  
SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre



# ① WHY THIS HANDBOOK? KEY QUESTIONS AND NEEDS

By Darko Marković

## 1. RECOGNITION OF LEARNING IN EUROPEAN YOUTH WORK

<sup>1</sup> Declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/eywc-website-declaration>.

The final Declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention<sup>1</sup> in 2015 states that “Youth work is not a luxury but an existential necessity if Europe is to effectively address its concerns about social inclusion, cohesion and equal opportunities, and commitment to values of democracy and human rights.” Furthermore, as non-formal and informal learning is one of the key principles of youth work, it is no surprise that the Declaration also calls for greater “recognition and validation of the learning and achievement that takes place through youth work in non-formal and informal learning environments”.

This plea for better recognition of the value of youth work and non-formal learning is not new; rather, it is yet another milestone in a long process that began back in 1998. The Final Declaration of the Council of Europe's 5th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth in Bucharest in April 1998 similarly invited Member States to recognise the abilities young people acquire from non-formal education.<sup>2</sup> Although progress seems slow overall, there have been many improvements regarding validation of non-formal learning in both the education and youth fields.<sup>3</sup> In December 2012, the European Council issued a Recommendation<sup>4</sup> asking Member States to establish strategies for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018. In the youth field, thanks to the launch of the Youthpass scheme in 2007, the educational value and focus of European youth work has gained greater visibility, and its impact on the learning achievements of young people across the continent is now much more tangible.

The project "Research-based analysis and monitoring of Youth in Action" (RAY) highlighted that participation in EU Youth in Action (YiA) projects contributes to the development of all key competences for lifelong learning.<sup>5</sup> It states that "While the most distinct development is reported for interpersonal, social and intercultural competences as well as for communication in a foreign language, a significant development is also stated for sense of entrepreneurship, civic competence, cultural awareness and expression, and learning competence ('learning to learn')."<sup>6</sup> A special "inclusion analysis" of the RAY data shows that the impact of international youth work on competence development is even stronger for young people with fewer opportunities.<sup>7</sup> When the opportunities are given and proper support is provided, this target group appears to benefit more from participation than their "better-off" peers. Another RAY study between October 2015 and April 2016 also highlighted that participation in Erasmus+ projects has a strong impact on the development of key competences for lifelong learning.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth. [Getting there...](#) (2013)

<sup>3</sup> Darko Marković and Gülesin Nemutlu-Ünal. [Unlocking Doors to Recognition](#) (SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre, 2011). [Overview of recognition developments](#) (SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre, 2016)

<sup>4</sup> Council [Recommendation on the validation on non-formal and informal learning](#) (2012)

<sup>5</sup> Key competences for lifelong learning: [https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/document-library/key-competences-for-lifelong-learning\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/document-library/key-competences-for-lifelong-learning_en)

<sup>6</sup> RAY. [Youth in Action makes a difference](#) (2013)

<sup>7</sup> SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre and RAY [Impact of mobility on young people with fewer opportunities](#).

<sup>8</sup> RAY (2015-2016): <https://www.researchyouth.eu/factsheet-key-competences>

# EFFECTS ON KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING\*

The majority of respondents “strongly agree” or “agree” that through their participation in a Erasmus+ Youth in Action project they improved their ability...

## KC1 COMMUNICATING IN A MOTHER TONGUE

... to say what I think with conviction in discussions. 88%

## KC2 COMMUNICATING IN A FOREIGN TONGUE

... to communicate with people who speak another language. 93%

## KC3 MATHEMATICAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMPETENCES

... to think logically and draw conclusions. 79%

## KC5 LEARNING TO LEARN

... to plan and carry out my learning independently. 73%

## KC6 SOCIAL AND CIVIC COMPETENCES

... to get along with people who have different viewpoints. 95%

... to negotiate joint solutions when there are different viewpoints. 90%

... to achieve something in the interest of the community or society. 88%

## KC7 SENSE OF INITIATIVE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

... to identify opportunities for my personal or professional development. 86%

... to develop an idea and put it into practice. 85%

## KC8 CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EXPRESSION

... to express myself creatively or artistically. 80%

N = 16.373 participants, survey conducted in October 2015 - April 2016.

Source: RAY research factsheet

Since learning in the youth field relates not only to lifelong learning but also to civil society, it both impacts on individuals' personal and social development and improves their employability. A study by the European Youth Forum<sup>9</sup> in 2013 in 40 European countries clearly showed that there is a match between the skills demanded by employers and those developed by taking part in youth work projects. Specifically, the report states that "out of the top 6 skills and competences most often mentioned as demanded by employers (...) five are also amongst those developed to a greater extent through involvement in youth organisations (...) communication skills, organisational/planning skills, decision-making skills, team-working skills, confidence/autonomy (...)". Another study, which focused exclusively on the development of competences in European Voluntary Service projects,<sup>10</sup> also found a significant match between the competences valued by employers and those developed by the EVS volunteers.

In terms of its impact on formal education, youth work has a positive influence on student achievements by fostering non-cognitive skills such as persistence, motivation, interpersonal skills and self-efficacy<sup>11</sup> (Shernoff and Lowe Vandell, 2007, 2008). Research also suggest that it is the quality of youth work that matters; the quality of youth work experiences may be a stronger and more positive predictor of academic performance than the quantity of experience in youth work programmes (Shernoff, 2010). Moreover, youth work plays an important role in providing alternative pathways for young people who drop out of education and training.<sup>12</sup> These pathways may lead individuals back to formal education or simply to acquiring new competences (and/or new qualifications) through non-formal and informal learning.

It seems that today, there is ample evidence that youth work has a significant impact on young people's competence development,<sup>13</sup> which is also confirmed in the growing body of national research.<sup>14 15</sup> However, what is often missing are ways and tools to "translate" these competences to other fields – primarily to education and employment. Perhaps after youth workers and young people have reached a certain level of self-recognition, there is a need to find ways to ensure both "conceptual transferability" (ensuring that the same meaning is assigned to the same words) and "practical transferability" of competences developed in the youth field through their application in other social contexts. It is our hope that this Handbook will provide some new doors and routes for Youthpass users to achieve such recognition.

<sup>9</sup> Manuel Souto-Otero, Daniela Ulicna, Loraine Schaeckens, Viktoria Bogнар: [Study on the impact of Non-Formal Education in youth organisations on young people's employability](#) (European Youth Forum, 2013)

<sup>10</sup> Özgehan Senyuva: [EVS Competences for Employment](#) (2014), EVS Competences for Employment Full Survey Report (SALTO Inclusion and SALTO South-East Europe Resource centres)

<sup>11</sup> Shernoff and Lowe Vandell: [Youth Engagement in After-School Programs: A Perspective from Experience Sampling](#) (2007, 2008), David J. Shernoff (2010)

<sup>12</sup> Allison Dunne, Daniela Ulicna, Ilona Murphy, Maria Golubeva: [Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union](#) (European Commission, 2014) p. 145

<sup>13</sup> *ibid* , p. 139-140

<sup>14</sup> Hidden competences – Study results: [Developing Competences Through Work and International Mobility](#) (2013), accessible here: [https://www.cmepius.si/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Sari-Turunen-Zwinger\\_Hidden-Competences-Study-Results.pdf](https://www.cmepius.si/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Sari-Turunen-Zwinger_Hidden-Competences-Study-Results.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Sever Džigurski and Darko Marković: [Study of the impact of NFE in youth work](#) (NAPOR, 2014)

## 2. A NOTE ON EMPLOYABILITY AND THE “INSTRUMENTALISATION” OF YOUTH WORK

The call for better recognition of youth work and non-formal learning is not only relevant to employability. It must be clear that youth work and non-formal learning have a value in and of themselves while playing an incredibly important role in supporting young people's inclusion, wellbeing, holistic development, and ultimately empowerment. These are important arenas of educational practice that have deserved their proper social recognition both in terms of their status and in terms of financial investments.

However, when youth unemployment started to skyrocket across Europe, employability as a topic moved rapidly up the political agenda. Solutions have been sought in various domains, including youth work. It is important to underline that youth work itself cannot and should not be the sole solution for youth unemployment, since the scarcity of jobs needs a systemic solution to which other policy arenas need to make a greater contribution. That said, it is true that young people's participation in (local and international) youth work activities develop important competences that can be beneficial for them in the labour market, in entrepreneurship or perhaps in formal education.

If you are a youth worker, it is entirely up to you to develop a position in relation to these questions and to consider what that position means for your role. While you do not need to become a job counsellor or career coach, it may be useful to keep this bigger picture in mind and acquire a knowledge and awareness of employment-related issues. And no, this Handbook does not intend to “instrumentalise” youth work – rather, it is designed to assist youth workers in responding effectively to the needs of the young people they work with.

## 3. YOUTHPASS SO FAR

Youthpass was introduced in 2007 under the EU Youth in Action (YiA) programme as an instrument for recognising learning outcomes obtained in the activities supported by the programme. Participants use the Youthpass certificates to describe what they learnt during

their project. In this manner, not only does Youthpass support participants in reflecting on their personal learning process, it also contributes to the social recognition of youth work and improves the employability of young people because they are able to document their acquired competences. Between its introduction in 2007 and October 2019, more than one million Youthpass certificates were issued.

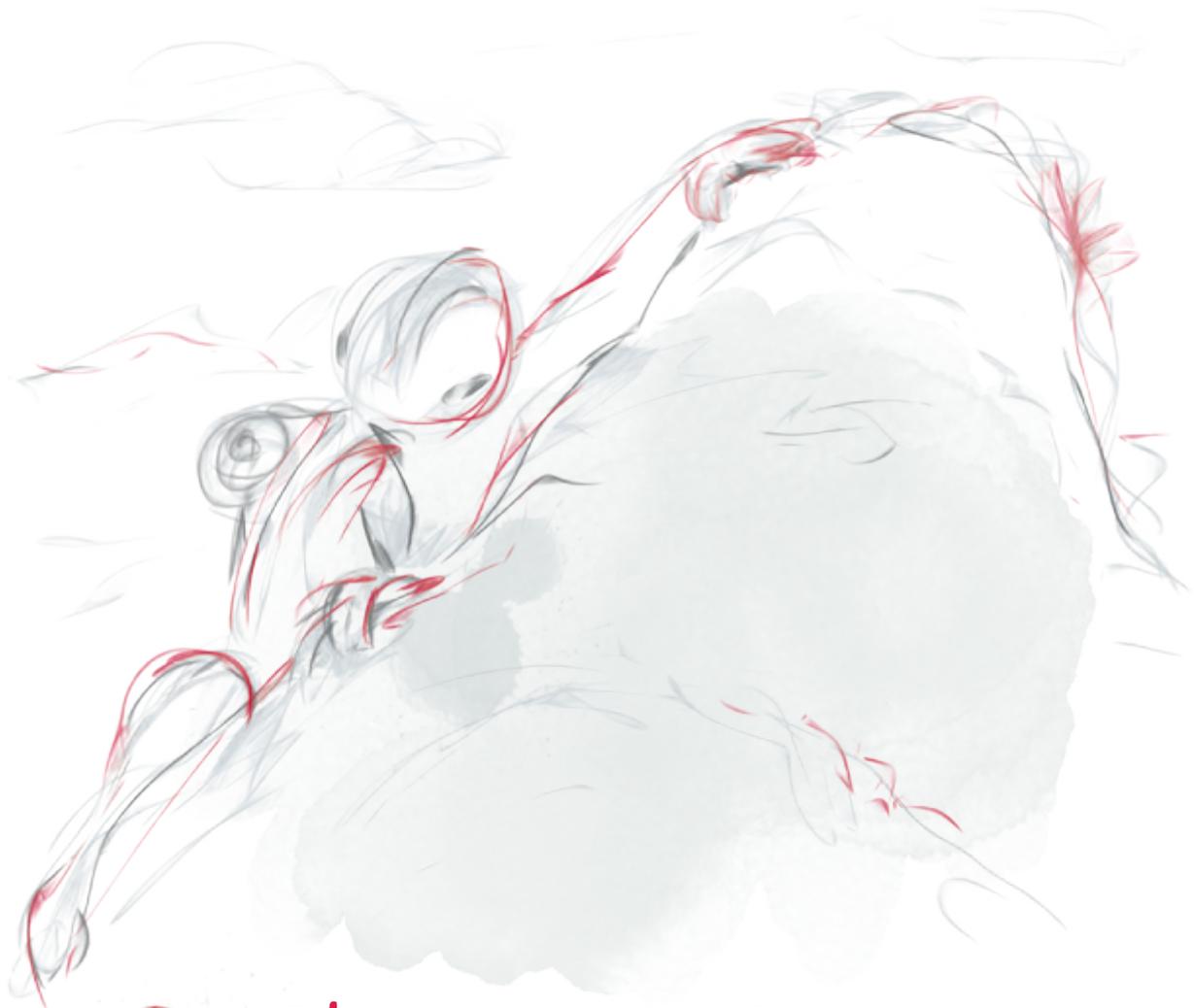
In 2012-2013 the European Commission carried out its Youthpass Impact Study<sup>16</sup> to assess the impact of the scheme on the participants of the EU YiA programme, the work of the organisations participating in the programme, and the recognition of youth work and non-formal learning. The study demonstrated that young people and youth work organisations hold the self-assessment dimension of Youthpass in high regard. The contribution of Youthpass towards raising awareness of one's learning achievements and communicating one's competences was also confirmed by the results of the RAY monitoring survey,<sup>17</sup> in which 83% of the participants involved in the reflection or self-assessment connected to Youthpass said it helped to raise their awareness of their development and learning throughout their project. When asked 2-11 months after the end of the project, 30% of Youthpass holders stated they had used it in some context, and 69% thought that the certificate had been useful for that purpose. The impact study also highlighted that for many young people, writing down the outcomes of their self-assessment is a challenge for which they need support. Youth workers also requested support and guidance so they can assist young people in completing their self-assessment.

The objective of this publication is to give youth workers, mentors and trainers ideas, resources and tools to help participants express their learning outcomes in such a way that they are adequately communicated to other people. This is a process that does not start at the end of a project; rather, it requires participants to keep track of and reflect on their learning as it evolves. Note-taking during reflection phases can be very helpful in reminding participants what they have learned after the project ends. Nevertheless, learning outcomes still need to be articulated in such a way that they are understood by people outside the international youth work community.

That said, it is not only for the purpose of filling in the Youthpass certificate that young people need to find the right words to describe their learning outcomes and competences. Today - and even more so in the future - the ability to describe one's competences is an important skill, one that is sometimes more valuable than a certificate when looking for a job or starting a business. So let's find the right language to describe our competences!

<sup>16</sup>Youthpass Impact Study: <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/about-youthpass/youthpass-impact-study/>

<sup>17</sup>Exploring Erasmus+: Youth in Action. Effects and outcomes of the ERASMUS+ Youth in Action Programme from the perspective of project participants and project leaders (2017), accessible here: <http://www.researchyouth.eu/results-erasmus-youth-in-action>



## II LEARNING; REFLECTING AND DOCUMENTING YOUR COMPETENCES

By Paul Kloosterman

## 1. REFLECTION AND LEARNING

Some forms of learning are easier to reflect on than others. Learning how to bake your own bread will probably take some time, some water and a number of ingredients, but it can be done in concrete steps. In between these steps, one reflects on the different parts of the process and discovers that it is important to knead the dough for a long time, that the dough needs to rise before it is put in the oven, and that turning up the temperature of the oven to bake the bread faster is not a good idea. These are fairly simple reflections that happen all the time in regard to the things we learn in life. It is human nature that we reflect so we can do better the next time; neither is it the kind of reflection that takes a lot of time. In fact, it happens almost automatically.

The kind of learning process that young people undergo in European youth programmes is different and more complex. Participants in youth exchanges, volunteering projects, training courses and other kinds of activities experience a form of learning that is often more about personal development, social skills, personal awareness, self-assurance, etc. These are all skills that are not learned by completing a few simple steps. We can't just tick off these things as if they were on a list; we cannot say "Now I'm totally self-aware!" or "Self-assurance: done!"

Learning about our own behaviour, our attitudes, our relationships with others and our personal goals in life is a process that never ends; one in which we take steps forward, sometimes steps back, and in which we develop new questions and new goals. It is also more difficult to identify the exact moment we undergo a learning process that relates to personal development, for this happens in situations that are frequently unplanned. It is not as if there is one session about assertiveness during the programme, and after that session participants know how to be assertive. Rather, they might find themselves in a variety of situations during the programme – on a coffee break, or maybe chilling out with other participants in the evening – where they act more assertively. Maybe they really did plan it, but sometimes it may just have happened and they only realised it at that very moment or a day later.

All this makes reflection more complex, but at the same time, reflection is essential for learning. It does not just help us to be aware of what we have learnt, it also teaches us about

how that learning took place. In other words, reflection helps on the one hand to record the learning experience; on the other hand, it helps us to prepare for continuing that process.

Finally, putting what we learn into words enables us to communicate it to others. This last point is why reflection plays such an important part in this publication: it tells us how to communicate our learning achievements to others, and how we can approach reflection as an essential part of the learning process.



## REFLECTION AND WRITING

Writing down experiences at the end of the day or the week helps learners remember what they did and to look back at those experiences from a certain distance.

Writing in itself can be a great way to reflect. When learners sit down alone and write, they go back through their experiences and put them into words. While this allows them to take the time to look back, it often adds something new to the experience. A young participant in a youth exchange who has enjoyed an exercise with many different activities, a lot of discussions, and intense teamwork with their peers will already have had all kinds of impressions at the very moment they undergo the experience. However, sitting down later on and looking at them again from a distance may deliver new insights. Writing down their own impressions, ideas, conclusions and questions helps them to reflect and learn.

The good news is that participants do this for themselves, meaning there is no need to write beautiful prose, that spelling mistakes are not a problem, and that it works as long as they can read their own handwriting. Of course, there are many people who love to write perfect sentences and work hard to find the most appropriate words, and that is wonderful too! However, “writers” are not the only people who can reflect and write about that reflection. Some are entirely content to scribble down some words, to draw things, to note down words all over the page in different colours, to write a poem, or to use pictures. All this is fine as long as it helps them to think about what happened, to look at and within themselves and to see how the experience changed them – in other words, to reflect. It is worth adding that this works provided notes are taken in such a way that they are still understandable when looking at them a few months later. At that moment, it may well be that they see things from another perspective and arrive at new insights and learning outcomes.

A more traditional way to take notes and reflect on one’s experiences is to use a simple diary. A little book with empty pages and a pencil is all that is needed. But one can also use a bigger book and crayons as well as a pencil, maybe also glue to stick in pictures, and other materials. It may no longer be the fashion, but many young people love to have their own diary and take it with them everywhere to fill it with words, stories, thoughts, drawings, poems, etc., sitting down every now and then in a quiet place to write just for themselves.

A somewhat less traditional practice – but in many ways the same – is to sit at a computer, using Word create an electronic diary. There is also a large number of (mostly free) websites, web-based tools and apps for keeping an online diary. All kind of formats and features exist. Just type in “online diary” in the search box. Many tools allow users to add pictures and even video clips. It is almost as if they have their personal diary with them at all times. Most of these diary tools can be kept strictly private or shared with some people or even with the entire world. The latter effect can also be achieved if one uses a blog as a diary. While the entries are then no longer private, which can limit what and how one writes, it is a great format for people who like to share their thoughts and experiences. Blogs also allow writers to invite feedback from readers, which can be helpful.

In this publication, we talk a lot about how to identify and communicate concrete learning outcomes to others. Reflection is the phase that comes before communication. This is not to say that a diary should be a long list of learning outcomes along the lines of “now I know this”, “now I am able to do that”, etc. The diary format allows questions to arise and ideas to develop. In that sense, reflection is much more a description of this very process. When working on describing learning outcomes, all the words, stories, sentences, drawings and pictures in the diary will be very helpful to the writer in realising what they have learned.



## Getting started

Young people may require some assistance writing and structuring their diary. Below are a few examples and tools that can help.

### Typical questions

A set of questions in the “I” format can be helpful in starting off the reflection and writing process:

- What did I enjoy most today?
- What made the biggest impression on me?
- What interesting contacts did I make?
- What satisfies me most today when I look at myself?
- What puzzled me today?
- Did I have a Eureka! moment?
- What did I find difficult?
- How did I deal with challenging situations?
- What did I discover?
- What new ideas got in my head?
- Is there anything I want to do differently the next time?
- What new questions do I have?
- What new plans did I develop today?
- Whom do I want to talk to again?
- What would be a metaphor for today?
- What grade would I assign this day?
- If this day were an animal/vehicle/musical instrument, what would it be?

(By the way, not all these questions should be used! Just pick a few.)

## Getting started

### structuring one's thoughts using three questions

This method helps to analyse an experience in such a way that facts can be separated from feelings. Often when looking back at a situation, one tends to mix up the things that happened with one's emotional response, which can affect one's perception.

#### These three questions should be answered:

- What happened?
- How did I feel?
- What do I want to do differently in the future?

In this exercise, it is crucial to deal with the questions one by one, ensuring that as question one is answered, learners only write down the things that happened. This sounds easy, but it is often quite difficult to restrict oneself just to the facts. For instance, the sentence "It was a beautiful sunny day and many people joined our activity" would not be a good answer to the first question. "During the activity the sun was shining, it was 24 degrees and 46 people took part in the activity" would be the right way to describe what really happened. Moving on to the second question, one possible response would be, "I really enjoyed the warm weather and was surprised that so many people joined the activity." The third question is more evaluative and helps the participant to think about alternative behaviours and responses. The process is not easy, but it is an interesting way to reflect.

## THE YOUTHPASS PROCESS

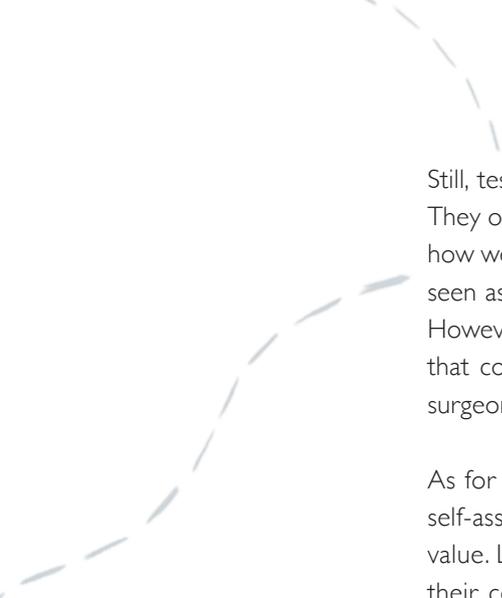
“It’s more than a certificate!” That is what many people will say when asked about Youthpass. In a way, the certificate is the end – the result. To get there, participants undergo a learning process during their youth exchange, training course or volunteering placement. The so-called “Youthpass process” was born from the idea of turning that learning process into a conscious experience – one in which young people become aware that they are learning, choose what they want to learn, explore different ways of learning, feel responsible for their own learning process, and evaluate and assess that process. The Youthpass process is a perfect fit for the concepts of lifelong learning and learning to learn. It is important to develop an ability to take responsibility for and decide about one’s own learning, because then that process becomes lifelong learning. *Youthpass Unfolded*<sup>18</sup> offers many examples and an extensive exploration of the Youthpass process.

<sup>18</sup>Youthpass Unfolded – Practical tips and hands-on methods for making the most of the Youthpass process (2012 – updated in 2016). Accessible here: [https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3553/Publication\\_YP-unfolded\\_online.pdf](https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3553/Publication_YP-unfolded_online.pdf)

Now let's explore one of the elements of the Youthpass process: self-assessment.

## WHY IS SELF-ASSESSMENT IMPORTANT?

“Are you really the best person to assess your own learning?” is a good way to start a discussion about self-assessment. The next question could be, “Who can decide better than you what you have learned?” Many people are used to a system in which other people decide to what extent an intended learning outcome took place, or whether it happened at all. These other people administer tests, do interviews, prepare exams, and assess someone’s learning outcomes. Indeed, there are quite a few professions where it is good idea to test candidates before they start working. No one wants to be operated on in a hospital by someone who declared themselves a surgeon.



Still, tests and exams as instruments for assessing somebody's competences have their limits. They only assess one's skills at that particular moment and often, the outcome depends a lot on how well the candidate handled the test situation. Assessments in the form of a test or exam are seen as a kind of "final" assessment, meaning that if you passed the exam, you are "good at it". However, this does not really correspond to the concept of lifelong learning, which recognises that competences can become outdated very quickly. No one wants to be operated on by surgeons who passed their exams 18 years ago and have had no refresher training since then.

As for the learning that takes place in the activities under the European youth programmes, self-assessment seems a far more appropriate way to identify learning outcomes and their value. Learners know best what personal development they underwent, how they improved their communication skills, why they feel more self-assured, how they have become better organisers, etc. In assessing their own learning, the young participants become much more aware of it, which subsequently enables them to better plan their further learning.

However, this is not to say that learners do not need other people to assess their learning. Self-assessment is not something people do on their own. Here, "self" refers to the fact that learners themselves are ultimately responsible for the assessment. That is not the same as doing it without help from others. Although the young participants probably know themselves best, they (as we all!) still have an incomplete or different perception of their behaviour and their skills. Other people see us from a different perspective and therefore can see things that we do not and/or attach a different value to our behaviour and skills. Similarly, peers, colleagues, trainers, mentors and youth workers will have experienced and observed the young participants interacting and working during the project and hence certainly have impressions of their own to share. Their impressions can enrich the self-assessment process.

Young learners can share their self-assessment with others and invite comments, suggestions and points they may have missed. But frankly, self-assessment is not an easy task. It is difficult for people to decide what value to attach to their own competences. Moreover, it is not something they are used to doing; it may feel uncomfortable to take notes on themselves, especially in a Youthpass context because Youthpass is a certificate. Rather, individuals are used to others doing an assessment or an evaluation of them and are happy when they receive a positive assessment. Writing something positive about oneself in order to present that to others may feel a little embarrassing, but that can be overcome. People in one's environment can play a strong role in this.

## SO HOW IS IT DONE THEN?

A self-assessment is nothing more and nothing less than a snapshot taken at some point during the learning process when learners take a moment to see where they are. This moment can be supported with questions in the first-person format such as, Where am I going? Where am I now, compared to my initial ideas about what I wanted to learn? What progress have I made? What can I do better? What am I capable of? What kind of unexpected learning happened? Are my initial ideas still the right ones? Also: Am I on the right path? What new questions do I have? What are my next steps? What should I adjust?

During a self-assessment, people take stock of the reflections they had before. While this is very similar to a reflection, in a self-assessment individuals look back on a certain period or activity, and with the help of the reflections they did previously, evaluate the outcomes and the value of what they have learned and put that into words.

As stated earlier, defining what one has really learned is not an easy task. It is not something one “just does”. Admittedly, some points are easier to identify: for instance, when the group has made a movie during a youth exchange and used a certain software to edit it, they can note down that they are now able to use that software. The same probably goes for volunteers describing how they improved their language skills during a nine-month placement in a foreign country. However, during a youth exchange or training course - and certainly during a long volunteering placement - young people have many intense experiences. What exactly is the learning in that? How can they pinpoint and describe it? It requires looking back at those experiences with the help of a diary and/or peers, youth workers, trainers and mentors and by asking other questions.

### Questions about the learning process

Self-assessment is not only about WHAT one has learnt but also about HOW. It is an opportunity to think about what learning methods are best for the individual in question, what the challenges have to be overcome, what the role of other people is, and at what point you really feel like you are actually learning. These kinds of questions help to increase awareness of one's own learning and may help to adjust one's way of learning in the future.

Being able to express one's own style of learning in words is not only important personally and for further learning, it is also an important skill that is valued highly by employers, for example. Finally, it is one of the Key Competences identified by the European Commission: learning to learn. Knowing oneself as a learner is a crucial component of that competence.

### Questions about new roles and tasks

When young people take part in an activity under a European youth programme, they often find themselves doing things they have never done before. These probably involve a lot of learning, which should be written down in one's self-assessment. For instance, during a volunteering project a young volunteer joined other volunteers to work with a group of teenagers every Wednesday afternoon - a new experience that went quite well. What did the young volunteer learn from that? To answer that question requires identifying what tasks were involved, such as coming up with ideas for activities, preparing the activities, setting a budget for the activities, preparing the space, explaining the activities to the group, getting the group's attention, encouraging unmotivated kids to join in, dealing with disagreements in the group, talking to individual kids, working together with the other volunteers as a team, resolving disagreements with one's colleagues, writing a report for the organisation, etc. Having noted down all these different elements, the volunteer can visually recall carrying out these tasks. What was new about them? What felt good to the volunteer? What did they get better at as the months went by? What made them be good at what they did?

The reflection that comes from those questions allows young people to articulate what they learned during that activity. Moreover, talking to other volunteers or a mentor, using the same questions, will undoubtedly deliver even more insights than just taking notes on one's own.

### Questions about positive experiences

Often, what people like to do and what makes them feel good are the things they are skilled at, which is wonderful! To be very good at something that one doesn't like to do at all is probably not desirable. This can help during a self-assessment. Thinking back to situations

and activities that made a participant totally satisfied and happy can help them to define the competences they acquired. First, it is important to find out what exactly made them feel good; in other words, to analyse what elements made up that activity. Somebody who loves to play in a band will definitely like to play music. But what other components are there? Playing in a band requires the ability to work in a team. So maybe working closely with others is something that they love doing and that they are good at. Someone else who feels happy when organising the disco during a youth exchange may like to dance, but there may be many other elements that contribute to that joyful feeling and reveal that that individual has certain skills: being a good organiser, taking care of people, creating a good atmosphere, working in a team, etc. Analysing an activity in such a way can generate new insights about one's passions and competences. Maybe it is not so much the disco itself but working in a team that someone really loves to do and is good at.

### Questions about the future

A self-assessment involves looking back at the outcomes of a certain situation or period. It is also a moment for the learner to look at the future, form new plans and develop intentions for the period ahead. Again, it is necessary to look at both the “how” and the “what” involved in learning. What kind of learning does one want to engage in from now on? What new ways of learning does one yet have to discover – methods that could still be useful? What kind of people does one want to connect with during that future learning process?

Focussing on the “what” involves asking a whole range of new questions. During a learning process, one may find answers to certain questions but then, many new questions arise. Exploring certain subjects more deeply will most probably generate new and more interesting questions. However, these questions may also arise from insights about oneself, leading one to ask, e.g.: How can I use that insight? How can I change certain behaviours? Where can I act out my newly discovered strengths? Undergoing such a self-assessment allows participants to look ahead, make plans and articulate.

Which ways of learning do I want to continue?

Which new ways of learning do I want to try out?

Which new questions came up?

How can I follow up on my new insights?

What kind of learning suits me?

What are my challenges?

What role do other people play in my learning?

What were my real learning moments?

#### THE FUTURE

#### THE WAY OF LEARNING

## questions for self-assessment

#### POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

What made me really feel good?

What made me like it?

What does that say about my competences?

#### NEW ROLES AND TASKS

Which new roles and tasks did I take on?

Which different elements were in that task/role?

Which new things did I learn there?

What was I good at?

## SELF-ASSESSMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN YOUTH PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

The diversity of activities within European youth programmes also means a variety of self-assessments, although the principles remain the same: the learner is the one who defines the learning outcomes.

When a mentor completes a three-day training seminar about mentoring techniques, their self-assessment will probably be shorter than that of a young volunteer completing a six-month placement. You simply learn more in six months than in three days. Moreover, a six-month learning process in another country and in a “new life” will be more complex than for a three-day session on a specific topic.

The mentor may only need a few notes taken during the course and their reflection period, and will only have to look at the programme to recall the different aspects of the training course to identify learning outcomes. Although unexpected learning may have taken place because of certain encounters or activities, the focus remains on the topic of the training course, namely mentoring techniques.

In a six-month placement the focus will not be that clear, the volunteer having had an enormous range of experiences all offering learning potential. These experiences cannot just be linked to tasks performed on the job, they also happen on a very personal level, influencing the volunteer’s confidence and self-awareness. To identify all of these learning outcomes it is crucial to keep track by taking notes, in all kinds of ways and on a regular basis. A self-assessment based on such a long period will require much more time and effort to ensure all the different outcomes are identified.

While the mentor will need just a few hours to complete their self-assessment, the volunteer will likely need much more time to identify the different learning outcomes by talking to various people in the organisation running the project, going through all their notes, and checking outcomes with peers and mentor, etc. Keeping track is essential!



## 2. THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

We refer to youth workers, mentors, coaches and trainers as facilitators (of learning). “Youthpass Unfolded” has a chapter entitled “Role of the Facilitator”, which describes several facilitator roles in the Youthpass process. In this Handbook, we focus on four of those roles as they relate more to reflection and self-assessment:

- Putting learning on the agenda
- Seeing the potential of learners
- Asking supportive questions
- Giving feedback

### PUTTING LEARNING ON THE AGENDA

The link between youth work projects and learning is not always obvious. For many young people, learning happens only in school – and for some it may even have a negative connotation. Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to see learning from another perspective and to rethink the meaning of the word together with the young participants.

One of the first things a facilitator should do is to gain clarity about the objectives of the activity. What is the reason for this project? What does this activity offer? What learning do facilitators think is involved in this? How do we as facilitators understand our role? What is our approach to learning? By making their objectives and approach explicit, facilitators help young people to recognise learning opportunities. That is the moment when learning is put on the agenda.

When it comes to reflection, it is particularly important to allow sufficient time and space for it in the schedule. If there is no specific time set aside for reflection during the youth exchange and the participants are left to do it at some point during their free time, it may not happen at all. Besides setting aside a specific time, it is also important to offer tools, methods and questions to help participants reflect. By providing time, space and resources, facilitators underline the importance of reflection as part of the learning process. Moreover, besides providing time for

reflection, it makes sense to ask young people to share their reflection experiences; to reflect on reflection, if you like. That may sound a bit over the top, but considering that for many young people, reflecting regularly is something completely new, it helps to create space for exchanging opinions about it, to overcome challenges, and to get tips and ideas from others. This way, learning will always be on the agenda.

## SEEING THE POTENTIAL OF LEARNERS

It is important to recognise that for many young people, reflection and self-assessment is especially difficult because they require introspection. Reflecting on oneself and seeing one's strengths and weaknesses requires the ability to look at oneself from a distance, not to mention how hard it is to say about oneself, "I'm good (or not so good) at that!"

As a facilitator, commenting on what you observe in terms of behaviours and attitudes can help young people recognise things that they are not aware of or not sure about. It requires good observation skills, and the feedback provided should be descriptive rather than judgmental. For instance, "I think you took quite a leading role there", "To me, it looked like you really enjoyed organising that activity", "I have the feeling you enjoy doing much more than talking", etc. are all ways to start a conversation about competences – and particularly attitudes – and that can help young people reflect on themselves and gain more self-awareness.

Recognising the potential of learners also involves recognising the different ways in which people learn, and realising that there is more than one way to learn successfully, each path providing different opportunities. This is true for reflection, too. For some people, sitting on their own and writing does not work at all. They may benefit much more from talking to others, maybe while out on a walk or even when listening to music together. As a facilitator of learning, you should allow for different ways of doing things and not get annoyed if, when the time comes for individual writing, some participants start doing something completely different.

## ASKING SUPPORTIVE QUESTIONS

It's important to have a set of questions ready for the reflection session. Coming up with suitable questions is not always easy, especially if you have to do it on your own. This Handbook contains many examples of questions and questioning techniques. As a learning facilitator, you play a crucial role in helping young people reflect by asking appropriate and supportive questions. You look at things from another angle, so you can offer new angles from which participants can look at their action(s) and behaviour(s). When you, through your questioning technique, get people to talk about themselves, you help them articulate what they have experienced, performed and learned.

## GIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback is similar to the process of articulating one's observations as described above. However, "feedback" in this context refers to organised and planned feedback in a specific session that the facilitator and participant have agreed to do together. Here, it is important that the person receiving the feedback receiving the feedback decides on what to have feedback. Feedback is not just given universally on all aspects of the receiver's activities: rather, it requires the giver to focus on aspects that the receiver has chosen.

As the feedback provider, you have to consider what you are able to give feedback on. When a volunteer asks for feedback on how they worked with a group of children and you as their mentor have never really seen the volunteer in action, perhaps you are not the right person to do so.

The most important principle here is that the feedback should be helpful to the receiver. It is not an occasion for the feedback giver to finally share their personal opinions about the receiver. Be aware that if you want feedback to be a form of support for the receiver, it should always be given with a positive intention.

### 3. COMMUNICATING COMPETENCES

Putting learning outcomes into words is helpful when people want to communicate their competences to others. It can also be a very meaningful thing to do for oneself. The process of writing about one's own capacities and competences helps to develop a genuine awareness of what one is able to do, and do well. In turn, it helps to increase self-awareness and confidence.

For many young people, looking at the future and deciding about a direction in life is quite challenging. What kind of work do they want to do? What may they want to study? Awareness of what they are good at and of where their passions lie can be enormously helpful to that thinking process.

For a young entrepreneur, it is crucial to know what personal strengths they need to set up a business. Besides, awareness of competences they don't have is essential when deciding about who to cooperate with.

Being able to describe competences is important in many situations that involve working with others because it contributes to good teamwork. That goes for teams in professional contexts, but also in volunteering projects and one's personal life. Being able to communicate what you bring to the table is an essential life-skill.



### III HOW TO SUPPORT THE YOUTHPASS SELF-ASSESSMENT

By Darko Marković

Have you ever built a house? Even if you haven't done it yet, imagine for a moment the process of building it. It can be an elaborate house of your dreams, or just a simple bungalow. Imagine the whole process step by step - starting from pouring the foundations, building the outside walls, installing windows and doors, completing all the smaller pieces of work along the way, and laying the tiles on the roof. Some things will go according to the original plan, but there are many unexpected challenges to overcome along the way. Eventually, the house is finished and you want to take a picture of it. What do you need the picture for? Do you want

to take it only for yourself, to keep in your own private album? Or would you like to share it with your closest friends? Or perhaps you want to post it on Instagram and share it with the world. Depending on your intentions, you will look for the best possible angle from which to take it. This may be easiest if the picture is only for your personal use; you have been part of the process and you know it inside out already. But what kind of photo will transmit all the beauty and uniqueness of this house to other people?

If we compare the Youthpass process, which implies a personal engagement to learning and commitment to ongoing reflection, to the process of building a house, the moment you produce the Youthpass certificate is the equivalent of taking the best possible shot of that house when it is done. So before you start providing support to your participants in doing so, you need to understand what angle they are looking for. In other words, before you begin the Youthpass self-assessment process with them it would be good to ask your participants

*“Why do you need the Youthpass certificate  
and how would you like to use it?”*

Obviously, there are many different answers to these questions. In this Handbook we tackle some of the most frequent ones, represented here in the form of these four keywords:

**MYSELF**

**JOB**

**VALIDATION**

**EDUCATION**

## 1. “I NEED THE YOUTHPASS FOR MYSELF”

If the answer is “I need the Youthpass for myself”, your role in the self-assessment process will be much less focused on the form than on the content. Learners have complete freedom to describe their learning outcomes in their own words.

Here, you can focus on

- explaining the Youthpass self-assessment process and its value,
- describing the concept of key competences for lifelong learning,
- providing support tools for writing down learning outcomes,
- giving encouraging feedback on the text,
- assisting with the technical process of producing the certificate.

This kind of self-assessment is often done in a diary style. In existing Youthpass-related handbooks, a lot is said about how to approach a Youthpass self-assessment for personal reasons. In this Handbook, we want to go a step further and explore how to support participants who are working on their self-assessment for other purposes, such as employment, further education, or validation.

### SUGGESTED TOOLS TO USE:

Tools

Two sides of the coin, The cheat sheet, Connecting the dots, Learning outcomes interview, Pyramid of learning, Take it to a new level, Learning with emotions, Should it stay or should it go

## Note

### THE VALUE OF YOUTHPASS FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

Regardless why it is being done, the value of working on one's Youthpass certificate can be summed up as follows:

1. It gives the learner a sense of completion with regard to the learning process they underwent during the project.
2. It allows them a well-deserved self-recognition of the achievements and competences gained in the project.
3. It is an excellent opportunity to practice self-assessment skills, thus enhancing their overall self-awareness and developing a highly relevant and transferable skill.
4. If properly supported by a learning facilitator or one's peers, it is often experienced as empowering and a great boost to participants' confidence.
5. It can be helpful as a basis for describing one's competences to others later on.

## 2. YOUTHPASS SELF-ASSESSMENT:

### From personal use to other purposes

Working on a Youthpass self-assessment for other purposes (employment, education or validation) will be essentially different than working on it purely for oneself. The main aim is to produce a certificate that can aid one's life choices or career path. In these cases, the support process can be summarised in the following three steps:

Explore



Match



Prove

Explore

- Explore the goals and needs of the participant. What will they use their Youthpass certificate for?
- Encourage them to research their “target” (e.g., job, validation procedure or educational institution), especially the competences these targets require.

## Match

- Identify the match between the competences required by the target and the competences developed in the project.
- When describing the competences, find a way to reconcile the language used by the target and the language of the youth work field.

## Prove

- Support participants in describing their learning outcomes while referring to the competences required by their target.
- Ensure they provide evidence to back up each claim (e.g., examples of how they demonstrated a given competence during the project).
- Verify whether the language used in the text is understood by someone less familiar with European youth programmes.

In the following sections, we provide more detailed guidelines on how to support the Youthpass self-assessment process for a range of specific purposes, namely applying for a job, enrolling in an educational programme, or preparing for a validation process.

### 3. "I'M APPLYING FOR A JOB"

If the learner intends to use the Youthpass certificate to apply for a job, there are three steps to be done in order to support them in the most effective way.

#### ENSURE TRANSFERABILITY

step 1

- Ensure that the learner understands what Youthpass is and what to expect of it. Also, clarify what Youthpass is not, specifically mentioning that it is not a proof of qualification nor a formal confirmation of acquired competences.
- Explain how they can transfer the competences gained in one field to another; e.g., from European youth projects to professional contexts.
- Highlight the potential benefits of using Youthpass in the job application process, such as:
  - a. It may give the potential employer additional information about the applicant's interests and level of initiative and proactivity.
  - b. It may give the potential employer information about the competences the candidate has acquired in another context.
  - c. Since the certificate is based on self-assessment, it may also deliver an impression about the applicant's level of self-awareness and ability to assess themselves in a balanced way.

## question

### CAN COMPETENCES GAINED IN EUROPEAN YOUTH PROJECTS BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHER PROFESSIONAL FIELDS?

As shown in the introduction to this Handbook, there is a growing body of evidence about the relevance of competences gained in non-formal settings and how they correspond with what is required in the labour market. In most cases, these competences relate to what are known as transversal skills (e.g., communication skills, organisational skills, teamwork, self-management, flexibility, openness for learning, diversity awareness, etc.), many of which are developed in European youth projects. However, in some cases participants also develop very relevant technical competences that can be transferred to other professional contexts (e.g., training skills, elderly care skills, construction skills, digital competences, research skills, etc.).

## CLARIFY THE TARGET FOR TRANSFERRING COMPETENCES

Once participants have developed an understanding of Youthpass and its potential benefits, it is time to start working on the transferability of what they have learned to other fields.

### step 2

- First, clarify if the potential job is within the youth field or in a completely different professional context. It will be easier to transfer one's skills gained in European youth projects to another youth (work) context than to some other fields. However, there are projects, especially in international volunteering, where the actual project activities are from the same professional field as the participant's potential career choice. In this case, transferability is not limited to "transversal competences"; technical competences are equally relevant.

Are competences to be transferred within the youth field or to other contexts?



- Invite the learner to research similar job ads online to work out what competences they require. The task is two-fold: to make a list of all the commonly required competences in the targeted industry, and to pay attention to the language used to describe them.
- Explore the connection between the learning outcomes of the current European youth project and the competences mentioned in the ads. Reflect further about the competences developed during the project. Is there a match? If so, make a list of the most common ones. Please note that this process may require some translation work from you to help the learner find the equivalent for the competences from the ads. For example, what is the youth work equivalent for “customer orientation” or “resilience”?

## question

DO YOU SPEAK THE EMPLOYER'S LANGUAGE?  
SOME TYPICAL COMPETENCES MENTIONED IN JOB ADS:

Accountability, adaptability, attention to detail, clear communication, confidence, conflict management, creativity, developing others, emotional control, flexibility, handling stress, integrity, leading teams, open-mindedness, openness for learning, proactive thinking, problem solving, project management, results orientation, self-management, taking initiative, teamwork, etc.

## TARGETED SELF-ASSESSMENT

Once the list of common competences is established, the actual self-assessment starts with the following question: Which competences on this list have you developed during this project? Invite the participant to write one short paragraph for each competence describing how the project helped them develop it. In doing so, follow these guidelines:

step 3

- a. Practice using the employer's "competence language" when describing your learning outcomes.
- b. Avoid using youth work jargon that will not be understood by an employer outside the youth field.
- c. Back up your claims. Provide concrete examples of the situations in the project during which you demonstrated the competence in question.

Finally, help the participant to cluster their self-assessment according to the Key Competences framework in the certificate.

## Note

### THE YOUTHPASS SELF-ASSESSMENT AS A WAY TO DEVELOP ESSENTIAL SKILLS

By practicing this kind of self-assessment – and bridging the gap between the two worlds – the participants also develop flexibility and adaptability, both highly relevant skills when transferring competences to a different context.

In a Serbian study,\* young employees confirmed the transferability of their competences gained in the youth field and non-formal learning to a different organisational culture. However, they also underlined that this transferability was never automatic. Instead, it required a great deal of personal flexibility and adaptability for them to apply their competences in another context.

An enhanced awareness of one's own competences and the ability to back up their existence are both essential skills when applying for jobs. They should be used when preparing one's cover letter as well as during the job interview.

\* Sever Džigurski and Darko Marković. [Study of the impact of NFE in youth work](#) (NAPOR, 2014)

### SUGGESTED TOOLS TO USE:

#### Tools

The cheat sheet, You need me - I am worth it, Pyramid of learning, CARD GAME: Name your competences, Show me your STARS, Dream Job.

## 4. "I AM PREPARING FOR VALIDATION"

Some of the participants or volunteers may wish to use their Youthpass for validation purposes. In case you are unfamiliar with validation, the term refers to acquiring a formally recognised qualification without attending formal training or education in that field. It requires the person to document that they acquired the necessary competences through life experience and informal and non-formal learning. The key to all validation processes, regardless of the methodology, is providing evidence for one's claims. It often requires creating a portfolio and submitting it for assessment. If the assessment is positive, one may be granted a full or partial qualification.<sup>19</sup>

### Validation of non-formal and informal learning in the EU

The European Council's 2012 Recommendation called upon Member States to put in place, by no later than 2018, arrangements enabling individuals to have their knowledge, skills and competences acquired via non-formal and informal learning validated. To achieve that goal, a growing number of European countries have been developing validation systems. It is a good idea to get up-to-date information on the provisions that apply for validation in your context. This can be done by consulting the regularly updated European Inventory on Validation.

Typically, a full validation process involves the following four phases:

1. **IDENTIFICATION** of individual's learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
2. **DOCUMENTATION** of individual's learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
3. **ASSESSMENT** of individual's learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
4. **CERTIFICATION** of the results of the assessment of individual's learning outcomes acquired through non-formal and informal learning in the form of a qualification, or credits leading to a qualification, or in another form, as appropriate.

<sup>19</sup> European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3073> and European Inventory on Validation: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning/european-inventory>

Even though the Youthpass scheme did not originally intend to serve the purpose of formal recognition (validation) of competences or qualifications, it can potentially contribute in at least two ways to this context:

1. **Youthpass certificate** as a piece of evidence and to be included in the validation portfolio;
2. **Youthpass self-assessment process** as a help to practice reflective writing and to back up one`s claims, demonstrating the competences developed in action.

TO SUPPORT PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE CONSIDERING TO USE YOUTHPASS FOR VALIDATION, YOU CAN DO THE FOLLOWING:

step 1

Ask them to research the validation process and its requirements thoroughly. Specifically, they should work out what competences are required for the desired qualification and what kind of evidence is accepted.

step 2

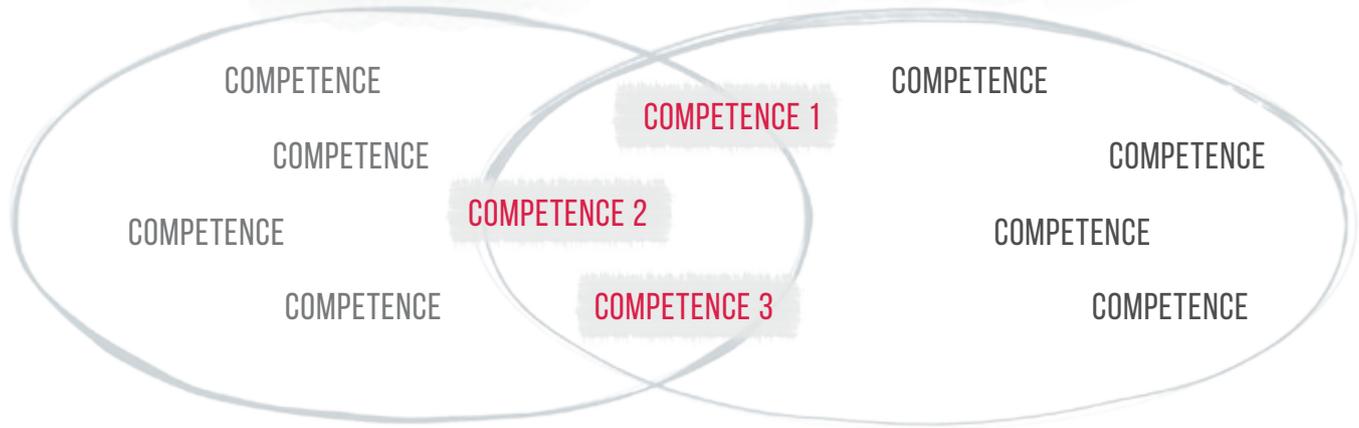
Assess the relevance of the European youth programme activity for the desired qualification. Verify to what extent the desired competences have been developed through the activity.

step 3

Once a match between the required and developed competences is established, ask participants to complete a self-assessment for those that are relevant. It is important not just to claim that they have developed that competence during the project, but also to back up that claim. Invite participants to use their Youthpass self-assessment to practice backing up their claims. What evidence can they provide to confirm they have acquired a certain competence?

Competences developed during the European youth project

Competences required for the qualification



What evidence do you have to prove that you have developed these competences in the project?

Ask participants to consider including their Youthpass certificate as evidence in their validation portfolio, or to just copy the elements of their Youthpass self-assessment, or both. They should plan their further steps in the validation process.

step 4

#### SUGGESTED TOOLS TO USE:

The cheat sheet, Learning outcomes interview, Pyramid of learning, Show me your STARS

tools

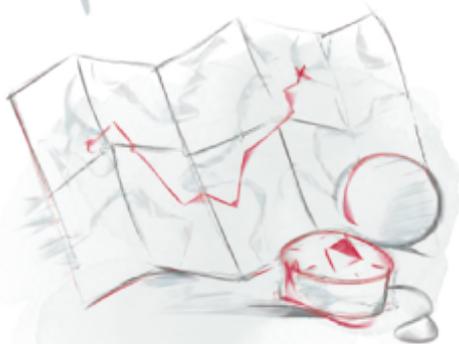
## 5. "I WANT TO ENROL IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING"

Sometimes a former volunteer or participant may wish to use their Youthpass certificate when enrolling in a degree course or entering a formal training programme. Their reasons for doing so may vary depending on the situation: for instance, to obtain additional points for their volunteering placement, to have their previous experience and learning recognised so they can skip some parts of the curriculum, or to use their Youthpass certificate as proof of foreign language competence instead of an official language assessment certificate when enrolling at university in another country. Nevertheless, when it comes to further education, learners should inquire with the school/university/training provider whether Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) is possible and what kind of evidence is needed. After getting exact information about the process, you can go ahead and support the learner as outlined in the previous two sections.

### SUGGESTED TOOLS TO USE:

tools

The cheat sheet, You need me - I am worth it, Pyramid of learning, CARD GAME: Name your competences, Show me your STARS, Dream Job.



## Examples of self-assessment styles:

### I Diary style

#### DESCRIBING ACTIVITIES

One way for learners in European youth programmes to approach their Youthpass self-assessment is to use “diary language”, which means describing the activities they have taken part in with a limited reference to the competence development. Diary language is often full of project-specific jargon. While this style is quite suitable for personal use, it has very limited value when it comes to using the Youthpass outside international youth work context.

*Example* “We worked together in groups. I came up with ideas and together with the others we developed them. I worked hard for my group and in my group and I was trying the best I could to follow the instructions to get a good result. Making presentations in a foreign language.”

### II Summary style

#### LISTING THE COMPETENCES

Another approach commonly used in Youthpass certificates is just to list one's newly developed competences without backing up the claims. This is a good basis for enhancing the use of Youthpass, but requires some additional work to make such certificate more accessible and convincing for someone from the “outside world”.

*Example* “I learned how to turn the ideas into action. I learned how to be creative and innovative. I learned that I have to be brave in taking risks and I learned more about project management.”

## Examples of self-assessment styles:

### III Convincing style

#### NAMING COMPETENCES AND PROVIDING EVIDENCE

To enhance the applicability of Youthpass certificates and transferability of competences gained in a project, it is recommended to clearly name the competence gained (using the language of the “target”) and providing evidence of one’s claims (i.e., providing concrete examples of how applying this competence in practice led to a positive outcome). Below is an example of the STAR<sup>20</sup> format for providing evidence. This technique can also be used to make statements about one’s competences in a CV, cover letters or during a job interview.

**Example** “During the project I improved my flexibility when working in a team. I worked with a team of eight other young people planning a local campaign project for two months. Suddenly, due to funding cuts, some of our original ideas could no longer be realised, so we needed to reschedule everything. Although I was personally very much attached to some of the original activities, I agreed to merge some of the planned activities and dropping others, while keeping the main goal of the campaign in mind. The situation led to better team unity and afterwards to a successful campaign.”

The STAR approach is suitable for use not only when describing successful situations – it can also be applied to situations involving failure, when the outcome was what the individual learnt or realised in that situation. This allows learners to demonstrate openness for learning and commitment to self-development.

<sup>20</sup> Interview Skills Consulting Ltd. [The Successful Interview Guide](#) (2003-2016). STAR and similar approaches used in competency-based job interviews.



Describe a **situation** where you have demonstrated or learnt the competence that you are presenting.



What were the **tasks** you had to complete in that situation; what were the specific challenges you had to address.



What were the **actions** you took to complete these tasks and how did you deal with those challenges.



What were the **results** of your actions; what have you learnt from that situation.



The STAR format for providing evidence of your competences



## IV TOOLS AND TIPS FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND DESCRIBING COMPETENCES

Compiled by Anita Silva

"In theory; theory and practice are the same;  
but in practice they are very different."

Commonly attributed to Yogi Berra

**Knowing** what one knows is a tricky thing; we have already established that. **Writing** what one knows may be even trickier, especially if the person is, say,

- a young person;
- not used to explaining their own competences;
- having to write about them instead of just demonstrating them;
- not specifically asked about it.

It is challenging, right? It takes good writing skills to produce a description that is concise but also complete (no one wants to read a novel about your competences). It should be realistic but also compelling. Isn't it like asking a participant to have the analytical capacity of Freud and the writing skills of Tolkien?

Well, while it's challenging, we believe young people can do it. But they may need a bit of help in the beginning. Happily, this is the original objective of youth work - to support young people in their development - and we are serious believers in young people's capacities.

Therefore, the million-euro question is:

How can you as a youth worker; trainer or mentor support learners in becoming more aware of their learning outcomes and make them more visible for others through Youthpass?



This chapter is all about these **hows**. We have put together some practical ideas on how you can support participants or youth groups in writing powerful self-assessments and have fun while doing so. This section contains step-by-step descriptions of interactive **methods** designed to help you introduce participants to the – for some, scary - world of writing a self-assessment while deepening their own reflection and allowing them to continue improving their writing skills. It also offers **tips and tricks** to make your facilitation work smoother and more efficient. Lastly, we propose different kinds of **resources** to use in this process.

Of course, the efficiency of these tools largely depends on how you implement them. It is up to you to reflect about what aims you and the participants have and want to achieve and to adapt the tools that will help you, and them, obtain the desired results. For that, it is important to take into consideration your participants' age and background as well as the time and space you make available for supporting them in writing their self-assessment.

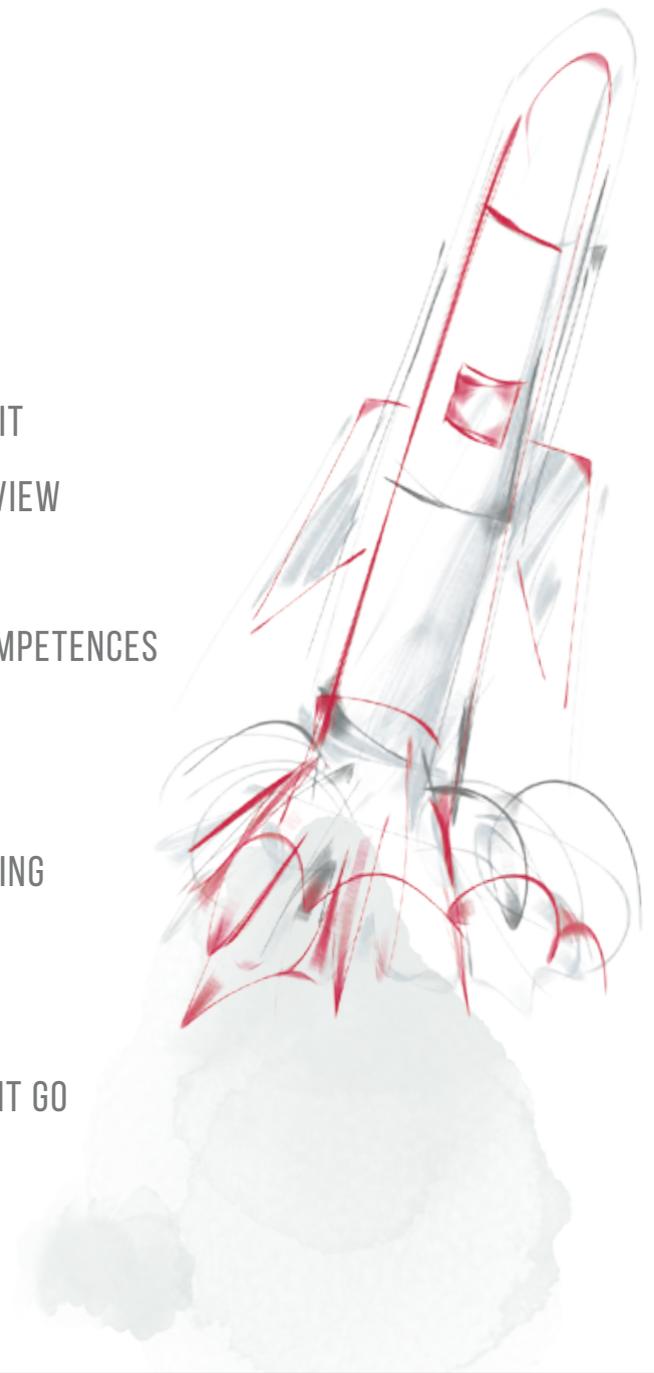
Each exercise is designed to help learners to discover new ways to explain their acquired competences. This means that sometimes you will have to ask the participants to focus on one specific competence or learning experience and use that as a base for the exercise itself.



Ready? Let's go!

## 1. METHODS

1. TWO SIDES OF THE COIN
2. THE CHEAT SHEET
3. CONNECTING THE DOTS
4. YOU NEED ME - I AM WORTH IT
5. LEARNING OUTCOMES INTERVIEW
6. PYRAMID OF LEARNING
7. CARD GAME: NAME YOUR COMPETENCES
8. SHOW ME YOUR STARS
9. DREAM JOB
10. THREE CHAIRS OF MY LEARNING
11. TAKE IT TO A NEW LEVEL
12. LEARNING WITH EMOTIONS
13. SHOULD IT STAY OR SHOULD IT GO



## 1. TWO SIDES OF THE COIN

What participants know is very important. But do you realise that what they do not know is also very valuable? Employers, for example, are always looking for what makes a candidate special. One way to work this out is by exploring candidates' strengths and weaknesses during job interviews. Are your learners prepared to explain their own limitations in a reflected way? This exercise can help.



### GROUP SIZE

Any



### DURATION

20-40 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Paper coins (see handout)
- Pens



### OBJECTIVES

- To help participants articulate what they have learned and what competences they still need to develop
- To reflect on the importance of acknowledging what they do not know

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



Learning outcomes are like the two sides of a coin. For everything we learn, there is something we have yet to discover. Being aware of what we do not know is a great way to discover new learning paths and generate curiosity, and that is important if we want to keep learning. This exercise is meant to help participants do that.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Give one paper coin to each person and ask to write one thing they have learnt on one side.
- Explain at this point that they will later discuss what they have written, but they can keep the coins for themselves in the end.
- Once they have finished, ask them to write a “however” sentence on the other side of the coin, explaining something relevant that they have not learned yet or need to improve on. Example: Side 1 - I learned about EU institutions; side 2 - However, I am still curious to know more about how the different institutions cooperate.
- Hand out two more coins to each participant. Ask them to do the same with these additional coins, identifying other things they have learned on side 1 and the related challenges on side 2.
- Finally, invite the participants to read out what they wrote.

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- Real coins have a monetary value. Do you think the things you wrote down have value?
- What side has more value? Side 1 or 2? Why?
- Is it important to think about what we don't know yet? Why?
- Are there sentences on your coins you would like to use in your Youthpass?

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

### Ideas for adaptation

- If some participants find it difficult to see or write, you can use real coins. Just hand out a coin and ask them to feel one side of the coin. Then, share with them that learning outcomes are like coins because they have a specific value. Ask them to tell you one thing they have learned. Then ask them to feel the other side. Because it is a different side, invite them to share something they do not yet know about the topic they mentioned previously.

Meanwhile, you can write down what they say. During debriefing, you can read your notes out to them and ask them if they want to include anything in their self-assessment.

### Tips and tricks

- If you have time, you can ask participants to write down how they can develop that competence further. Example: Side 1 = I have learned how to write my own reflections; side 2 = However, I still need to develop that skill further. I can take a creative writing course to gain more confidence and improve my writing skills.
- You can also propose transferring these short sentences to their self-assessment immediately, selecting the competence box that fits best.

### Risks, difficulties, etc.

Participants may feel vulnerable writing about things they haven't learned yet or are unsure about. Because of this, it is important to:

- Make sure you let them know that it is ok to have questions and admit what they do not know. During the process, you may choose to fill in a coin of your own and share your own learning and learning needs with them.
- Do not collect the coins in the end. Treat them as personal material, like a diary, that they should keep for themselves.

CREATED BY

Anita Silva



I learned

€

I learned

€

however

€

however

€

## 2. THE CHEAT SHEET

Remember when you used to sit down for an exam with little notes in your pocket with information you'd need for that exam? Of course you don't! It's called cheating and you'd never do that! ;) This, though, is a cheat sheet that helps participants find the right words to write down what they already know in nice complete sentences. It's cheating time!

Seriously though, sometimes cheat sheets are a good way to study, and here the idea is to give participants some simple words that can help them start to articulate what they have already learned. Or if they already know what competences they've developed, this may help them to note them down using clearer and more concise language.



### GROUP SIZE

Any



### DURATION

30 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Paper
- Pens
- Flipchart, whiteboard or similar, or photocopies of the cheat sheet



### OBJECTIVES

- To help participants articulate their learning outcomes in writing.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



- On a flipchart or a cheat sheet for each person (see table below), write words in different categories to help participants construct their sentences.
- Show the flipchart (or distribute the cheat sheets) and explain this to the participants: "You know you have learned things, but 'learning' is a word that sometimes limits your options. This flipchart helps you to explore other aspects of your learning experience."
- Then, ask participants to write complete sentences about their own learning outcomes using the verbs and expressions in the table.
- Each column in the table is an independent list. This means that participants can use the 1st expression in the 1st column and combine it with the 3rd expression in the 2nd column and the 5th expression in the 3rd column.

step 1

step 2

step 3

step 4

Example: "I explored decision-making in a group with an international group of young people during a three-day camp. We had to decide everything together and we learned how to do that without arguing. That will enable me to become a better team member in the future."

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- Did you manage to write some sentences about your learning outcomes?
- Did the table help you with that process? How exactly did it help you?
- Do you feel this sentence clearly describes your learning outcomes?
- Are there words or expressions in this table you can use to explore other learning outcomes?



## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



For some participants, the words in the table may be new. If this is the case, make sure you take the time to explain their meaning before the exercise starts.

Obviously, you can adapt the table to your own language and choose other words that make more sense in your context.

## ADAPTED BY

Anita Silva





## The Cheat sheet

I explored...  
I discussed...  
I acknowledged...  
I questioned...  
I failed...  
I enjoyed...  
I reflected...  
I confirmed...  
I discovered...  
I read...  
I felt...  
I dreamed...  
I heard...  
I experienced...

Because...  
By doing...  
With...  
Without...  
While...  
At...  
When...  
About...  
Through...  
After...  
When...  
In spite of...  
That...

That is relevant for...  
That will allow me to...  
That will show in...  
That will be useful for...  
That will enable me to...  
That showed me...  
That motivated me...  
That stopped me...  
That made clear for me...  
That changed...  
That increased...  
That improved...  
That revealed...  
That created...

### 3. CONNECTING THE DOTS

When writing a self-assessment days or weeks after a learning experience, the memory of that experience will have most certainly faded. Using the groups' memory can be useful to recall important elements of that experience. This exercise is designed to help participants assist each other in remembering details of their learning path that can be useful when they write their self-assessments.



#### GROUP SIZE

Three to twelve



#### DURATION

approx. 40 minutes  
(depending on group size)

#### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)

- Large poster or roll of paper
- Pens
- Highlighters



#### OBJECTIVES

- To allow participants to use each other's words and memories to make sense of a specific learning experience (e.g., a youth exchange).

## DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



- Prepare a large empty poster for the group and give one pen to each participant. The pens should all be of different colours.
- Ask participants to write keywords somewhere on the poster, in rounds as described below. Allow two to four minutes per round.
- During the 1st round, ask them to write down words relating to topics they learned about in that specific learning experience (e.g., teamwork, tolerance, creativity...).
- During the 2nd round, ask them to write down words about things they have experienced, such as activities, or things they tried (e.g., cooking together, horseriding, playing games...).
- During the 3rd round, ask them to write down words about things they actually learned (working in a multicultural team, being patient, speaking better English...). Note: You can reduce or increase the number of rounds to cover, e.g., "things that changed in you", "things you missed", etc. Facilitate the process by helping participants remember different moments in the process (preparation sessions before departure, during the activities, during the breaks, etc.).
- After the last round, ask participants to connect different words (theirs or others') on the poster, creating a maze or drawing a line with their own highlighters. Each participant should select any words on the poster that they feel are relevant to their learning path, even if those words were written by someone else. They can connect them in any way they want, as long as they make sense to them.
- Afterwards, ask each participant to use the words they connected in a written text that should be written on a separate piece of paper. Allow 15 to 20 minutes for this step.
- Optionally, you can ask young people to read their texts out loud, or to use the poster as inspiration for creating their Youthpass.

step 1

step 2

step 3

step 4

step 5

step 6

step 7

step 8



### DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- How did it feel recalling the memories from your learning experience?
- Did it help to use other people's words?
- Looking at your text now, how do you feel about your learning experience?
- What can you use from this text for your Youthpass?

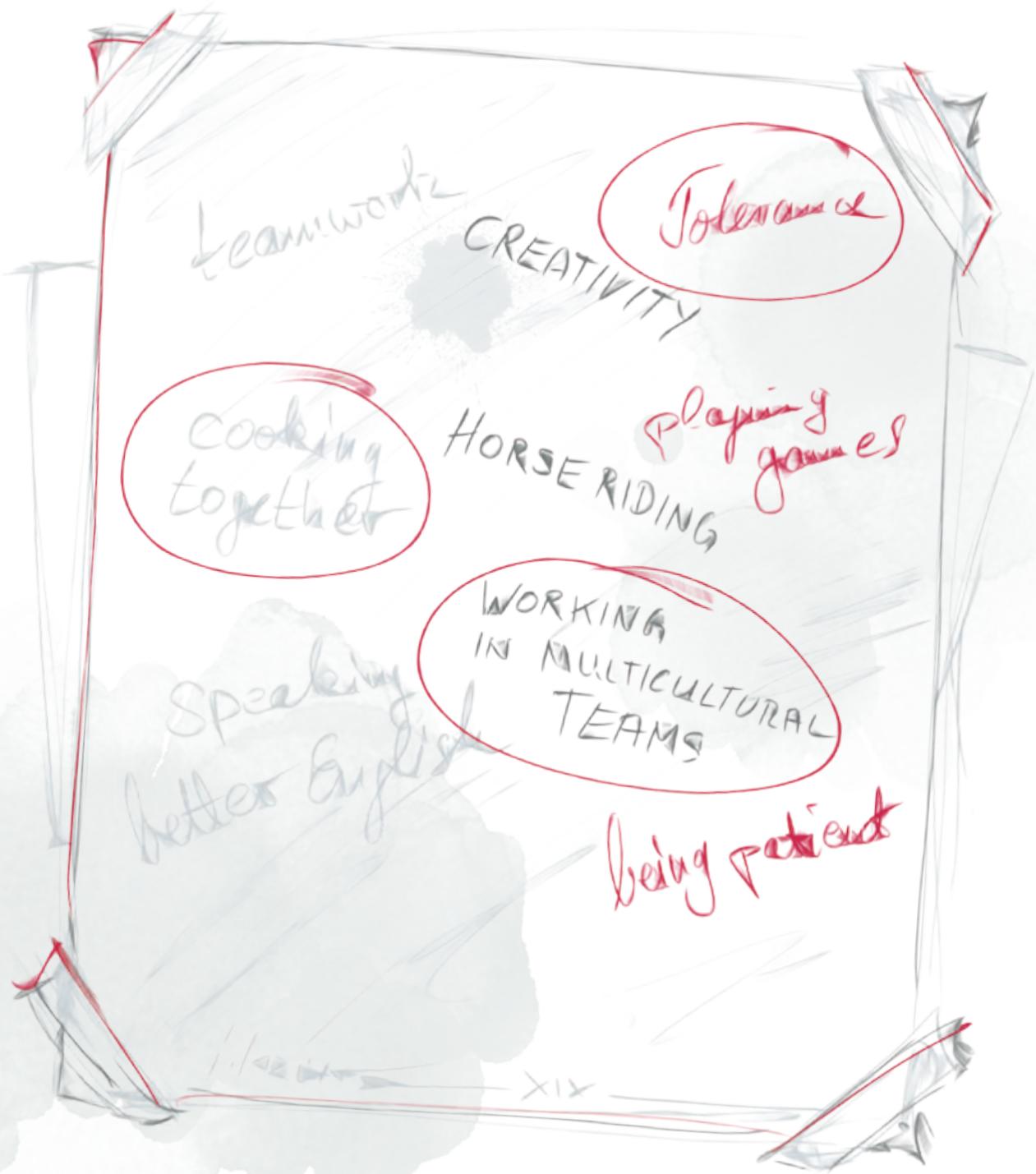


### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

If participants are having trouble writing, instead of asking them to write words that relate to their learning experience, you can provide a pile of cards with keywords on them and ask them to either choose from them or suggest new cards. In the end, instead of each participant writing their own text, you could also ask them to speak about the cards they found relevant while you take notes on their behalf. Once they feel more confident about their conclusions, help them to write their text.

### CREATED BY

Anita Silva



Teamwork

Tolerance

CREATIVITY

Cooking together

HORSE RIDING

playing games

WORKING IN MULTICULTURAL TEAMS

Speaking better English

being patient

## 4. YOU NEED ME - I AM WORTH IT

Even when people know what they have learned, it is sometimes hard to imagine what value that knowledge or skill may have for others. This exercise invites participants to see things from the perspective of an employer or a future colleague and imagine how they would value the competences the participants have gained.



### GROUP SIZE

Any



### DURATION

30 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Learning diaries
- Pens and paper



### OBJECTIVES

- To acknowledge the value of what participants have learned so they can create a self-assessment others will want to read and value

## DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



Ask participants to choose a competence they developed in their project and complete one or more of the following sentences:

- An organisation/company could use my competence in ... because it would improve their...
- I will be a valuable team member because now I can...
- I will be paid to do... because my employer will gain...
- I will be able to study... because I already know/can....
- I will be a better citizen because... and that is useful for...

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS



- What value does your newly gained competence have to others?
- How can you express that when writing your Youthpass?
- How can you show evidence of this competence?
- Can you provide an example of a situation where you used it?

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



Other sentences can be created if they fit your participants' contexts better. If writing is difficult, the exercise can also be done orally.

## CREATED BY

Anita Silva

## 5. LEARNING OUTCOMES INTERVIEW

A good talk is sometimes all you need to clarify your ideas. This method allows participants to verbalise important aspects of their learning.



### GROUP SIZE

Three or more



### DURATION

90 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Paper
- Pens
- Interview guide



### OBJECTIVES

- To assist learners in formulating their learning outcomes
- To share and exchange learning outcomes

## DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



- Make clear that not all the questions in the guide have to be used. The questions are there to inspire the interviewer and suggest possible questions if needed. The interviewer can add other questions if they wish.
- The interview involves three participants each with a different role: the interviewer, the interviewee and the reporter. During the exercise, each participant has a chance to switch roles. The reporter writes down the outcomes of the interview in such a way that the interviewee can use these notes as a basis for writing down their learning outcomes.
- One interview takes around 20 minutes.

step 1

step 2

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- How did it feel acting out different roles (interviewer, interviewee, reporter)?
- How do you feel about articulating your learning outcomes now?

## CREATED BY

Paul Kloosterman



## Learning outcomes interview questions

Can you describe the moment(s)?

What made these moment(s) special?

What was your role in that moment?

What did you do?

What does that say about you?

WHICH MOMENTS  
DID YOU REALLY  
ENJOY DURING  
THE PROJECT?

What did you like?

What were you good at?

How did you contribute to the team?

What kind of roles did you take?

Do you see yourself as a team player? Why?

If your team were a ship's crew, what  
crew member would you be? Chef,  
captain, deckhand, helmsman...?

What does that say about you?

WHEN YOU  
WORKED IN A  
TEAM...

WHEN WERE YOU  
REALLY PROUD OF  
YOURSELF?

What happened?

What role did you take?

What did you do?

What made it feel good?

What does that say about you?

*Learning Outcomes interview*



WHICH THINGS  
IN THIS PROJECT  
HAD YOU NEVER  
DONE BEFORE?

How did it go?

How did it feel?

Did you surprise yourself?

Will you do those things again?

Would you do it different then?

What does that say about you?

Learning Outcomes Interview

WHAT WILL YOU  
DO NOW THE  
PROJECT IS OVER?

Are there new things you want to try out?

Which issues do you want to work on?

What will you transfer from the  
project to other jobs?

What did you discover about yourself?

What does that say about you?

WHAT WOULD  
YOU SAY ABOUT  
YOUR ROLE IN THE  
PROJECT...

... to your grandmother?

... to your old elementary school teacher?

... to the butcher?

... to your three-year-old nephew?

... if you were interviewed on national TV?

WHICH  
CHALLENGING  
MOMENTS WERE  
THERE?

Can you describe those moments?

What made them challenging for you?

How did you overcome the challenges?

Looking back, would you do the same again?

What does that say about you?

## 6. PYRAMID OF LEARNING

This tool helps participants organise their learning into levels and formulate sentences using a list of action verbs.



### GROUP SIZE

For individual work with one participant,  
or for a group divided into pairs



### DURATION

90-120 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Flip chart paper
- Marker pens
- Handout with action words



### OBJECTIVES

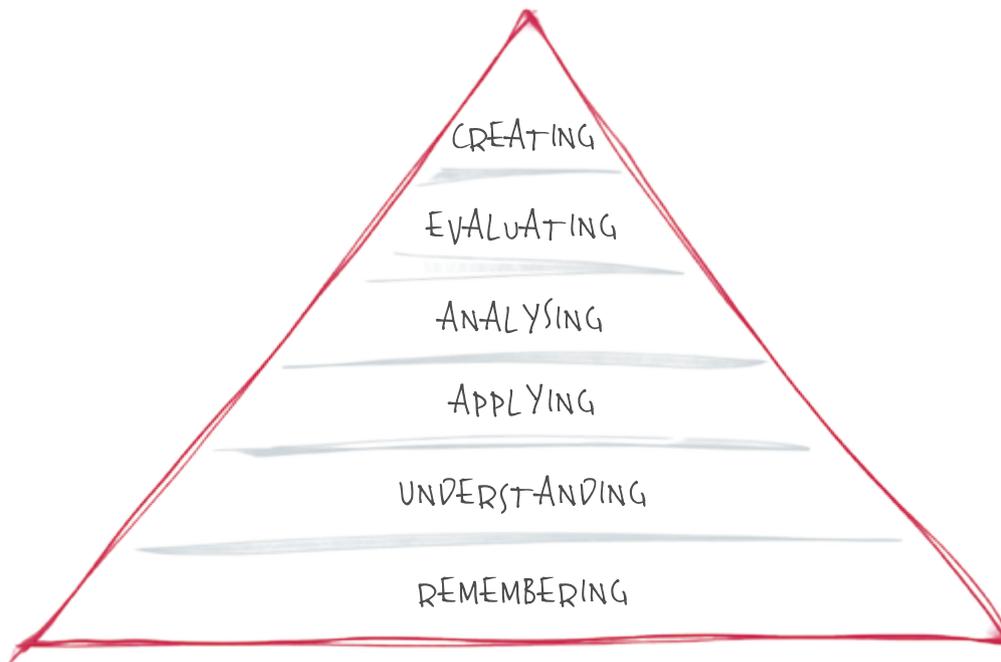
- To identify learning outcomes following the revised Bloom's taxonomy of learning outcomes
- To learn to formulate learning outcomes using the suggested list of action verbs

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



This exercise is based on Bloom's taxonomy of learning outcomes and helps participants work out at what level their learning outcomes are after the project and find the appropriate words to describe them.

According to the model there are six levels of learning (see diagram below). For each level there are suggested "action verbs" that can be used to describe the learning outcome (see the handout with action verbs).



Revised Bloom's taxonomy of learning outcomes

After identifying several key learning areas in the project (e.g., using other exercises like CARD GAME "Name your competences" or the learning outcomes interview), draw the Bloom's pyramid of learning on the flip chart paper and explain its levels:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Additional information about Bloom's Revised Taxonomy is available here: <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/> or <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/effective-teaching-practices/revised-blooms-taxonomy/>

### Remembering

Explain that this stage is about being able to recall an experience and/or to reproduce information (e.g., I have read about and remember the basic information about the stages of team development).

Level 1

### Understanding

This stage describes the ability to demonstrate a deeper understanding of one's learning area (e.g., I can recognise the stages of team development in our team work during the training course).

Level 2



### Applying

Level 3

This stage is about applying knowledge in a real-life situation (e.g., I can apply and use my knowledge about team development stages in my team and help us move through these stages in a planned and conscious way).

### Analysing

Level 4

This stage involves gaining a deeper understanding of the learning area, usually due to an extended reflection about the experience (e.g., I can accurately analyse the reasons for the challenges my team face when starting a new project. I can recognise the patterns in our behaviour that move us forward or block us).

### Evaluating

Level 5

This stage is about critical reflection and the ability to argue the pros and cons of a certain approach based on one's experience (e.g., I can reflect upon and understand why stages of team development in international groups do not necessarily have the same sequence and duration as in my local team).

### Creating

Level 6

This is about creating something new, one's own theory or approach (e.g., Based on my experience I have created new ways of helping international teams work better).

Now, ask participants to return to their own learning outcomes and cluster them according to the above stages. If you are using cards, you could ask them to place the cards where they believe their learning has actually happened. Alternatively, ask them to draw connecting lines or write down their main learning outcomes on the Pyramid drawing.

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS



After they have placed the learning outcomes on the pyramid, encourage participants to explain their choices. You can ask level-specific questions such as

- What is the most crucial information and knowledge that you are able to reproduce in this area of learning?
- How are you able to demonstrate this deeper understanding? Can you give me an example?
- Can you be more specific about your ability to apply what you have learnt? Could you apply that ability in other situations?
- Can you give me an example of a good analysis you made in that area?
- What are your experiences in thinking critically in relation to this learning area?
- What did you manage to create in relation to this learning area? How did you manage to do that?

After this step, distribute the handout with the action verbs and the formula for writing learning outcome statements (for more information, see section III.4 “I am preparing for validation”) and let your participants do the exercise for all the learning areas you have talked about. Provide additional assistance if needed.

Clear  
“action”  
verb

+

related  
object of  
learning

+

the context  
where learning  
has been  
acquired.

=

Learning  
outcome  
statement

ADAPTED BY

Darko Marković



## LEVEL 1. REMEMBER

Choose	Draw	Locate	Omit	Read	Repeat
Count	Identify	Match	Outline	Recall	Reproduce
Define	Label	Memorize	Point	Recite	Select
Describe	List	Name	Quote	Recognize	State

## LEVEL 2. UNDERSTAND

Associate	Discuss	Extrapolate	Interpret	Represent	Tell
Classify	Distinguish	Generalize	Interrelate	Restate	Translate
Compute	Estimate	Give Examples	Judge	Rewrite	
Convert	Explain	Illustrate	Match	Select	
Defend	Express	Indicate	Paraphrase	Show	
Demonstrate	Extend	Infer	Predict	Summarize	

## LEVEL 3. APPLY

Add	Classify	Dramatize	Interpolate	Organize	Show
Apply	Complete	Examine	Judge	Paint	Sketch
Calculate	Compute	Explain	Manipulate	Prepare	Solve
Change	Discover	Generalize	Modify	Produce	Subtract
Choose	Divide	Graph	Operate	Select	Use

#### LEVEL 4. ANALYZE

Analyze	Combine	Diagram	Illustrate	Relate	Utilize
Arrange	Compare	Differentiate	Infer	Select	
Breakdown	Design	Discriminate	Outline	Separate	
Categorize	Detect	Distinguish	Point out	Subdivide	
Classify	Develop	Identify	Point out	Survey	

#### LEVEL 5. EVALUATE

Appraise	Conclude	Critique	Grade	Measure	Support
Assess	Contrast	Defend	Judge	Rank	Test
Compare	Criticize	Determine	Justify	Rate	

#### LEVEL 6. CREATE

Choose	Design	Formulate	Make	Propose	Role Play
Combine	Develop	Generate	Organize	Rearrange	Tell
Compile	Devise	Group	Originate	Reconstruct	Transform
Compose	Do	Hypothesize	Plan	Reorganize	
Construct	Drive	Integrate	Prescribe	Revise	
Create	Explain	Invent	Produce	Rewrite	

## 7. CARD GAME: NAME YOUR COMPETENCES

If writing about a learning experience becomes a problem, help your participants assign names to their competences and make self-assessment an easier process.



### GROUP SIZE

For individual work with one participant,  
or for a group divided into pairs



### DURATION

60-90 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- One deck of competence cards per participant (see handout), ideally copied onto cardboard



### OBJECTIVES

- To help recognise and name the competences developed during the project
- To provide a basis for documenting learning outcomes further in the Youthpass certificate

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



*Version 1*

Spread all the cards in the deck out on a table so the competence words are visible. Invite the participant to think about a non-formal learning activity (or youth work project) in which they took part and pick up the cards denoting the competences developed during the activity. If some competences are missing, they can use "joker" (blank) cards and write down these competences on them.

*Version 2*

Give the whole deck of cards to the participant and ask them to cluster the cards into three piles: "developed during the project", "not developed during the project" and "not sure". When this is done, first check the "not sure" section to see if there is a competence that

should be put in the “developed during the project” cluster. Then, look at that cluster and see if an important competence is missing (one that was not in the deck). If yes, use the blank cards to add them.

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

Once the cards have been sorted, invite the participant to reflect on their interpretation of each competence and remember the moments or situations when they developed this competence or when it first manifested. Take notes and give them to the participant at the end of the exercise.

This exercise can continue with “Show me your STARS” or “Pyramid of learning” from this Handbook.

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

The “Competence cards” handout should be copied in a larger format (e.g., A3), ideally on cardboard. This will allow you to create a real deck of cards.

## CREATED BY

Darko Marković

## FURTHER SOURCES, LINKS AND REFERENCES

If you prefer ready-made decks of cards that can be used for the same purpose, they can be bought online from various providers, e.g., <http://www.kwaliteitenspel.nl/en/>



**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**DEVELOPING  
OTHERS**

**NETWORKING**

**RELATIONSHIP  
BUILDING**

**ACCURATE SELF-  
ASSESSMENT**

**EMPATHY**

**NUMERICAL  
REASONING**

**RISK TAKING**

**ACHIEVEMENT  
FOCUS**

**FLEXIBILITY**

**OPEN-  
MINDEDNESS**

**SELF-  
AWARENESS**

**ADAPTABILITY**

**GIVING/RECEIVING  
FEEDBACK**

**OPENNESS FOR  
LEARNING**

**SELF-CONFIDENCE**

**ANALYTICAL  
REASONING**

**ICT SKILLS**

**ORAL  
COMMUNICATION**

**SENSITIVITY  
TO DIVERSITY**

**ARTISTIC  
EXPRESSION**

**INFLUENCING**

**ORGANISATIONAL  
AWARENESS**

**STRATEGIC  
THINKING**

**ATTENTION  
TO DETAIL**

**INTEGRITY**

**ORGANIZATIONAL  
SKILLS**

**STRESS  
MANAGEMENT**

**AUTONOMY**

**INTERCULTURAL  
SENSITIVITY**

**PERSEVERANCE**

**TAKING  
INITIATIVE**

**CLIENT  
ORIENTATED**

**LEADERSHIP  
SKILLS**

**PLANNING**

**TAKING  
RESPONSIBILITY**

**CONCERN  
FOR QUALITY**

**LISTENING**

**POLITICAL  
LITERACY**

**TEACHING/  
TRAINING SKILLS**

**CONFLICT  
MANAGEMENT**

**MANAGING  
BUDGET**

**PRESENTATION  
SKILLS**

**TEAM WORK**

**CREATIVITY**

**MANAGING  
OWN EMOTIONS**

**PRIORITIZING**

**TIME  
MANAGEMENT**

**CRITICAL  
THINKING**

**MANAGING  
OWN LEARNING**

**PROACTIVITY**

**TOLERANCE  
OF AMBIGUITY**

**DEALING  
WITH CHANGE**

**MOTIVATING  
OTHERS**

**PROBLEM  
SOLVING**

**WORKING  
UNDER PRESSURE**

**DECISION  
MAKING**

**NEGOTIATING**

**PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT**

**WRITTEN  
COMMUNICATION**

## 8. SHOW ME YOUR STARS

How can you prove you know something? “Star” it to show what tasks, actions and results you experienced in a given learning situation.



### GROUP SIZE

Individual work or group work of any size



### DURATION

90-120 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Handout with the STAR model



### OBJECTIVES

- To assist in documenting learning outcomes in a format that is understood by the employers
- To practice perspective-taking skills (seeing things from the employer's perspective)
- To improve self-presentation skills in an interview setting

## DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



Explain your participants that in this exercise, they learn how to present the competences gained in the project (e.g., that they have identified in other exercises such as Name your competences, Learning outcome interview, Cheat sheet, etc.) in a format commonly used when applying for a job. The main aim of this exercise is to present competences with evidence (concrete examples) that can be used not only in Youthpass certificates but also in CVs (skills and competences section), in their cover or motivation letters, and during job interviews.

step 1

Explain to the participants that in a real-life job search it is vital to start from the vacancy notice and look carefully at the required skills/competences (typically, these include communication skills, teamwork, working under pressure, problem-solving, etc.). So this exercise will not just help them fill in their Youthpass self-assessment, it will also improve their ability to present themselves in a good light as they look for a job.

step 2

Next, explain that in the recruitment process employers very often use the so-called competence-based approach (also known as "behavioural interviewing") to look for the best fit between your competences and those the job requires. Employers will ask whether candidates are able to provide evidence for their claims; in other words, they will ask them to give examples of concrete situations where they have shown or developed specific competences (e.g., "Please describe a situation when you have successfully worked in a team. Or tell me about the situation when you needed to manage your priorities and did it well."). It is important to bear in mind that most employers know very little about youth work. Advise to keep the use of jargon to a minimum and to always ask themselves if what they write will be understood by someone who has never done a youth exchange or volunteered under a European youth programme, or who has never heard of youth work.

step 3

Finally, present your participants with the STAR model from the handout and ask them to write a short paragraph for each competence they believe they developed during the project.

step 4



### DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- What was it like to work with the STAR model?
- To what extent did you manage to keep the perspective of the employer in mind?
- How understandable are your descriptions to someone with no youth work experience?
- How could these descriptions be improved?
- How do these competences fit in best with the Key Competences framework in the Youthpass self-assessment?
- To what extent could you use the STAR approach during a job interview?

### ADAPTED BY

Darko Marković



### FURTHER SOURCES, LINKS AND REFERENCES

There is plenty of material and resources about STAR model online.



## STAR Model

### Situation:

Describe a situation in which you acquired/demonstrated this competence.

### Tasks:

What tasks did you have to accomplish in that situation?

### Actions:

What actions did you take?

### Results:

What were the outcomes?

## 9. DREAM JOB

Looking at your future self may help you better understand what you want to do or say today. This tool helps participants create a vision for themselves and understand where their project is in relation to that dream.



### GROUP SIZE

For individual work with one participant, or for a group divided into pairs



### DURATION

60-90 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



For this activity you need a comfortable place and something to write. Make sure you take notes for your participant during the exercise (where indicated) that you share with them at the end.



### OBJECTIVES

- To create awareness of the transferability of competences gained in youth work to employment or entrepreneurship
- To improve recognition of the value of competences gained in youth projects

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



step 1

Invite your participant to sit comfortably and close their eyes... and relax... and ask them to follow the rhythm of their own breathing. Invite them to turn their focus inwards, to connect to things that really matter to them.

Next, continue with the following instructions:

step 2

- Now in your mind... you may travel to the future... And I invite you to see yourself in your „Dream Job“... being very successful...
- Tell me... What do you see?
- Where is it happening?
- With whom do you work?
- What is your typical working day like?
- How do you see the results of your job?
- What are the skills needed to do it well? (WRITE THESE DOWN)
- What are the attitudes that are helping you to be so successful? (WRITE THESE DOWN)
- Now, from your Dream Job look at yourself in the past, in your youth projects... and non-formal education... what have you learnt in those activities... that is helping you now in your Dream Job? (WRITE THESE DOWN)

Now invite your participant to slowly come back to the present activity. Tell them to open their eyes.

step 3

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

Ask your participant for quick feedback on how the exercise went. Then share your notes. Ask them to articulate in their own words what main competences they gained during the youth project, and what they still need to learn to get closer to their vision.

## CREATED BY

Darko Marković

## 10. THREE CHAIRS OF MY LEARNING

This method helps to visualise the three main elements of a given competence: attitude + skill + knowledge.



### GROUP SIZE

For individual work with one participant,  
or for a group divided into pairs



### DURATION

60-90 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Three chairs
- Three labels: "Knowledge", "Skills", "Attitudes"
- Clipboard with paper for taking notes



### OBJECTIVES

- To raise awareness of competences developed in the project; specifically, the knowledge, skills and attitudes behind those competences
- To provide a basis for self-assessment for the participant's Youthpass certificate

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



Step 1

Affix one label to each of the three chairs. Before you start with the exercise, ask the participant if they understand these three terms clearly. For example, in relation to team work, "Knowledge" would mean they understand that open communication is an important aspect for team work. "Skills" refers to their ability to express themselves openly and clearly. "Attitude" refers to their willingness to share their own or hear about other team members' perspectives.

Next, tell the participants that in this exercise they are invited to play the roles of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes gained in their project. This will allow them not only to talk about their competences, but also to feel them.

Then follow the instructions from the handout.

step 2

step 3

### DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

Ask your participants for a quick feedback on how the exercise went. Then share your notes. Ask them to articulate in their own words what main competences they gained during the project.

### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

During role play, ensure that participants stick with their roles and speak in the first person ("I...") rather than use "It...". During the interviews with the roles, create a relaxed atmosphere and stage the exercise like an informal chat. It should not feel like an interrogation or exam.

For further assistance in writing down learning outcomes, feel free to use other exercises from this handbook, like Cheat sheet or Pyramid of learning.

### ADAPTED BY

Darko Marković



*Important:*  
Keep a pen ready so  
you can take notes  
for your participant.

## Three chairs of my learning

*step 1*

First, **present the three chairs** that represent learning in the sense of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes. Explain that in this exercise, the participant is asked to assume the roles associated with these three chairs.

*step 2*

Invite the participant to **assume the role of Knowledge** developed in the project (ask them to sit in the Knowledge chair). Then interview them in the role of Knowledge, asking the questions below (ensure that the participant sticks with the role and speaks in the first person (“I...”) rather than use “It...”). As you do this, take notes for your participant.

- Hello, Knowledge, good to meet you! What kind of knowledge are you?
- What other knowledge is there?
- How were you developed in this project?
- How do you make yourself visible to others?
- How can you be used in \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's name) life?

step 3

Thank Knowledge. Then ask the participant to **take the role of Skills** developed in the project. Proceed as above: interview Skills and take notes.

- Hello Skills, good to meet you! What kind of skills are you?
- What other skills are there?
- How were you developed in this project?
- How do you make yourself visible to others?
- How can you be used in \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's name) life?

step 4

Thank Skills and ask your participant to **take the role of Attitudes** developed in the project. Repeat the procedure and take notes.

- Hello, Attitudes, good to meet you. What kind of attitudes are you?
- What other attitudes are there?
- How were you developed in this project?
- How do you make yourself visible to others?
- How can you be used in \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's name) life?

step 5

Now ask your participant to **exit from the last role**. Then summarise the outcomes for them: "What we have discovered is that in this project you have gained... (list knowledge)... (list skills)... (list attitudes)... that can be useful for.... Is there anything you would like to add?"

step 6

Then **give your notes to the participant** and ask them to use them as a basis for filling in their self-assessment.

## 11. TAKE IT TO A NEW LEVEL

Assessing our learning is also about exploring the limits of our competences. Knowing to what extent we can perform a certain task or apply a certain skill is important to gain a realistic view about our abilities. So after assessing what your participants have learned, it is time to ask how far they are from being a Master Yoda.



### GROUP SIZE

Any



### DURATION

30 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Handout
- Pen



### OBJECTIVES

- To help participants discover the limits of their competences.
- To obtain a creative overview of their competences

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



step 1

- Ask participants to write down three things they learned during their learning experience (e.g., youth exchange, volunteering project or training course).

Introduce the exercise by explaining:

“After assessing what you know (e.g., I know how to work in a team) you may want to question in what situations you are good at it.”

Instruct participants to

1. note down one competence they believe they have developed at the top of the handout;
2. read the questions on the handout (see below) and answer those that they find triggering or inspiring.

#### DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- Did it help you in any way?
- Can you apply the same exercise to other competences you have developed?
- Now you have done the exercise, what would you write differently in your Youthpass?

#### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



This exercise encourages participants to think outside of the box. This can confuse them as to its purpose. Some youth workers find it easier to explain this before the exercise starts, so the participants can cope with the questions that may seem strange to them.

#### CREATED BY

Anita Silva

step 2

step 3





# Competence:



Could I do this for NASA?

Could I do this alone?

Could I be a hero in this?

Could I do this on the moon?

Could I do this with blind people?

Could I do this without preparation?

Could I do this in the desert?

## 12. LEARNING WITH EMOTIONS

Although emotions are an important part of learning, we sometimes forget to mention them or forget what we learned from them. A learner who was frustrated about a boring session or really excited during a fun exercise can look back and analyse their feelings at that moment. This exercise can encourage participants to think about how emotions influence our attitudes and consequently our behaviour.



### GROUP SIZE

Any



### DURATION

30 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Cut-out images (see handout)
- Pen and Paper



### OBJECTIVES

- Revisiting the emotions experienced during the learning experience and learning from them

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



Step 1

- Cut out the images in the handout and place them in an envelope.

Step 2

- Explain to participants that the aim of this exercise is to allow them to remember what emotions were present during their learning process and to help them write down what they have learned from those emotions.

### Instructions for participants:

Step 3

- Take the images in the envelope and choose a few that represent feelings or emotions that were present during your learning process. There is no limit on the number of pictures you can choose, and it does not matter if they represent positive or negative emotions.
- Write down a few sentences explaining how you felt and what you learned from these emotions.

### DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- What did you learn from that emotion?
- What will you do about it in the future?
- How much of this reflection is useful for others, such as a future employer?
- How can you express this in your Youthpass?

### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



Sometimes participants lack the words to express their emotions. Using drawings can be helpful to start this reflection, but eventually they will need to articulate their emotions in writing. If that is an obstacle, you can bring along a list of words related to emotions in the language of the group and share it with your participants.

### CREATED BY

Anita Silva



## Emotions:



HAPPY



TIRED



SURPRISE



SUSPICION



MAYBE



DOUBT



FEAR



ENTHUSIASM



CONFUSED



DISAPPROVAL



SARCASM



ANGER



ASLEEP



QUESTIONING



SMILE



SCARED



GLOOM



EAGER



SNEAKY



CRYING

## 13. SHOULD IT STAY OR SHOULD IT GO

It is very easy to misinterpret the purpose of a self-assessment, but not so easy to let the learner know that what they wrote in their self-assessment – after they tried their best – is not entirely adequate. Prevention is the buzzword here. This quiz is designed to be a fun exercise during which we can all laugh about possible self-assessment mistakes before they happen.



### GROUP SIZE

Any



### DURATION

30-50 minutes

### RESOURCES & PREPARATION (SPACE, MATERIAL, EQUIPMENT, PEOPLE)



- Paper and pens
- A bell or whistle or hammer (anything that can be used in a quiz when your team is ready to answer).
- Handout with questions
- Board or flipchart to write down the points of each team



### OBJECTIVES

- To help young people understand what not to write in a self-assessment
- To have fun while preventing inadequate content writing and demystifying the self-assessment process

### DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD STEP BY STEP



This is a quiz you can play with individuals if you have a small group, or you can create teams if the group is too big. Ideally, you should not have more than five individual contestants or teams to make sure everyone gets to participate actively.

There are as many rounds as the number of sentences you want participants to reflect about, so one sentence = one round. For each round the procedure is:

- The game host reads the sentence out loud, followed by the question “Should it stay or should it go?” *step 1*
- The teams (or individuals) click the button (or ring the bell or blow the whistle or whatever they want to use to indicate they want to answer). If a team answers “it should stay”, this means they believe the sentence makes sense in a self-assessment. If a team answers “it should go”, they think the sentence is not appropriate for a self-assessment. *step 2*
- The host decides which team was first to answer and allows them to give their opinion first. *step 3*
- After the first team answers, any other teams that want to give it a try may also give their answer. Each time a team answers, they should explain why they believe theirs is the right answer. *step 4*
- The host reveals the right answer and explains why that particular sentence should or should not be part of a self-assessment. *step 5*
- The host writes down the points of each team for each round on the board or flipchart. *step 6*

#### Points system:

One correct answer = 10 points

Being the first to answer = +5 points

Having the most creative justification for their answer (even if the answer is wrong) = +5 points

#### Note:

The sentences proposed in this exercise were created to encourage reflection and debate. You and your learners do not always have to agree on your answers. Just let the debate flow and keep in mind that the purpose is to write a self-assessment.



## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- What did this quiz teach you about self-assessment?
- What will you pay special attention to when writing your self-assessment?

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



You can make this quiz as simple or exciting as you wish. Dress up, create prizes, add features and special challenges, or simply ignore the quiz, sit down with participants and ask their opinion about each sentence.

## CREATED BY

Anita Silva





## sentences

Although I already speak three languages, during this project I improved my level of English.

I now feel more confident expressing my emotions.

I really liked the food at the venue.

During this activity I fell in love and that I will never forget.

## should it stay or should it go?

### should stay

A self-assessment identifies new things that you learned but also competences you improved. Having said that, it would be important to complete this text with an explanation about how you improved – in this case, your English.

### should stay

A self-assessment is not only about hard knowledge but about competence development as a whole. That means knowledge, skills and attitudes. Feeling more confident expressing your emotions is an important step in improving your communication skills, for example.

### should go

A self-assessment is not the same as an evaluation form. The idea is not to assess the quality of the venue but the quality of your own personal learning journey.

### should go

Although this is very touching, it is something you should write in your diary, not in a self-assessment you may later want to show to employers or teachers.

## sentences

I learned a lot of new things through games and I realised I learn better this way.

As I was the person responsible for buying the plane ticket(s), I learned a lot about travel planning.

The group was really nice and everyone had fun together..

As a youth worker I was happy to see that Peter was so involved in every activity. (Written by the youth worker in Peter's self-assessment)

## should it stay or should it go?

### should stay

Great! Realising how you learn better makes you a better learner. And by becoming a better learner you will always learn more. It is a positive spiral of competence development!

### should stay

Your self-assessment doesn't have to be only about your experience during the activities. What you learned during preparation and follow-up is equally important, so remember to mention it.

### should go

That's great news but it doesn't refer to any learning aspect.

### should go

If you are not the rightful owner of a self-assessment please refrain from writing in it. It's not yours! Doing that is like writing a private diary for someone else. It just doesn't make sense, right?

## sentences

I did this exercise where I had to empty a cup of water without touching it. I started trying with tape but that didn't work. Then I used a chair, but that broke the glass. With a new cup I used some ropes and then I managed the task. Through this I learned a lot about project management.

The facilitators said that it's important to be active in society and I agree with them.

After this project I was motivated to learn more French, so since I got home I have been taking weekly classes with two of my friends.

We learned a lot of things but I can't really remember them now.

## should it stay or should it go?

### should go

Sometimes, in non-formal learning and experiential learning settings we learn a lot from games and activities. A detailed description of these activities may not be relevant for the reader. Moreover, if the exercise prompts the learner to reflect about other, more complex, concepts (e.g., project management), it is important to show the link between the activity and the topic as well as how the learner reflected on that topic. Otherwise it is difficult to understand how an exercise with a cup of water helped the learner to develop project management competences.

### should go

It's not important who you agree with but what you believe in. In this case you could phrase the statement like this: "I learned that it is important to be active in society because..."

### should stay

Your learning journey does not end when you return home. If you kept on exploring a certain topic that was part of the project, this shows you have the capacity to pursue your learning objectives. That is a strong skill! (By the way, if you do not know where to put this, try the box entitled "Learning to Learn".)

### should go

A self-assessment is not about We but about You. Besides, there is no point writing about things you don't remember, right?

## sentences

My friend Peter, who also took part in this activity, learned many new dance steps.

I improved my active listening skills by taking part in two workshops about this topic and practicing with my colleagues. I became more confident using active learning techniques. Other participants mentioned that they noticed my improvements.

I didn't know much about marketing before this project but I attended a session on that topic and that really helped me understand it better. I still need an opportunity to practice it though. I hope it comes soon.

## should it stay or should it go?

### should go

In principle, what Peter learned should be in his self-assessment, not yours. For that reason, the sentence should go. However, if the next sentence is "And that motivated me to start dancing as well. I now dance three times a week and perform every week." Then it would be ok to use that sentence... right?

### should stay

This one is a winner. You explain what you learned, how you learned and you show evidence of your development. Well done!

### should stay

It is ok to say what you didn't know before or even what you still haven't manage to do. It shows that you are able to assess your learning needs and that is a valuable skill.

## sentences

My roommate snored very loudly. So in order to sleep, I had to imagine I was on a cruise and he was the sound of the Atlantic Ocean.

The team did a great job and were always there when we needed them.

Roses are red. Violets are blue. I learned English poetry. For me that was new.

My learning process about this topic was like a washing machine. Sometimes it felt too fast and I was getting dizzy with so much information, but now I feel I got rid of some old ideas and I have some bright new colourful concepts to show.

## should it stay or should it go?

### should go

Ok, unless you will use this self-assessment to get a job as a stand-up comedian, you should focus on your learning journey, not on your sleeping challenges.

### should go

Good for them. Good for you. Good for everyone! But your self-assessment is not about the team, it's about you.

### should stay

A bit of fun and creativity won't harm your self-assessment. Just make sure it is useful in case you want to show it to potential employers, teachers or others, and that it expresses your learning outcomes accurately.

### should stay

You can use images and metaphors to better explain your learning journey, just make sure that you don't get lost in the plot. It is fine to use your imagination but remember to mention what you have learned and how in concrete terms.



## 2. TIPS AND TRICKS

### WORK ON THE NEEDS

To effectively support someone in writing a self-assessment, it is important to understand what their writing skills are. Some young people are great writers and just need to understand what they are supposed to write about. Others may know exactly what they learned but do not have the right vocabulary or strong enough grammar to describe it. Understanding what writing skills the participants have will help you choose what methods to use and define what kind of support you can give. A good starting point is simply to ask participants what they believe they can already do, what their main challenges in the writing process are, and what kind of support could be useful for them.

### WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Besides knowing what kind of support your participants need, it is also important to know what their Youthpass will be used for: Is it just for self-development? Will it be used for employment purposes? Understanding how your participants intend to use this document will help you define, jointly with them, the most relevant content and the most adequate style of writing. For more information about this, see section III (How to support Youthpass self-assessment).

### DO THINGS STEP BY STEP. A BLANK PAGE IS WAY TOO FRIGHTENING.

Albus Dumbledore, the headmaster of Hogwarts School, had a Pensieve, a bowl where he could collect his thoughts with a simple movement of his wand. We all wish that writing a self-assessment were that simple. In reality, it is not like that at all; it is more like building a house. Before you start the construction project, it is a good idea to prepare the terrain and choose your tools. The same goes for writing a self-assessment. You need to understand the purpose of the self-assessment and what elements should be in it. Taking time to prepare the text

before actually starting will allow young people to build their self-assessment step by step, making it easier for them to express not just the easy thoughts, but also more complex and complete ideas. On how to prepare the writing process, check section II (Learning, reflecting and documenting your competences).

## WHO IS AFRAID OF THE EIGHT KEY COMPETENCES?

The eight key competences on the Youthpass self-assessment form are there to help participants assign their learning outcomes to commonly recognised categories. For some, it really does help to use these boxes while for others, it just makes everything more complicated. Our approach is simple: use the form if it is in your learners' best interest. If it looks too complicated and you don't have the time to explain what each competence means, the participants can use only some of the competence areas. Some participants might choose to use only the „specific competences“, „task-related competences“ or „professional competences“ (based on the type of their project), and not use the key competences at all. In these cases, not-used competences won't show up in the final document. To see some examples of what (not) to write in a self-assessment, take a look at the handout for the tool “Should it stay or should it go?”.

## MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Writing a self-assessment is all about choosing the right words and structuring your text clearly to showcase your competences in a job application or job interview. As someone who supports this process for a young person or a group, it is important that you know about or have undergone these processes or at least know how they work. There are a lot of websites with tips – and even examples – on how to communicate in a professional context, write a presentation, or attend a job interview. While this should not be copy-pasted into a learner's self-assessment, it can inspire you - and them - to develop their own self-assessment in a more adequate way.

## “LEARN” IS AN OH-TOO-SMALL WORD

Or maybe it's too big. For sure, it is very easy to fall into the trap of only using this verb to express what you are competent at. Remind yourself and the learners that writing about what they explored, became curious about, reflected upon, discussed, failed at, etc. is just as important as the things they actually think they learned. Encourage learners to remember all these details and to explain their learning process. The exercise “The cheat sheet” may be helpful in exploring new ways to talk about your participants' learning journey.

## PROVIDE EVIDENCE

Just like a lawyer in court, a learner should convince their readers to believe in their claims. Help young people to provide evidence of the competences they developed by giving clear examples of situations when they have performed a certain task, exhibited a certain skill or demonstrated a particular value. The STAR approach can be helpful for this purpose. Learn more about it in Examples of self-assessment styles on pages 45-46 or use the exercise “Show me your STARS”.

## MAKE THE PROCESS ENJOYABLE

Writing words in a form may not be your participants' idea of a fun afternoon, so turn the exercise into a pizza party or have them do it on the beach. Whenever a step in the writing process is accomplished, celebrate! Finished a paragraph? Put on some special music! Wrote about your mistakes? Make a toast! Manage to get halfway? Get up and dance! Celebrating small victories is much more motivating than celebrating only at the end – because maybe then you are just celebrating that it's over.

## DON'T OVERDO IT

Lastly, remember that the goal here is for your learners to write a useful self-assessment, one that they feel proud of. There is no point in making this task so overwhelming that it becomes demotivating and a source of anxiety. Recognise your limits and the limits of the participants. Neither are you supposed to be a career advisor, nor will this young person make a career out of writing professional self-assessments.



### 3. OTHER RESOURCES TO KEEP EXPLORING THESE TOPICS

Do you love all things digital? Are you one of those people that see the end of each project as the beginning of a new journey? Great! We don't want you to end up empty-handed so here are a few resources that may be helpful to you along the way, whatever path you choose.

Just keep playing, keep reading and  
keep creating new resources.

#### KEEP PLAYING

Here are a few examples of games or gamified platforms you can use to explore learning achievements with your participants.

Learning Out of The Box Cards

- <https://www.youthpass.eu/da/youthpass/downloads/learning-out-of-the-box/>

Open Badges

- <http://openbadges.org>

## KEEP READING

Want to delve deeper into Youthpass? Here are some publications to explore.

Youthpass Unfolded

- <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/youthpass-unfolded/>

One 2 One – Supporting learning face-to-face

- <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/handbooks/>

Time to Show Off – Research Report

- <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/others/>

Youthpass for ALL! Recognising the skills of young people with fewer opportunities

- <https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1949/YouthpassForAll.pdf>

Study on the impact of Non-Formal Education in youth organisations on young people's employability

- [http://issuu.com/yomag/docs/reportnfe\\_print](http://issuu.com/yomag/docs/reportnfe_print)

## KEEP CREATING

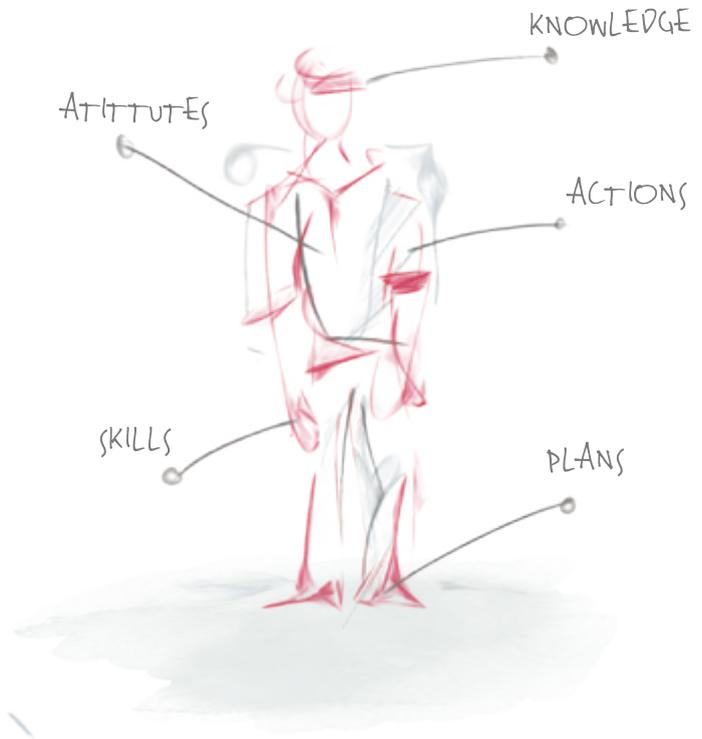
If you just can't stop yourself from creating new tools, here are a few online resources to help you.

### Use images

Present ideas visually. Visualise an individual or group learning process. Explore the use of Youthpass for each participant or present the newly gained competences. The web is filled with tools for creating impactful images and info graphics. Here are a few of our current favourites:

- <http://easel.ly>
- <https://www.canva.com>
- <http://piktochart.com>

An adapted template from [www.easel.ly](http://www.easel.ly) representing a self-assessment tool for a youth exchange:



## Use mindmaps

Mindmaps can help us “see” our thoughts in a more structured way, which can make articulating learning outcomes much easier. You can use them, together with your participants, as a tool for mapping learning objectives and outcomes, or just for listing all the different uses that can be assigned to a Youthpass. They can be used individually or collaboratively. Of course you don’t need an online tool to make a mindmap, but if you prefer screens to paper, these sites will make your day.

- <http://www.mindomo.com>
- <https://www.mindmeister.com>
- <http://mindmapfree.com>

## Use stories

There are stories that need to be told. Maybe one of your participants always dreamed of writing a book, or maybe they just want to blog. These tools will help them enhance their stories and transform any learning experience into an epic journey.

- <https://storybird.com>
- <http://www.dipity.com>
- <http://www.storyboardthat.com>
- <https://www.storyjumper.com/main/help>

An adapted example of a cartoon created with [www.storyboardthat.com](http://www.storyboardthat.com) as a self-assessment tool for a volunteering experience:

LAST YEAR I WAS LOOKING FOR A NEW LEARNING CHALLENGE SO I ASKED FOR GUIDANCE FROM THE YOUTH WORKER IN MY ORGANISATION.

I WENT TO BULGARIA AND WORKED IN A PROGRAM TO DEVELOP YOUNGSTERS' LIFE SKILLS. DURING THAT PROJECT I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT GROUP FACILITATION.

NOW, I'M HOPING TO PUT IN PRACTICE MY NEWLY GAINED SKILLS IN MY FUTURE JOB.



Using photos or cartoons, you can make great videos with easy-to-use tools. Write the script to a learning journey; let learners create their own cartoons or film the “life” of a competence. Just keep the ideas rolling. Lights, camera, action!

- <http://www.powtoon.com>
- <http://animoto.com>
- <http://www.videoscribe.co>

## Use employment sites

From How-to-Make-a-CV webinars to career advice blogs, employment is the topic of the day. There are plenty of sites out there with great articles, tutorials, apps and other resources to inspire you and your participants to go further with that self-assessment just like a pro.

- <http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-careers>
- <https://www.themuse.com/advice>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/careers>
- <http://www.skillsforemployment.org/>
- <http://www.workcoachcafe.com>
- <https://www.ivyexec.com>
- <https://www.visualcv.com>

## Use the Youthpass site

youthpass.eu is an online home where you are always welcome. It offers step-by-step instructions, FAQs and technical information along with some useful tips on how to support young people in writing their learning outcomes. Check it out.

- <https://www.youthpass.eu>

Whatever resource you choose to use, remember the most important resource of all: the motivation to keep learning.



Enjoy the journey!

# V ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

## ANITA SILVA

Anita Silva is a Portuguese international trainer and consultant. She has extensive experience in non-formal education approaches in international youth work, higher education, community work and even the corporate sector. She is the director of Team MAIS, a consulting company that helps organisations to take learning a step further using innovative and collaborative methods. She has a Master's degree in Creativity and Innovation and loves to take people on a journey outside their own box. As a community educator, Anita engages with several social causes and is the founder of Clowncare, an NGO that takes professional clowns to elderly care centres.

## DARKO MARKOVIĆ

Darko Marković is from Belgrade, Serbia and a freelance trainer, coach and consultant. His engagement with civil society and youth work began in the mid 1990's in response to the need to support the peace process in the Balkans and to strengthen civic participation in all spheres of a fragile democracy. As part of his engagement in Serbia, he has been a strong contributor to the development of youth work, youth policy and non-formal education in the country. In the early 2000s he became involved in the international youth work field, working first with the Council of Europe, later with the EU youth programme. Since then he has worked in more than 30 countries with a wide range of target groups, including youth workers, trainers, mentors, coaches, teachers, policymakers, business leaders and others, often facilitating strategic processes. Among his main areas of interest and expertise are leadership development, systemic change, organisational transformation, intercultural competence and better recognition of non-formal learning. He is a member of the Youthpass Advisory Group and has written several handbooks and publications.

## PAUL KLOOSTERMAN

Paul Kloosterman has worked in the international educational field as a trainer, consultant, researcher and writer for many years. He was and still is involved in training courses for trainers, teachers, policymakers and youth workers. Over the last ten years he has focused mainly on Learning to Learn. He is co-author of the "Handbook for facilitators: Learning to Learn in practice" and "Learning to Learn: International perspectives from theory and practice". He is a member of the Youthpass Advisory Group, which is responsible for implementing the Youthpass scheme in the European youth programmes. In recent years he has been involved in various research projects concerning Learning to Learn and Self-Directed Learning in youth work and training.



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## ABOUT SALTO TRAINING & COOPERATION RESOURCE CENTRE AND YOUTHPASS

Salto Training & Cooperation Resource Centre supports the European Commission and the National Agencies of European youth programmes in developing and implementing the Youthpass strategy and the European Training Strategy (ETS). SALTO T&C RC aims to improve the quality of training strategies and activities in the youth field, and the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work throughout Europe. The Resource Centre develops Youthpass on behalf of the European Commission and promotes the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and of youth work, by coordinating training activities and providing educational materials related to these topics. Through the strategies, processes, activities and tools developed, the Resource Centre contributes to the competence development of trainers, youth workers and staff of National Agencies.

Youthpass is a tool to document and recognise learning outcomes from youth work and solidarity activities. It is available for projects funded by European youth programmes. It is a part of the European Commission's strategy to foster the recognition of non-formal learning, putting policy into practice and practice into policy.

In preparation for this publication, SALTO T&C RC and the Bulgarian National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth in Action held out a seminar entitled "From Diary to Certificate", during which the context and the idea of the publication were discussed and a few of the methods tested. The feedback from seminar participants contributed heavily to the final selection of supportive methods and tips that were included in this Handbook.

#### Published by

JUGEND für Europa/SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre,  
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This report was published in Oktober 2019.

This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the  
European Commission or the SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource  
Centre or the organisations cooperating with them.