

B3

**Youthpass in practice**

**Youthpass in European Voluntary Service**

✦ Rita Bergstein

**1 What is Youthpass in European Voluntary Service?**

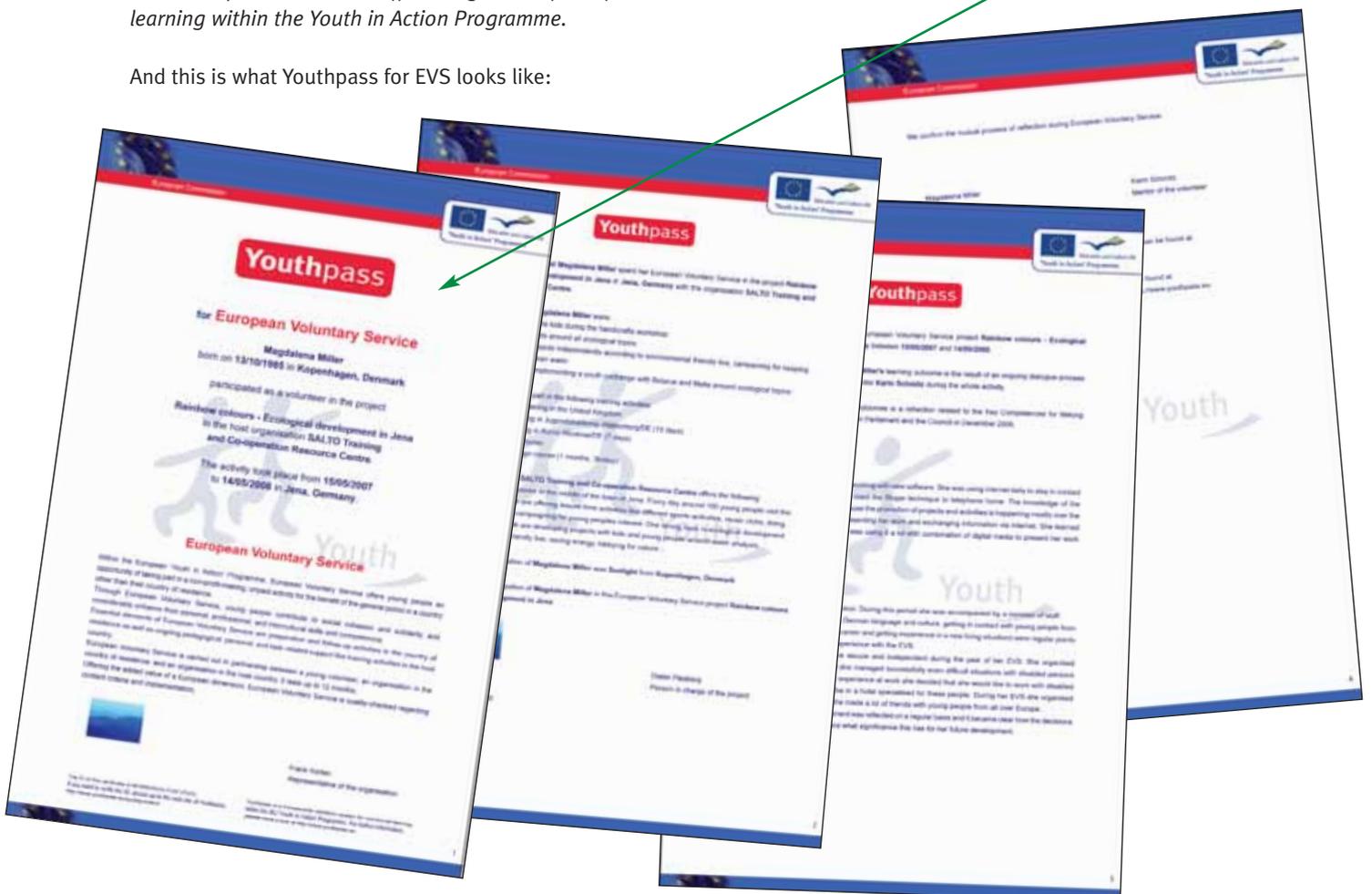
The simple answer is that Youthpass in European Voluntary Service (EVS) is a Certificate which confirms the participation of volunteers and describes their specific EVS project. It is also a Certificate that describes what volunteers learned during their project using the Key competences for Lifelong Learning as a framework.

And the more sophisticated answer is that Youthpass and the linked political context offer recognition of non-formal learning within the Youth in Action Programme.

And this is what Youthpass for EVS looks like:

**1.1 Youthpass as confirmation of participation**

Youthpass confirms participation of the volunteer taking part in a European Voluntary Service activity. The first half of the first page includes the name of the participant, the date and town and country of birth and the basic details of the EVS project, which are: project title and the duration of the project presented as an activity date.



In the following parts, each section of the Youthpass Certificate will be explained.

**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

**1.2 Description of European Voluntary Service**

The next part of the document is a general description of what European Voluntary Service is, based on the Programme Guide of the Youth in Action Programme.

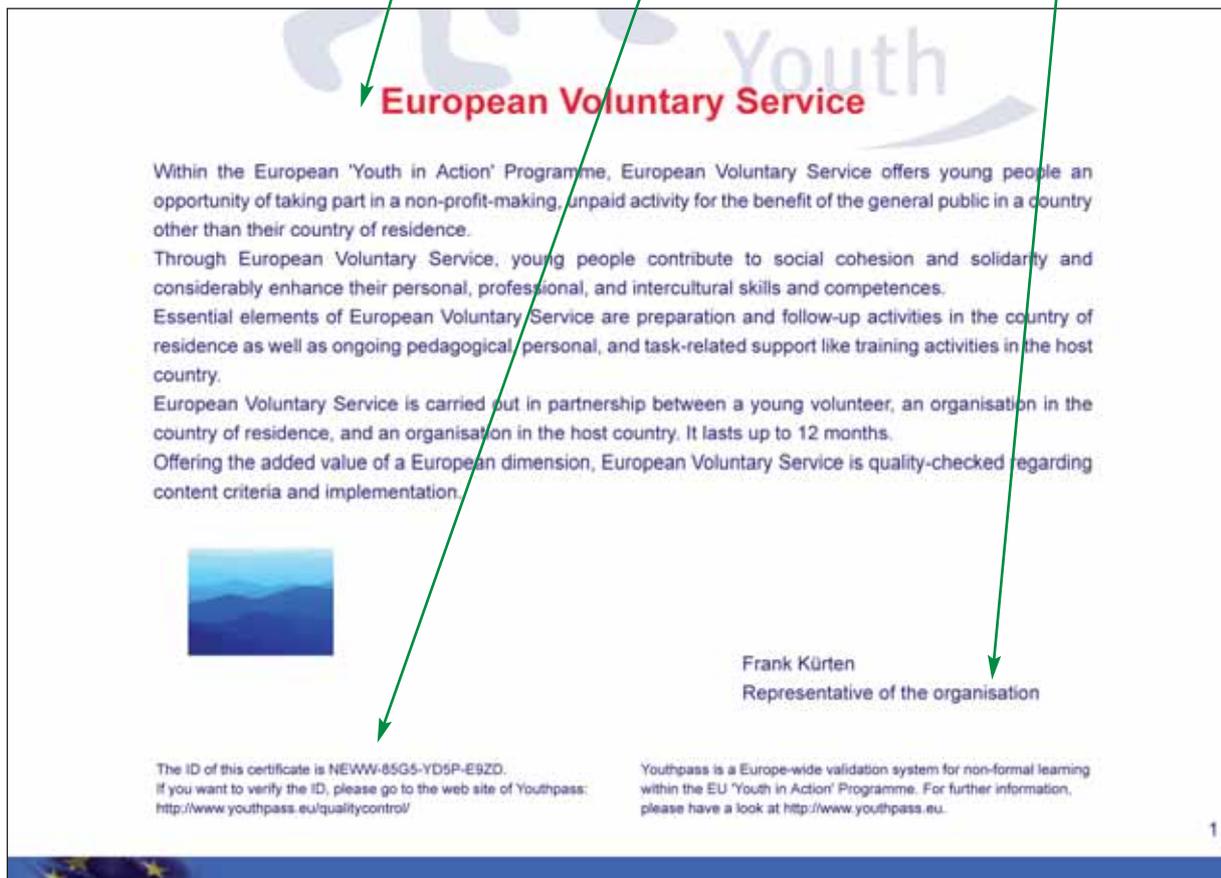
This helps people from outside the youth field to understand what European Voluntary Service is really about. This description is necessary when showing Youthpass to people who have never heard of EVS or other voluntary services in international youth work.

It might also make you think about how you would describe EVS to someone from outside the field...

The first page of Youthpass is to be signed by a representative of the organisation.

The structure of the first page of Youthpass ensures that relevant information about European Voluntary Service is presented in a short way, which can be handy to use in support of a job application, for example.

All Youthpass Certificates are stored on a central database for security reasons and to allow the creation of a replacement Youthpass if someone loses theirs. Each Youthpass has a unique ID number on the bottom of the first page which will allow people to check if the Certificate is genuine.



**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

**1.3 Individual description of activities undertaken**

The second page of Youthpass for European Voluntary Service starts with a description of the role and tasks of the volunteer in the host organisation, followed by an outline of the host organisation.

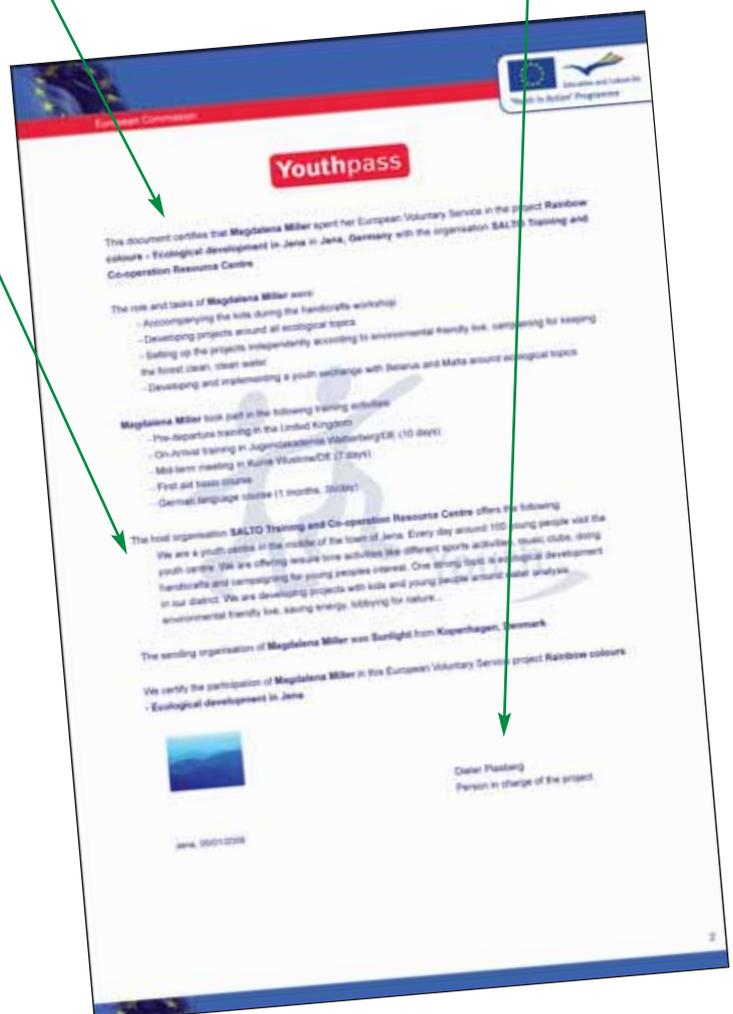
In this part, the Youthpass Certificate provides information to make the setting of the EVS project easier to understand. It describes the training activities undertaken by the volunteer. Besides pre-departure, on-arrival training and mid-term meetings, you can also add language courses or other courses on practical or other relevant topics (e.g. sent by the host organisation to participate in other national or international training courses).

The EVS project takes place in a foreign country where different types of organisations and working cultures exist, which people from outside the field or from another country might not initially understand.

It is important to name the sending organisation – in particular if the EVS volunteer uses Youthpass to demonstrate acquired competences in their home country e.g. when applying for a job in the local area. The sending organisation could give further credibility.

This page will be signed again by a representative – it could be the legal representative, the mentor or the co-ordinator of the project; preferably, of course, someone who knows the project very well.

All the above information is limited to two pages. Therefore there are a limited number of characters for each of these parts in the online certificate generation tool. We have found that a two-page Certificate is more readily accepted by people from outside the field. Also, some people prefer to use these two first pages separately from the part describing the personal learning outcomes, depending on the context in which they want to use the Certificate. As the number of pages is not limited, you will find just one page here for demonstration purposes.



**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

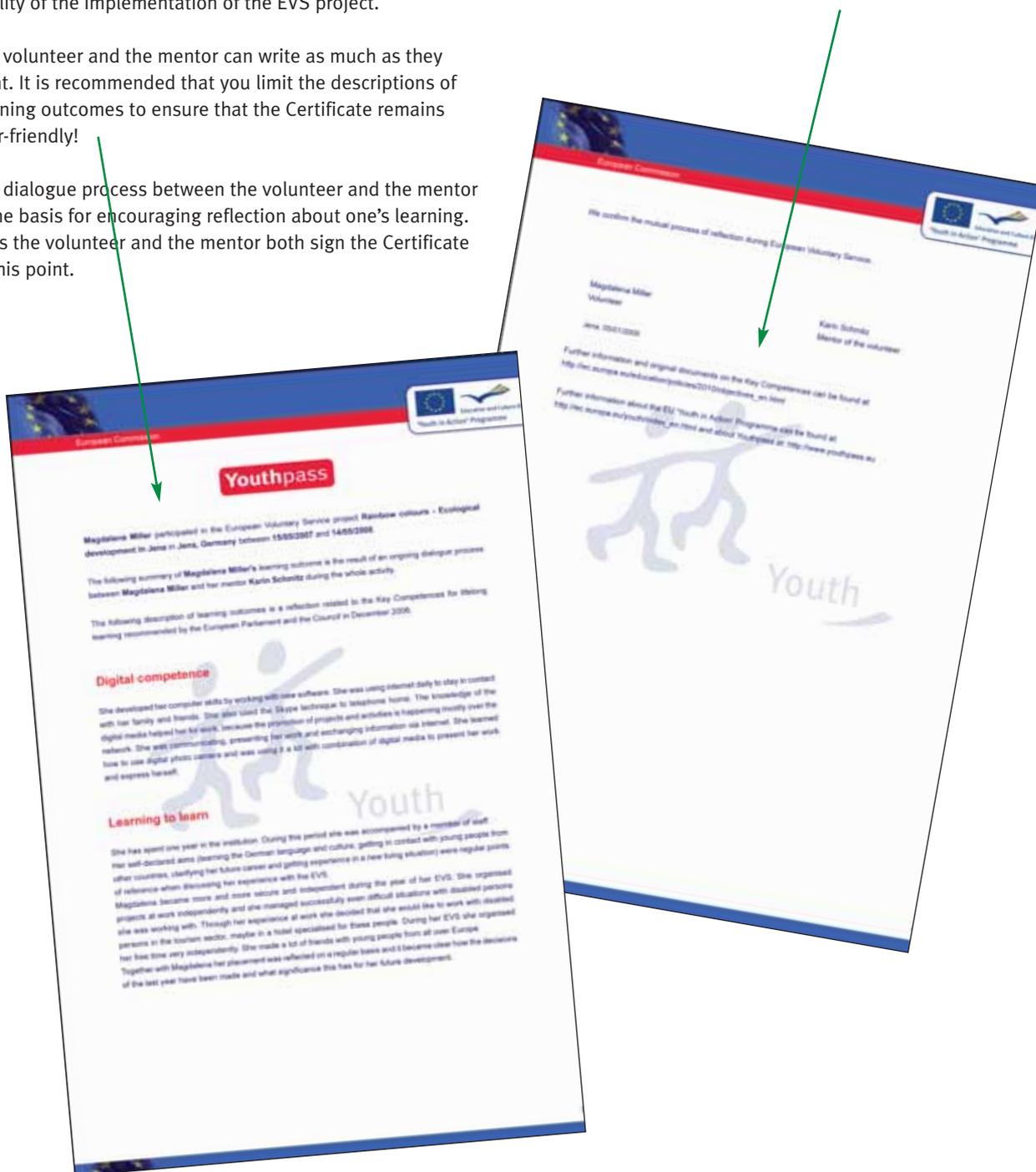
These two first pages of the Certificate are followed by an optional number of pages, in which the participant's learning outcomes are described using the Key competences. A short introduction highlights the joint dialogue process between the mentor and the volunteer which took place during the whole EVS period to deepen their reflection on the learning process and to ensure the quality of the implementation of the EVS project.

The volunteer and the mentor can write as much as they want. It is recommended that you limit the descriptions of learning outcomes to ensure that the Certificate remains user-friendly!

The dialogue process between the volunteer and the mentor is the basis for encouraging reflection about one's learning. Thus the volunteer and the mentor both sign the Certificate at this point.

Space is also provided to give further references – for example from another support person, or a language teacher – at the end of the Certificate.

At the bottom of the last page, you will find links to the Youth in Action Programme, to the Key competences and to the Youthpass website for further information.



**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

You can find further information about Key competences

- > in A4 “You hold the keys to Lifelong Learning” (general information) and
- > specifically in European Voluntary Service further in this chapter.

**1.4 Quick summary of how to generate certificates**

**Compulsory fields to complete on the website** to produce Youthpass Certificates:

On the first page: name of the participant; gender; date of birth; the EVS project details (title, dates, venue); who will sign the first page

On the second page: role and tasks of the volunteer; host organisation’s offer; the sending organisation; the training activities; who will sign the second page

On the following pages relating to Key competences and learning outcomes, all fields are optional – if there is no entry in a particular field, it does not appear on the Certificate.

**You can generate the Youthpass Certificates easily on the Youthpass website.** This is how it works when your European Voluntary Service project is approved:

- > Together with the contract for the approved project, you will get the link to the Youthpass website [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)
- > You are obliged to inform volunteers that they are individually entitled to receive a Youthpass.
- > We recommend including information about Youthpass and the Key competences as soon as you set up the planning for the EVS project together with volunteers, sending and host organisations.
- > On the Youthpass website you need to register before you can start using the Youthpass generating tool.
- > Help texts will guide you through the different steps.
- > You can easily create a Youthpass Certificate by filling the different fields online with information about the EVS project and the volunteer. Once all information is there you can generate the Certificate in PDF and print it.
- > If you type in the learning outcomes along with the Key competences, please do not forget to save the text every now and then to avoid data loss.

Further technical details you will find on the website [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu).



### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### *Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

#### 2 Why Youthpass for European Voluntary Service?

Now you have some idea of what Youthpass in European Voluntary Service is about and what the document looks like. But what is the benefit/potential of using Youthpass in European Voluntary Service? Why is Youthpass meaningful for volunteers? Why does it make sense for organisations? There are several answers to these questions depending on your perspective.

For **volunteers** Youthpass is the official proof of their active participation in a European Voluntary Service project. They can use it as a reference when they apply, for instance, for a job or an educational course. But a Youthpass also means - more importantly - recognising their own active participation in a project, their mobility experience and emphasising their ability to learn from this intercultural experience and to develop personally and professionally.

*When volunteers leave their home countries to go abroad and spend a period of their lifetime in a foreign country, they have to cope with a lot of new things; they have to survive in a new environment and put ideas into practice. This will influence their future perceptions of life, culture, work and vision of reality and their view of European societies. Youthpass is an opportunity to reflect on and describe this experience gained in an EVS project. This experience contains a lot of personal growth and enormous learning potential.*

Youthpass offers an opportunity to document the learning which happens in European Voluntary Service. Next to that it demonstrates commitment and active participation within a European context. Especially for those young people who have not managed to finish their formal education, a Youthpass Certificate could make a difference when applying for the next step in their lives. In any case, Youthpass can easily form part of a young person's portfolio.

Volunteers have to decide for themselves if they want to show all of the Youthpass pages to others. Sometimes it will be more effective to use just the first and second pages to

show that they participated actively in an organisation abroad for a period of their lives. On other occasions it will be equally appropriate to present the learning outcomes within the 'Key competences' framework (page three and following).

Experiences with Youthpass will be documented in a so-called 'good practice' part of the Youthpass website in the near future. If you want to share your experiences and support with others, please feel free to share them!

For the **organisers of the European Voluntary Service project (organisations, mentors)**, Youthpass is a fantastic opportunity to use a Europe-wide system for validation and recognition of their work.

The Youthpass Certificate also shows that you organised an activity which was quality checked by the National Agency of the Youth in Action Programme in your country or by the Executive Agency of the European Commission - if you implement a Centralised project supported by the European Commission directly.

If you use the educational recommendations concerning the learning process, objectives and outcomes described in this Youthpass guide, you can increase the educational impact and quality of your youth work.

Youthpass highlights the added value in terms of the learning experienced in a Youth in Action activity - as you can read about further in chapter A5 "Youthpass - more than a certificate of participation".

In the next part you will find more information about how you can implement Youthpass in an EVS project.

### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### Youthpass in European Voluntary Service

### 3 How can Youthpass be used in a European Voluntary Service project?

“Youthpass is more than a piece of paper and more than just cream on top.” This is the intention of all those who were part of the development of Youthpass.

Now we will look at how to put this into practice - from the first moment you hear of Youthpass to the very last moment when you complete a European Voluntary Service project.

We invite you to go through the following steps which might give you some inspiration on how you can adapt or use the Youthpass process in your EVS project:

**1.** When you start to plan hosting/sending volunteers you can integrate Youthpass and the Key competences right from the beginning when planning and setting learning objectives for the European Voluntary Service project – both for the volunteer and for your organisation. You can choose which competences you would like to address, the learning potential for the individual volunteer and your organisation and how to encourage this process.

If you are dealing with topics like active participation in society, active European citizenship or specific topics like intercultural learning, ecological development, the situation of socially excluded people in different countries etc. you can think about encouraging a specific reflection process for volunteers and for your organisation.

**2.** When you plan the structure of the European Voluntary Service project, please reserve time:

- to inform volunteers that they have the right to receive Youthpass if they want. It is the contractual obligation of an organiser to provide a Youthpass Certificate if requested,
- to include questions on learning and personal and professional development for the volunteers and participating organisations during the ‘reflection moments’ of the EVS project,
- to start thinking already about the use of Key competences and use the descriptions presented later in this chapter,
- to plan regular reflection sessions and possible tools to support volunteers to reflect on their learning objectives,
- to think about different approaches to motivate volunteers in their learning and to link this to Lifelong and Lifewide Learning – please use the ideas about this contained in chapter B 1 “How to support learning”.

**3.** The self-assessment parts and the dialogue process you create with volunteers need time. Setting up a process which offers an opportunity for deep reflection needs a relationship of trust. A lot of volunteers are not familiar with this approach to thinking about learning and you may need to offer guidance and methodological support.

**4.** Motivate volunteers to create networks and partnerships with others to deepen their reflection and to make it a real learning experience. Motivate them to use the on-arrival training and mid-term meetings to receive feedback and develop their reflection on learning objectives and on how to reach them in different ways. Again, you will find support in chapter B1 “How to support learning”.

**5.** During one of the last meetings between volunteers and mentors it is recommended that you invite volunteers to reflect on their learning objectives and the outcomes of the EVS project as a whole and describe them using the ‘Key competences’ framework. Use the reflection process as well to reflect on the mentor’s work and support and the learning experience as a mentor or for the organisation. Volunteers provide a good point of view from outside.

**6.** Before generating and printing the Youthpass Certificates at the end of the EVS project, it is necessary to fill in all the information related to the European Voluntary Service activity. Most of the steps can be prepared in advance – except the individual part about the volunteer’s learning outcome.

**7.** There should be enough time reserved to find the best description. This could be developed in different steps during the final weeks of the EVS project. As support, one could use the adaptation which is offered on the website – in the tool itself – or it can be printed before.

**8.** There is no need for volunteers to choose every Key competence. They can just pick those which are related to relevant learning outcomes. The others will not appear on the Certificate if there is nothing typed in the particular fields.

**9.** Remember that there is also a field for other specific skills which allows you to highlight specific learning e.g. practical, job related skills.

**10.** The description of the learning outcomes can be prepared offline in an electronic format. This allows copying and pasting information online into the Youthpass generating tool.

**11.** For individual recognition purposes ask the legal representative of the organisation to sign the Youthpass Certificate after generating the full document. Maybe this can be linked with a little ceremony which provides recognition of the volunteer’s EVS project and the mentor’s commitment.

### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### *Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

You will find all relevant technical questions concerning the website, the technical conditions and procedures in Chapter C.

#### 4 Further aspects

##### **Coordinating organisations**

Coordinated projects use different ways of dealing with the Youthpass process: either the coordinator acts as a mentor and follows the volunteers' individual learning processes or he/she delegates the task to a mentor, who is selected by the hosting organisation. However it is organised, make sure that the best person to accompany volunteers through the Youthpass process follows their personal and professional learning. Anyway, the coordinator is responsible for finding the best solution.

How to deal with it technically when generating Youthpass Certificates will be explained on [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu).

##### **Language of Youthpass in European Voluntary Service**

Youthpass for European Voluntary Service will be filled in and generated in most cases in English for international mobility reasons. If the mentor and the volunteer need support to describe learning outcomes in English, please use any resource like dictionaries, support people with language abilities... It could also be very supportive to integrate the sending organisation in the translation process.

Youthpass might be used in a local environment where English will not be understood. If volunteers want to receive it in another language e.g. their mother tongue, this is possible. The technical tool is set up for as many languages as volunteers need. Of course there is a need to translate all text box fields.

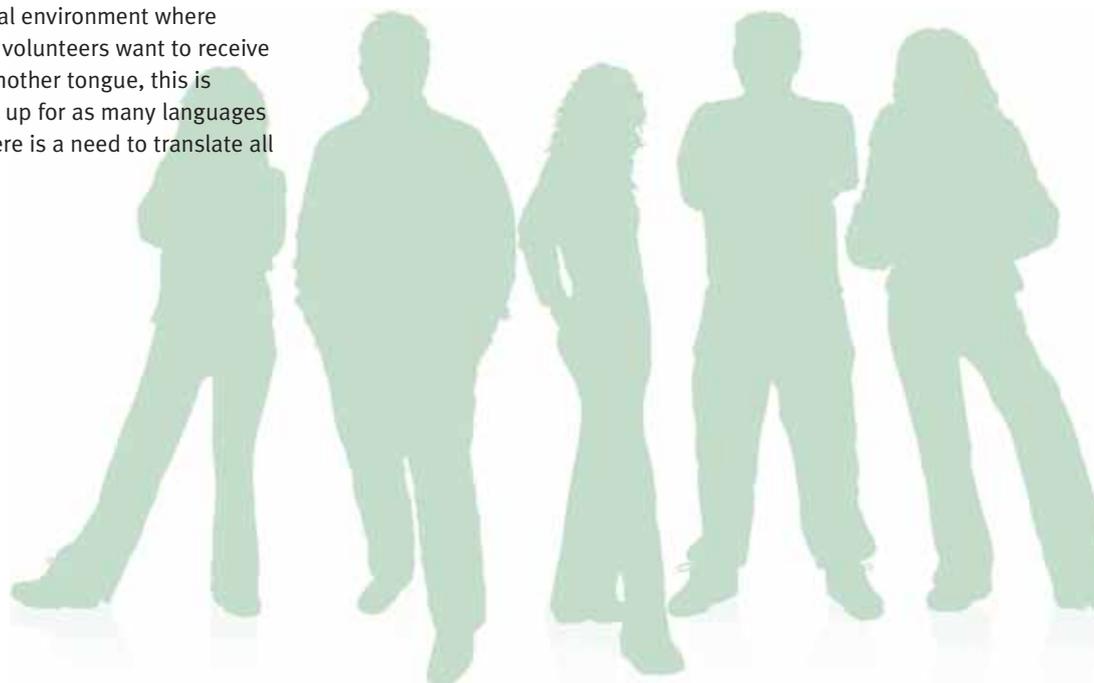
##### **5 Key competences in European Voluntary Service**

The following part provides assistance with understanding and using the key competences during the dialogue process between the volunteer and the mentor to describe learning outcomes. You are encouraged to have a look at other sections of the Youthpass Guide (such as chapter B1 "How to support learning") which give further hints and ideas on facilitating the use of Youthpass in the Youth in Action Programme.

##### ***The background to the Key competences for Lifelong Learning***

The European Union has defined basic Key competences for Lifelong Learning in Europe. All types of education can refer to this same framework, and so do we in the Youth in Action Programme. Competence is defined as being a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Have a look at Chapter A4 "You hold the keys to Lifelong Learning" for a detailed explanation of the development of the framework.



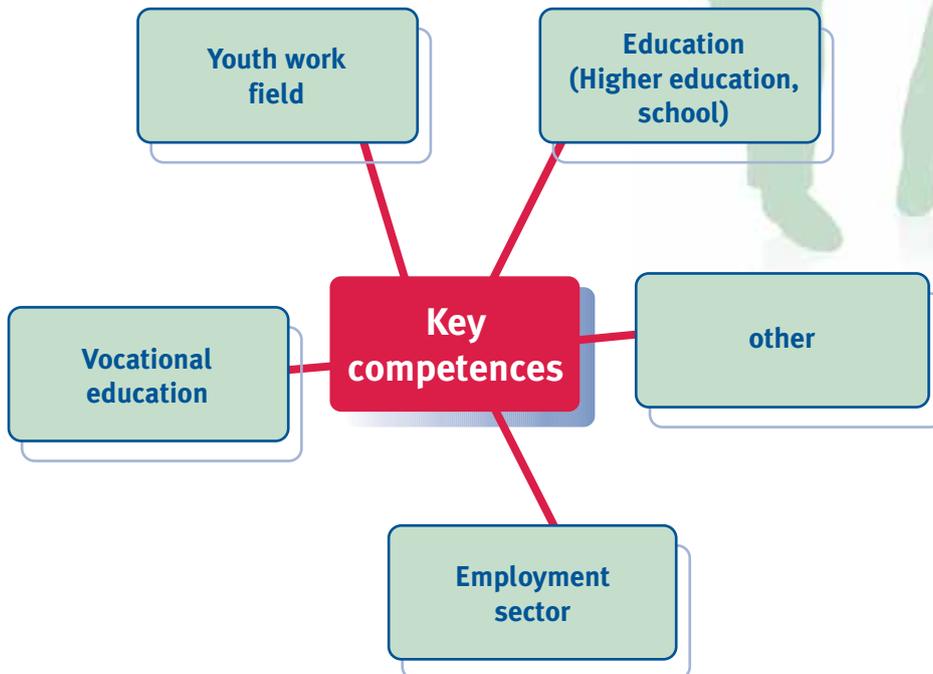
**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

**Key competences in the Youth in Action Programme**

Using Key competences as a tool to describe the learning outcomes from experiences gained within the Youth in Action Programme is new. The decision to go down this path is part of an overall strategy to support young people in their personal lifelong and life-wide learning process and to promote the recognition of youth work in the wider society and its importance in political priorities. One part of the Lifelong Learning strategy is the focus on employability but the other part – which is as important and closer to what we know as youth work - is the future life of young people and coping with the challenges that come from changes in societies. With Youthpass, both aspects will be highlighted.

This common European Key competences framework helps us in using a more coherent European language to talk about learning experiences across different environments.



**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

Below you will find the European definition of the Key competences, and what they might look like in European Voluntary Service. It will hopefully give you some ideas on how you can describe learning outcomes.

You are invited to use the ‘Key competences’ terminology when describing the learning outcomes of EVS. This offers guidelines on how to focus on a common European approach and on how to start using a more coherent European language to report and present these experiences, including in different environments. Especially in view of the Youth in Action Programme, the use of the Key competences here is intended to improve the quality of EVS projects in supporting multipliers in their work.

Each of the Key competences is described below in the following way:

- 1) an extract from the original wording of the Key competences, and
- 2) suggestions on how to reflect on this competence in the context of EVS

One approach to creating a link between learning outcomes in EVS and the Key competences could be:

1. *List all general competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes) gained by your EVS volunteer on a large sheet of paper in three columns.*
2. *Now cut out each single competence from the large paper.*
3. *Prepare 8 large sheets of paper with headings of different Key competences.*
4. *Now stick the general competences that you cut out earlier on the respective ‘Key competence’ paper. Find out where they fit the best.*

This can give you and the volunteers a more practical understanding of how to link learning outcome in EVS with the concept of Key competences.

Of course you can try another approach, taking the Key competences right from the beginning of the reflection process and thinking about the learning outcomes while being inspired by them.

For some of you, and especially volunteers, it may be a relatively new exercise to jump into a dialogue using self-assessment. You may find it useful to offer some examples of half sentences which you can use when describing learning outcomes and competence development. Here are some examples taken from B1 “How to support learning”. If you describe it as continuous text you can either use “I” or “He/She” or the name of the volunteer. It depends on the preference you choose with the volunteer.

1. *I/He/Linda feel/s more comfortable now...*
2. *I/He/Linda found out ...*
3. *I/He/Linda learned ...*
4. *I/He/Linda feel/s confident ...*
5. *I/He/Linda made progress ...*
6. *I’m/He is/Linda is able to ...*
7. *I/He/Linda know/s now how ...*
8. *I/He/Linda developed...*
9. *I/He/Linda have/has a clear view now ...*
10. *In future I/he/Linda want/s to develop futher ...*

**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*



**Communication in the mother tongue**

**The original wording of the Key competence**

Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts; in education and training, work, home and leisure.

**Suggestions for use in the context of EVS**

Most of the volunteers in the Youth in Action Programme use a language other than their mother tongue to express themselves. During the EVS project the volunteers live and work in an environment where using their mother tongue is usually not possible in daily life. Being confronted with learning a new language makes one think about the use of the mother tongue. Being in touch with friends and family from the home country shows the quality of understanding in daily life in that country. It also shows the need to learn

another language to feel more at home through using the guest country's language. Some volunteers might offer language courses in their mother tongue while others will be hosted in a country where people speak the same mother tongue as them.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *What difficulties did I experience in communicating? How did I overcome those difficulties?*
- > *What opportunities did I have to use my mother tongue? How well did others understand me?*
- > *To what extent did I develop my communication skills in general? In what way?*
- > *How did I adapt my language to the level of the people I was speaking to? Did I make other people feel OK about not speaking perfectly what was - for them - a foreign language?*



### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### Youthpass in European Voluntary Service



#### Communication in foreign languages

##### The original wording of the Key competence

Communication in foreign languages broadly shares the main skill dimensions as communication in the mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts (in education and training, work, home and leisure) according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and between the different languages, and according to that individual's social and cultural background, environment, needs and/or interests.

##### Suggestions for use in the context of EVS

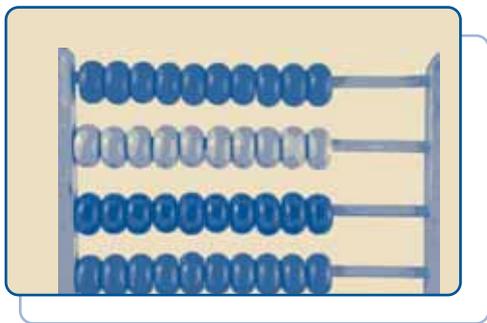
Communication is an important element of an EVS project. Regular exchanges of information and learning outcomes take place between the sending organisation, the host organisation and the volunteer. All participating parties develop the necessary abilities to deal successfully with one another. For the volunteers this means acquainting themselves with a new language, expressing their interests and needs in a foreign language. During the EVS project the volunteers live and work in an environment where they have to use a foreign language in daily life including expressing their feelings. Being confronted with learning a new language, makes one think about different concepts of language, terminology, systems and language codes in specific situations.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *How well did I use the host country's language?*
- > *What difficulties did I experience in communicating? How did I overcome those difficulties?*
- > *How creative was I in explaining things if I did not find the correct word?*
- > *Did I also have a go at writing?*
- > *Where did I identify most differences between my mother tongue and the newly learned language (language codes, different concepts, terminology)?*
- > *Did I learn something in terms of my communication style (active listening, different use of language in different contexts...)?*
- > *Did I learn something about cultural aspects of communication in the host country (use of non-verbal communication, taking turns in the conversation and meetings, directness/indirectness of communication, explicit messages or reading between the lines)?*
- > *If applicable, how well did I use English as a common language in specific situations?*

B3. Youthpass in practice

Youthpass in European Voluntary Service



**Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology**

**The original wording of the Key competence**

**A.** Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. Building on a sound mastery of numeracy, the emphasis is on process and activity, as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves, to different degrees, the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes of thought (logical and spatial thinking) and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs, charts).

**B.** Competence in science refers to the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world, in order to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions. Competence in technology is viewed as the application of that knowledge and methodology in response to perceived human wants or needs. Competence in science and technology involves an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and responsibility as an individual citizen.

**Suggestions for use in the context of EVS**

**A.** Mathematical competence: The interesting aspect of this area of competence for EVS is the challenge of solving the most diverse problems in projects and to draw logical conclusions of all kinds in certain situations. The quality of the solutions is then to be seen within the area of everyday practice and not within the formal ‘logic’ context. Strategic thinking can also be described under this area.

**B.** Competence in science: Volunteers in Voluntary Service have already learned scientific concepts and ideas due to their education as well as knowledge and training from their home country. In the new, and for them culturally different situation, these concepts are put to the test. This can lead to frustration, but can also contribute to increased knowledge as well as the ability to be able to solve problems. This covers technical background knowledge as well as social scientific approaches.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *When did I use my mathematical competence during the EVS project?*
- > *How did I solve problems/challenges related to the EVS project when I faced them? Which skills did I use and improve?*
- > *Could I use logical thinking in specific situations? How did I use them?*
- > *Did I (learn to) use strategic thinking when I developed parts of the project? How did I use it?*
- > *How did I deduce logical conclusions based on practical arguments/experiences (deductive approach)? And how did I test a ‘theory’ (theoretical approach) in practice (inductive approach)?*
- > *How did I (learn to) use technology available for specific parts during the EVS project – e.g. internet research, databases, Polaroids, digital cameras for reporting, Projectors/presentations, specific methods according to the topic involving ‘objects’ (material to work with on ecological development, movies for social topics...)?*

**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*



**Digital competence**

**The original wording of the Key competence**

Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication. It is underpinned by basic skills in ICT: the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the internet.

**Suggestions for use in the context of EVS**

During EVS, volunteers use or develop their skills in dealing with digital media. Depending on the volunteer's skills and background knowledge, this covers the fundamental competences of using internet and e-mail communication as well as the competence of creating and maintaining websites.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *What information sources did I use to prepare myself for the EVS project?*
- > *To what extent did I communicate with (the sending and) the host organisation using the internet before the EVS project?*
- > *Did I use communication technologies and communication during the EVS project? How and what did I learn?*
- > *To what extent did I communicate with my family, friends, or other volunteers during the time I spent in the host country?*
- > *What did I learn about computer use in other countries here?*
- > *How did I deal critically with knowledge available on the internet?*
- > *How did I learn to use online resources for my EVS project (websites, blogs, mailing lists, social networks like Facebook)?*



**Learning to learn**

**The original wording of the Key competence**

'Learning to learn' is the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organise one's own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one's learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome

### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### Youthpass in European Voluntary Service

obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an individual's competence.

#### Suggestions for use in the context of EVS

EVS is a learning experience which young people have in a country other than their own. It is a combination of non-formal (planned and intentional) learning, and informal (unplanned and spontaneous) learning. An important part of EVS is the conscious decision to leave the known environment and look for a new challenge. Learning takes place in the EVS project in the most diverse ways. Before their placement EVS volunteers set themselves goals which they pursue during their posting. Becoming independent, getting to know a new culture, very personal aims connected to a career search or personal further development are all mentioned time and again. These are some motives people are most aware of. The learning process itself is often undirected and coincidental. Through training and personal accompaniment it is frequently possible to reflect on learning experiences and to become more aware of the learning process. To raise this awareness and take responsibility for your own learning process could be a crucial 'learning to learn' step in EVS.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *What does learning mean to me in general? What are my experiences so far?*
- > *What are/were my learning goals within my EVS project? How did they change (if at all)? How will/Did I reach them?*
- > *How do I want to learn? How did I learn?*
- > *Which activities in the EVS project motivated me most in my learning?*
- > *Where did my skills and knowledge improve?*
- > *Which methods do I want to/did I use to evaluate what I learned?*
- > *Which learning style do I prefer: learning by doing, by reading and thinking, by observing? How did I experience new ways of learning due to limited communication?*
- > *How did I explore different ways of learning compared to learning in school and university?*
- > *Why is this learning important for the next stages in my life?*
- > *How will I use what I learned?*
- > *How did I deal with challenges in my learning process? How do I motivate myself to deal with obstacles and continue learning?*



### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### Youthpass in European Voluntary Service



#### Social and civic competence

##### The original wording of the Key competence

These include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. It is linked to personal and social well-being. An understanding of codes of conduct and customs in the different environments in which individuals operate is essential. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.

#### Suggestions for use in the context of EVS

EVS projects offer testing experiences, handling different challenges in a new country with a different language spoken in a special way. It always involves developing new social contacts and friendships and coping in an organisation and therefore in a work situation. Most of the organisations which use EVS placements are concerned in some way with social and political questions. This means the volunteers are often involved with fringe groups, special political questions or particular everyday problems. EVS makes a contribution to the development of European citizenship. Young Europeans spend a year of their lives in another European country and bring impetus and ideas to institutions and communities. They represent a bridge between organisations in different countries. They meet volunteers from different European countries in accompanying training to exchange experiences, to address key questions

and to enliven Europe. It is the aim of many host organisations to bring Europe to the institution and to concern themselves with current questions and topics. In this way volunteers are often the bearers of the European idea in an organisation. Many organisations use this chance to arrange events or new initiatives related to Europe.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

#### Social and intercultural competence

- > *How did I make new friends? What went well? What did not develop well?*
- > *How did I identify different habits in the host community? How did I cope with them?*
- > *Did I take the initiative, go towards others, and support others?*
- > *When was I most successful in communicating with others here?*
- > *How did I present my own cultural background in the host community? How did I experience theirs?*
- > *What was my intercultural learning process during the EVS project?*
- > *How did I deal with the cultural shock (if I faced one)?*
- > *How did I deal with conflicts? How did I resolve them?*
- > *How did I improve my ability to work in a team?*
- > *Which other social competences did I develop during the year?*
- > *To what extent did I increase cultural self-awareness: being more aware of my own cultural values, norms and stereotypes and the effect of communication with foreigners?*
- > *To what extent did I develop intercultural sensitivity, flexibility and an enhanced understanding of difference?*

**B3. Youthpass in practice**

*Youthpass in European Voluntary Service*

**Civic competence**

- > *How much was I actively involved in the EVS project?*
- > *Did I find out how to influence developments in the organisation/in the community? Did I use this knowledge?*
- > *When did I participate in decision-making within the EVS project?*
- > *How did I take into account different opinions? How did they change my view of my own country, of the host country, of European developments?*
- > *How did my knowledge of national and/or local/National/European policies and structures increase?*



**Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship**

**The original wording of the Key competence**

Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports individuals, not only in their everyday lives at home and in society, but also in the workplace in being aware of the context of their work and being able to seize opportunities. It is a foundation for more specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity. This should include awareness of ethical values and promote good governance.

**Suggestions for use in the context of EVS**

An EVS placement includes the management of an independent project. In this way organisations and volunteers have the chance to use the special situation of EVS to make additional suggestions or put ideas into practice. If a volunteer wishes, then the complete planning, preparation, management and evaluation is normally given over to them. It is possible to look at the creation of new projects and initiatives involving young people as a form of social entrepreneurship.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *Which tasks did I take up during the EVS project; did I propose things that I could put into practice – my 'own' project?*
- > *How did my understanding of the practice and principles of project management increase in the EVS project?*
- > *When did I take risks? And what did I learn in the process?*
- > *What chances did I take to express my creativity, to use new knowledge and skills gained during the EVS project?*
- > *How will I use the concepts of other working styles, cultures and innovation in future?*
- > *Did I see and seize opportunities for cooperation or networking in future? Make contacts that could be useful for my future – (job related, common projects, etc.)?*

### B3. Youthpass in practice

#### Youthpass in European Voluntary Service



#### Cultural awareness and expression

##### The original wording of the Key competence

Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.

##### Suggestions for use in the context of EVS

Young people often develop creative forms of expression to make contact with others in a non-verbal way of communicating or to reflect on experiences. Either organisations offer an opportunity to develop cultural aspects during the EVS project or young people use this form of expression based on their own initiative. If this is the case, then examples can be supportive of the description. All forms of creativity and media can find their place in youth work.

Increasing cultural awareness can prepare the ground for effective intercultural learning. If volunteers reflect on different cultural traditions, behaviour in general or specific contexts, major learning steps can be made to become aware of differences and similarities. This can involve a major learning step towards cultural awareness and how to deal with new contexts. It can also serve to raise awareness about dealing with ambiguity.

Questions which can help the volunteer to reflect are:

- > *How willing was I to get involved in new forms of cultural experience?*
- > *When was I able to use different media and forms of expression (e.g. verbal, drawing, body...) to express myself in different situations?*
- > *Which skills did I improve?*
- > *Which differences and similarities did I identify between the host country's culture and my home culture?*
- > *Did I experience situations where I could not understand/deal with the host country's culture? How did I resolve this situation?*
- > *Did I increase my ability to cope with new situations?*
- > *Which major changes have I become aware of?*
- > *What does it mean for my life in future?*

#### Europass

Dealing with Youthpass in European Voluntary Service provides a major opportunity for young people to develop their self-reflection and their personal and professional learning. It may well be that volunteers would like to use this for their further professional career path. They will find it important to use the Europass Curriculum Vitae or the Europass Language Passport for their next steps in life.

They will find the Europass web site including further resources here: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>