

Youthpass



Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

salto|youth



Contents

1. Foreword
2. An introduction to Youthpass in EVS
 - 2.1 What is Youthpass within the European Voluntary Service?
 - 2.2 Why is there Youthpass in EVS?
 - 2.3 When will Youthpass be implemented?
 - 2.4 Who is responsible for Youthpass?
3. The learning dimension of EVS
 - 3.1 Youthpass – support learning and make it visible
 - 3.2 Learning in EVS
 - 3.3 Non-formal, formal and informal learning in EVS
 - 3.4 Learning in EVS is experiential
 - 3.5 The learning environment for a volunteer
 - 3.6 Different roles in the learning process of the volunteer
 - 3.7 Learning to learn
- 4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle
 - 4.1 Flow and approach of the Youthpass process – outside and inside the different training courses
 - 4.2 Role / position of trainer
 - 4.3 Key competences
 - 4.4 Key competences in the EVS training Cycle
 - 4.5 Importance of reflection
- 5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings



1. Foreword

Youthpass and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning has an enormous impact on the developments of educational approaches and on the focus of Youth in Action projects. Using the key competences for lifelong learning, the learning to learn discourses and the developments around self-directed learning influenced the educational discussion in a lot of training and project contexts in the youth work field.

With this publication we want to provide further material – background as well as practical tools and methods – for the training cycle which supports the European Voluntary Service projects. Pre-departure and on-arrival trainings, mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation provide perfect places and moments for volunteers to interrupt, to pause for a moment and to reflect on experiences made in the EVS project. We want to invite you to look during these moments through learning-process glasses and use the potential for further learning.

The publication is mainly targeted to EVS trainers but also to other persons accompanying volunteers in this reflection. You will be asked by a lot of volunteers, how it all works with Youthpass – focussing mainly on the certificate – and we hope that you find answers here and some questions as food for thought.

Please keep in mind that the mentor should be the one taking care of the Youthpass certificate and finalising the process – and has a lot of opportunities to support the learning process – for individual and of course professional learning within EVS projects.

We would like to thank the two authors Mieke Neven McMahon and Matej Cepin for their effort to write this publication and of course the participants of the 'Recognise Learning - Recognise Yourself - Youthpass in the EVS training cycle' - training course which took place in October 2009 with the support of the Irish, Portuguese and the Slovenian National Agencies. This publication is very much inspired by the discussions which took place during this training course.

Enjoy reading and we are looking forward to receiving your feedback: Youthpass@salto-youth.net

Your Youthpass team!

2. An Introduction to Youthpass in EVS

2.1 What is Youthpass within the European Voluntary Service?

The European Voluntary Service enables young people to carry out a voluntary service for up to 12 months in a country other than their country of residence. It fosters solidarity among young people and is a true 'learning service'¹.

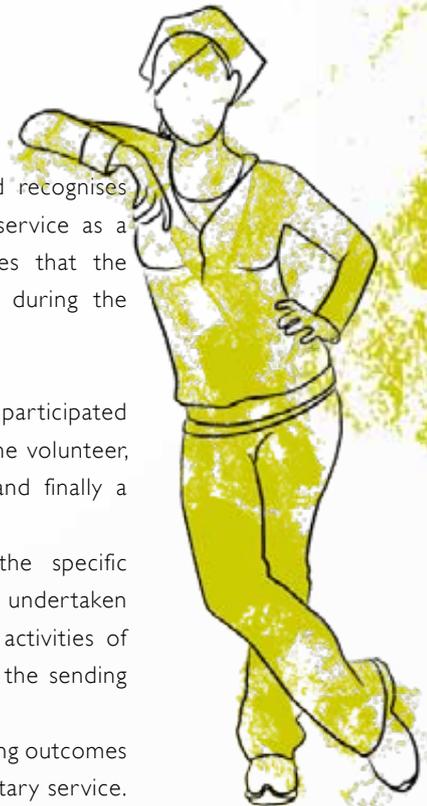
The European Commission supports the European Voluntary Service (EVS) for young people due to the enormous benefits to the young people who participate. These benefits are both concrete – such as improving the volunteer's language skills – and less tangible, for example developing the volunteer's sense of self-worth and self-confidence.

EVS is a learning experience, where many learning opportunities – both non-formal and informal are created and recognised. Youthpass is the instrument to recognise non-formal and informal learning outcomes gained through EVS.

The Youthpass certificate confirms and recognises that the volunteer has carried out a service as a volunteer abroad. It also acknowledges that the volunteer has learned and developed during the voluntary service.

Youthpass consists of three parts:

- **Part one** certifies that the volunteer participated in EVS. It provides personal details of the volunteer, the time period in the host project and finally a general description of EVS.
- **Part two** gives a description of the specific project, the role, tasks and training undertaken by the volunteer; a description of the activities of the host organisation and the name of the sending organisation.
- **Part three** is a description of the learning outcomes the volunteer achieved during the voluntary service.



¹ Programme guide of the Youth in Action programme, pg. 53

2 An Introduction to Youthpass in EVS

The Youthpass certificate can be used as a certificate confirming and describing participation (on page one and two of the certificate), or as a certificate of participation and describing the learning outcomes achieved during the voluntary period (all pages of the certificate).

Since 2007 Youthpass is available for participants of the following formats of the Youth in Action Programme:

1.1 - Youth Exchanges

1.2 - Youth Initiatives (since April 2010)

2 - European Voluntary Service

3.1 - Youth Exchanges and Training Courses with Neighbouring Partner Countries

4.3 - Training Courses

EVS, both long term and short term, has a lot of potential for learning. It offers volunteers a real life experience. The Action incorporates support elements for planning, reflecting, and assessing the learning coming from these experiences. The two main support elements for the volunteer incorporated in EVS are the mentor and the training cycle.

2.2 Why is there Youthpass in EVS?

As shown above, Youthpass can be used as confirmation of participation and as such it could, for instance, be used as an addition to the CV when applying for jobs or courses. But more interesting is the educational impact that the Youthpass process can have. It has the capacity to improve and increase the learning within an EVS project, and the Youthpass certificate makes this learning visible.

By following the learning process and preparing the learning outcomes for Youthpass, volunteers will need to plan, follow, recognise, assess and understand their own learning. Most volunteers will have experience with learning in formal education; like school and university, but it might be the first time that they find themselves in a situation where **they** will be responsible for their own learning and development.

Volunteers will be supported to start a process of **self-directed learning**. The mentor and the training cycle will support the volunteer in planning their learning, in discovering what they want to learn and how they learn best, but ultimately the volunteers are responsible for deciding what they learn and how far they want to go in this process.

Questions for reflection:

- What is your experience with learning?
- How do you perceive learning?
- What is your understanding of self-directed learning?
- How self-directed are you in your own learning?
- What does recognition of non-formal learning mean to you?

2.3 When will Youthpass be implemented?

If you think of Youthpass as an instrument to recognise the learning achieved during the EVS project then it becomes clear that it is a long-term process. It is not something that can be done in the last few days of the EVS project. Youthpass will be completed and generated at the end of the service, but it reflects

an ongoing process during the entire EVS experience – from preparation to follow up. If the learning is not planned, followed, understood and documented, a lot of it will go unnoticed or it will be forgotten by the time the Youthpass certificate is being prepared.

2.4 Who is responsible for Youthpass?

The **National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme** inform the organisation that holds the contract about Youthpass and provide the link to the Youthpass website. The organisation that holds the contract is obliged to inform the volunteers about Youthpass. If the volunteer wishes to receive the Certificate, the organisation/mentor should implement the process and generate the Youthpass certificates in the end.

Of course Youthpass is more than the creation of a certificate, as seen in the previous chapter. The Youthpass process is about learning that happens in the EVS project. There are different support structures in EVS that will help the volunteer on her or his learning journey.

The first one is the **mentor**: it is recommended that the mentor and the volunteer start a dialogue process about learning. This can be incorporated in the reflection/evaluation meetings which take place during the time the volunteer is in the host organisation. This dialogue process about experience and learning is very important for volunteers. It is often only through dialogue that people are able to reflect and deepen the learning experience. Often it is the observation of another person that will create awareness of actions and progress. The mentor is in the unique position of following the volunteer's personal development and of seeing changes and improvements in the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the volunteers. It is this outsider's insight that can be invaluable for the learning process. The mentor helps making learning outcomes obvious. Through dialogue and asking questions the mentor can direct volunteers to be more specific about what they have learned and how they learned it.



2 An Introduction to Youthpass in EVS

The second support structure in place is the **EVS training cycle**. Volunteers will receive maximum four training courses (pre-departure, on-arrival, mid-term evaluation and final evaluation) during their voluntary period. These training courses are in place to prepare, support, and evaluate the EVS experience. They also offer a unique opportunity for providing information on Youthpass and to support the learning experience and process of the volunteer. During these training courses there is time to share questions and common experiences with other volunteers. The time away from the project can help volunteers in taking a step back and looking at their experiences.

This is where EVS trainers have a part to play. During the training courses the volunteers can be supported in learning how to learn, in making their learning plans, in reflecting and assessing their learning. The training cycle will support the learning process of the volunteers and help them in taking responsibility for their own learning. Volunteers will be supported in their self directed learning process. It is important that volunteers will take the lead in this process.



Questions for reflection:

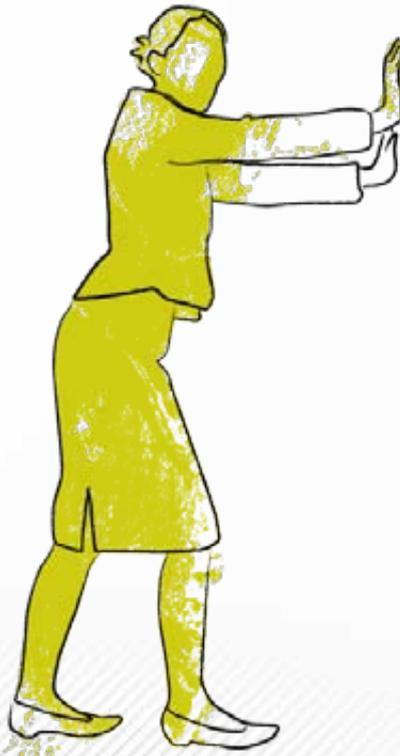
- How can you support the learning process of a volunteer?
- What do you think is the value of Youthpass?
- How do volunteers value learning in EVS?
- How could they appreciate the Youthpass process?

3. The learning dimension of EVS

3.1 Youthpass – support learning and make it visible

In the previous chapter the importance and role of Youthpass in European Voluntary Service was explained. Two main aspects were stressed:

- Youthpass supports the learning process in EVS
- Youthpass as an instrument recognising non-formal and informal learning outcomes gained through EVS



Youthpass has the potential to raise the quality of the learning process. Furthermore it can help involved people, especially volunteers, to communicate this quality through formulating their learning outcomes and making them visible for various stakeholders such as employers, educational institutions, youth organisations and others.

For a long time, sitting behind a book and trying to remember as much data as possible has been considered as one of the only ways of learning. In recent years learning has become much more. Most of today's learning theories consider learning as a permanent lifelong and life-wide process. Like all other living creatures, we are learning all the time, whether it is conscious or not.

In this context the key question about EVS as learning experience is not: 'Learning in EVS: yes or no?', it is much more:

- What are the learning interests and contents in an EVS project – of involved actors?
- How to raise the quality of EVS as a learning process?

3 The learning dimension of EVS

- What is the usefulness of learning – how is it connected to the volunteers' future needs? How does it prepare them to deal with future challenges?
- Will volunteers be able to transfer their knowledge to other environments?
- reflecting, assessing and evaluating learning
- thinking about how to transfer learning into other environments
- translating learning into the language of other stakeholders

The Youthpass process offers various possibilities to the different stakeholders in an EVS project – especially to volunteers:

- increasing awareness of the learning process, interest, content, and outcomes
- managing/organising the learning process better

But: What is learning in EVS? How does it look like? What does the term 'quality of learning' mean? It would probably be helpful to discuss these issues before we go to concrete steps of implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle.

3.2. Learning in EVS

In most of the cases trainers, who are the main target group of this booklet, see learning as an integral part of an EVS projects. All the other aspects: service character, intercultural dimension, dissemination of results etc. are seen as means to support learning.

Analysis of volunteers' reasons for participating in EVS projects show that learning is not at all on the first place among these reasons. Often EVS is seen as a way to be challenged in life in general, to do something good for society, to try out something new, to escape from a certain reality or to have a possibility to travel.

For the majority of these volunteers learning in EVS projects comes 'only' as a side effect. What the majority of EVS trainers see as a crucial element, is often not a motivational factor for the volunteers, the project promoter and even the mentors.

Wider aspects of learning

Some general characteristics of learning will contribute to further discussions about learning in EVS. These characteristics are not 'facts'. Learning itself is a concept. Speaking about its characteristics reflects the beliefs of the speaker - so it is very subjective.²

Learning is life-long. People learn all the time, they never stop, it is a permanent process.

Learning is life-wide. Learning is not only vocational! It covers all aspects of people's lives; they have to learn for all the different roles they take.

Learning is experiential. All learning is based on impulses that generate experiences. Experience is a foundation of learning. If learning is connected to an individual's life experiences, it will probably have a greater impact.

²References:

- Jarvis, P., Holford, J., Griffin, C. (2003). *The Theory & Practice of Learning – 2nd edition*. London, New York: Routledge Falmer
- Jarvis, P. (2004). *Adult Education & Lifelong Learning*. London: Routledge.

Learning is more than just education. In some theories education is considered as intentional activity, but learning is much more than that: it is intentional and unintentional.

Learning, at least in youth work, should be self-directed. Learners should take as much self-direction as possible over content, methods, goals and evaluation of their own learning.

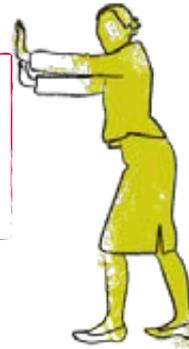
Learning should be learner-centred. The learner is a centre of learning. Competence is not something one gets from the outside but something one builds in a learning process based on experiences.

Learning means acquiring competences. Only theoretical knowledge is not enough as it does not guarantee manifestation of this knowledge in practice. The concept of competence consists of knowledge, skills and attitude. One can only make an impact in society if the 'right mixture' of all these 3 elements is acquired.

For this booklet the characteristic of learning is taken from the experience of being active in the Youthpass development and implementation.

Questions for reflection:

- What is your first association when you hear the word 'learning'?
- Which past experiences have influenced your perception of learning?
- How do people, who are not trainers, perceive learning?



Who learns in EVS?

Volunteers are certainly the most important stakeholders of an EVS project and as such usually also benefit the most from their learning outcomes. But – volunteers are far from being the only important stakeholders in EVS. There are many others. Some of them are more and others less involved:

- mentor
- sending coordinator
- host coordinator
- sending organisation (wider than only a coordinator)
- host organisation
- volunteers' co-workers

- friends, family and colleagues of volunteers at home and the host environment
- people the volunteer works with
- other stakeholders

If the project is successful, all these stakeholders learn or benefit from it. The ones who are more involved in the project usually (but not necessarily) learn more – others less. Speaking of the volunteer being the 'centre' of the project, one could say that stakeholders who are more connected with the volunteer (on physical, communicational or other level) learn more and others less.

3 The learning dimension of EVS

The aspect of organisational learning should not be ignored. Learning may be seen as an individual activity, but it also has a social aspect. Increasingly we speak about organisational learning, both in the profit and non profit sector. Organisations of all different kinds become more and more aware that the impact of individual learning increases if it gets incorporated into the organisational structure and culture. Organisational knowledge changes the know-how of organisations. It changes their goals and methods but also structures, public image and many other aspects. According to Senge³, a learning organisation includes these 5 dimensions into its culture:

- Systemic thinking (holistic view on challenges)
- Personal mastery (everyone is committed to learning)
- Mental models (individuals' representations of the world are constantly challenged)
- Building shared vision
- Team learning

³ Senge, P. (1990):

The Fifth Discipline.
Century Business,
Random Century,
London

As one can see from the dimensions listed above, EVS can be just an ideal opportunity to raise quality of organisational learning in both sending and host organisations. During their stay abroad volunteers

as well as people around them have to face complex challenges which need a 'systemic approach'. They are usually faced with tasks and a context which demands gaining new skills: Their mental models are constantly challenged due to the intercultural context of EVS, they have to find a common vision with the organisations to make the project useful and last but not least, teamwork is usually indispensable in EVS. Key questions about learning for different stakeholders in EVS projects are:

- How to plan and implement projects so that they will produce a high learning outcome for everybody involved?
- How to recognise newly gained learning outcomes on a regular basis so that they can be used to improve the EVS project? Or how to mainstream learning interests, learning as such and learning processes in an organisation?
- How to use the volunteers' potential to strengthen organisational learning in the host organisation?
- How to incorporate volunteers' individual learning outcomes into the sending organisation?
- How to manage a process of organisational learning through EVS projects?

3.3 Non-formal, formal and informal learning in EVS

Importance of planning

EVS is a complex learning experience. It offers many opportunities to learn: conscious as well as unconscious, planned as well as unplanned, gaining technical as well as social knowledge. Learning

increases with the amount of surprising and unpredictable situations the learner is exposed to, an EVS project certainly presents such a set of situations.

For a volunteer, EVS is always an adventure to some extent. In an adventure, there are many things we cannot predict. In adventures, detailed planning does not always work; too little is known beforehand.

Abilities like intuition, the capacity to react quickly or to resolve problems also come into consideration. But of course that does not make planning learning in EVS unnecessary. Without planning, the amount of surprises and unpredictable situations would probably be even bigger and sometimes they might even become too big.

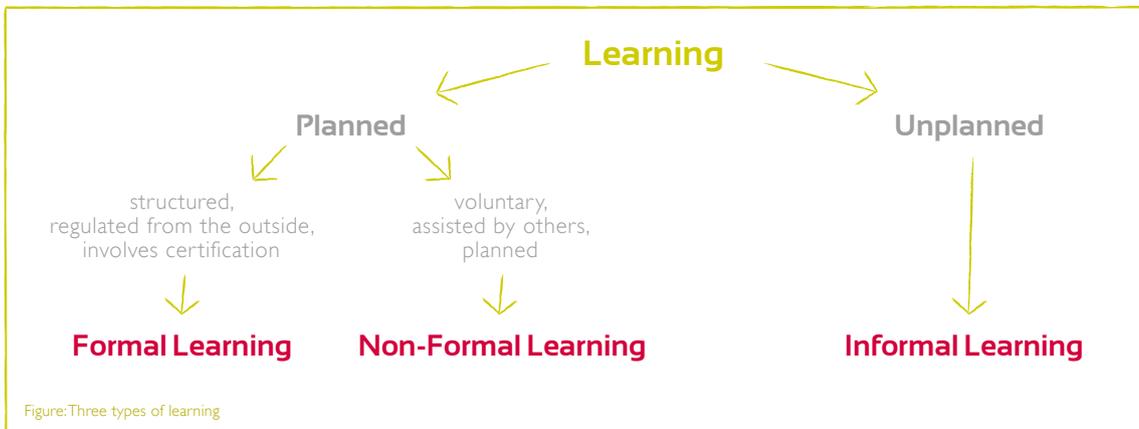
Three types of learning

It is this **difference between planned and unplanned learning** that shows the main distinction between formal and non-formal learning on the one side and informal learning on the other. Formal and non-formal learning is planned at least by the organisers of any activity (purposive), informal learning is not. Informal learning just happens whether the learner realises it or not.

Within planned (purposive) learning two further types can be recognised. Formal learning is structured, regulated from the outside and involves standards of certification. Non-formal learning on the other hand is voluntary - intended by the learner and assisted (not regulated!) by others. It takes place in a diverse range of situations and environments.

This has a great impact on those who plan it. In non-formal learning, the learner is often involved in planning it - or at least has a much higher opportunity to steer elements of the plan i.e. goals, content, methods, assessment and evaluation of learning. However, in formal learning aims are almost always externally set⁴. Somebody else is the one who plans and takes responsibility for the curriculum, for directing learning and certifying it.

⁴ Lynne Chisholm in Bridges for Recognition: Promoting Recognition of Youth Work across Europe. p. 41 ff <http://www.salto-youth.net/tools/bridges/Bridges2005/BridgesForRecognition/>



3 The learning dimension of EVS

Formal learning in EVS

Formal learning is the type of learning that does not occur very often in EVS. Situations where volunteers would benefit from it would include for example:

- a formal language course
- a vocational training course in the host country (e.g. nursing)
- handcraft oriented vocational courses (e.g. gardening) or others.

Non-formal learning in EVS

Non-formal learning represents the central type of learning in EVS.

The process of planning non-formal learning in EVS is complex and can lead involved stakeholders to a wider and broader perspective, from more abstract to more concrete.

Following phases in structuring a possible learning process can be identified:

- preparation of the expressions of interest by both sending and host organisation
- planning and preparing the individual project
- discussing concrete issues after the approval of the project
- the volunteer will be motivated to identify learning objectives/interests
- the volunteer and the mentor could plan concrete steps of possible learning/identify learning interests during the project
- the team of trainers implement EVS trainings

which includes dealing with the learning dimension of EVS, self-directed learning etc.

- the volunteer plans how to transfer the knowledge and the learning outcomes back to his/her sending organisation together with both the staff of sending and host organisations.

Non-formal learning in EVS projects occurs mainly in the fields that are most predictable and most connected to the content of the project itself. It is much easier to predict what volunteers will learn in their service, language course or EVS trainings. Learning that happens during their free time and private life is generally regarded as informal learning.

Informal learning in EVS

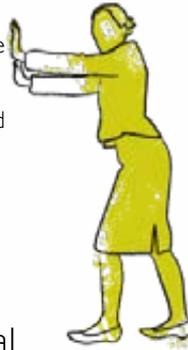
Informal learning is a type of learning that happens all the time but specially in new and unpredictable situations. It cannot be planned. It happens during the volunteer's free time as well as during his/her work, transportation, training or, for example, waiting in the line of the supermarket.

A lot of learning happens informally, but due to its unpredictable nature, volunteers recognise informally gained learning outcomes sometimes only very long after situations have already passed. Sometimes it takes years to realise how important a situation was for an individual's life!

In this context the EVS training cycle can become very important, as during the training courses many opportunities occur to help volunteer recognise learning that happened while they were busy doing other things!

Dividing the learning process in EVS into formal, non-formal and informal learning can help us to think about:

- To which extent is it reasonable and possible to plan a learning process and where are the limits?
- Is it (and to which extent) possible to include formal learning into EVS projects?
- Which learning processes can be planned and which not?



3.4 Learning in EVS is experiential

Experiential learning is the process of learning from direct experience. It assumes that experiences are sources of learning. The term is generally used in two ways:

- firstly, in the sense that **all learning is experiential**; in this view every person learns all the time and that everything what happens to him/her is a potential learning experience.
- secondly, in the sense that **some learning is experiential and some not**; in this view we know different sources of learning – besides experiences also books, conversations, dreams etc. In this sense the concept of experience is constrained to what is called 'concrete experience', something 'more powerful' that influences all levels of human beings and involves them entirely.

But regardless of this partly philosophical distinction, the quality of what one experiences is an important aspect of both views. It depends on the personal

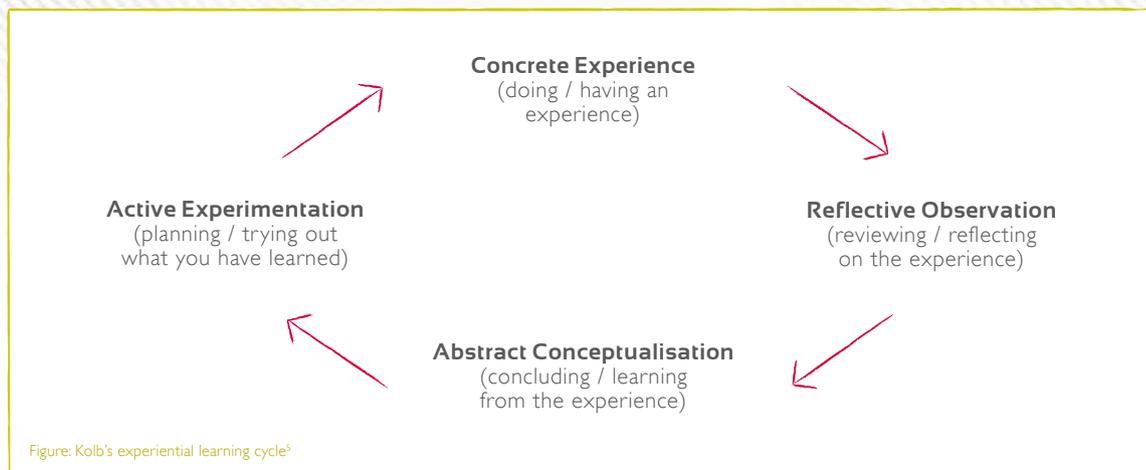
learning styles, if learning from books is more intense than learning by doing or vice-versa. But learning by doing in general offers a huge potential. And learning by doing is easy to transfer into other life situations. EVS is such a learning opportunity. It provides many concrete experiences which involve volunteers e.g. in new tasks, new people, new ways of thinking and culture, new challenges, the need to care for him or herself, work related experience, personal experience – all these are very concrete sources of learning on physical, social, emotional, moral and cognitive level.

But, unfortunately, only capturing experiences is not sufficient. Individuals who capture experiences only, can be compared to a computer with only input devices but no processor. What would be the use of such a computer?

Here one of the most famous experiential learning theorists, David A. Kolb, developed a model called the 'experiential learning cycle'.

3 The learning dimension of EVS

⁵Kolb, David A. (1984):
Experiential learning –
Experience as the
Source of Learning
and Development.
Prentice-Hall Inc.,
Engelwood Cliffs,
New Jersey.



The cycle represents learning as a continuous process of processing experiences. Concrete experience on the top of the cycle is often understood as a start

of learning, but not all people learn from concrete experiences. Some have reflection as their primary learning style, others learn through theory, others again by trying to do things themselves.

Applying Kolb's experiential learning cycle to EVS provides the following:

- Concrete experience (doing / having an experience). In EVS this phase represents what happens 'on the ground' – concrete things happen during the service and engagement in the project, private life, socialising time etc. Because of being in another, in most cases very different environment, full of surprises, this phase is very intense and therefore represents a solid basis for learning – but is not yet learning itself.
- Reflective observation (reviewing / reflecting on the experience) generally happens through conversations about what has happened for example with the mentor or other volunteers or the trainer in a training course, or while the volunteer makes his or her individual reflection. Having free time to reflect without pressure or very strong impulses from the surroundings is crucial for the success of this phase.
- Abstract conceptualisation (concluding / learning from the experience) is probably the phase that is most difficult to describe. It happens on conceptual level, and often no visual indicators accompany what goes on 'in the head'. Conclusions, new concepts, changes of attitudes and new strategies for future actions are results of this phase. This phase cannot be efficient without prior reflection.
- Active experimentation (planning/trying out what was learned) means putting previously re-conceptualised mental models into practise. It means 'doing things in a new way and trying out what happens. The point of this phase is to use new concepts, ways and strategies in life. Of course these trials produce some new, often unexpected results and side effects. These provide new experiences, and the learning cycle starts again.

The results of the 1st phase are 'raw experiences' which still 'don't have names', they are maybe labelled in the 2nd phase. During the 3rd phase the labels are brought into an order, linked to existing

concepts, and attitudes are possibly changed. The new concept or order can be tried out, conclusions can be developed and future actions can be planned.

3.5 The learning environment for a volunteer

Earlier in this chapter types of learning in the context of EVS were discussed, and it got obvious that the entire EVS environment is a potential source of very different learning opportunities.

Clarifying in which situations a volunteer learns in EVS can help volunteers, mentors or trainers when reviewing learning outcomes. Having a list of such

possible sources of learning can be the basis of a reflection tool, complementary to the framework of the 8 key competences.

The model described in the table below can be transformed into specific reflection methods to be used within EVS trainings or for the individual work between a volunteer and a mentor.

Learning from Environment in EVS		
Learning from...	Possible Learning Situations	Can Learn for Example...
Service (project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal relationships in the project • Type of service • Tasks • Organisational culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing professional and private interpersonal relationships • New practical skills • Cultural (working) habits
Living in another country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language learning • Ensuring conditions of living • Interaction with social, political and economic system in the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The language • Ability to care for him/herself • Intercultural competences • Knowledge about institutions
Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content of training courses • Relationship with volunteers from other countries • Non-formal learning methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various skills (like: conflict solution, learning to learn, project planning ...) • Recognising value and ways of non-formal learning • Creating international friendships • Evaluating and estimating personal situation
Free time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure time activities • Socialising • Informal relationships • Sharing a living space with others • Living with little money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New hobbies • New forms of spending free time • Different ways of socialising • Learning to live with others • Learning to budget

3 The learning dimension of EVS

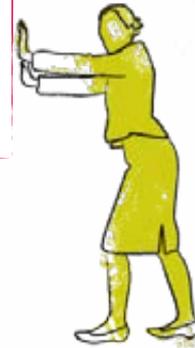
3.6 Different roles in the learning process of the volunteer

The next table presents a quick overview of different responsibilities in EVS in the context of the learning process of the volunteer:

Role	Responsibilities
Volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and plans his/her learning interests and objectives together with the sending coordinator and host mentor before and during the project. • During the project he/she cooperates with the host mentor and/or coordinator to follow his/her learning process. • Steers as much as possible his/her learning process (self-directed learning). • Collects situations and evidences about his/her learning to be used for the Youthpass Certificate. • Evaluates his/her learning regularly with the help of the host mentor. • After the project is finished he/she transfers gained knowledge back into his/her sending organisation with the help of the sending mentor.
Host mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports volunteers in planning their learning / Youthpass process • Gives feedback to the volunteer and enables the volunteer to express him-/herself • Supports volunteers while reflecting, assessing and evaluating learning. • Supports volunteers in formulating learning outcomes and completing their Youthpass Certificates. • Supports volunteers in moments or periods of falling motivation.
Sending mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the volunteer to identify learning interests/objectives and the process before the project starts • Keeps contact with the volunteer during their stay abroad (satisfies the need of life contact with his/her home environment). • Offers support to transfer acquired competences after the volunteer returns from EVS • Is open to include volunteers' learning outcome into the sending organisation's context
Employees in host organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are prepared to share knowledge and skills which the volunteers need to accomplish their tasks • Includes volunteers into planning tasks and learning outcomes
Project coordinator in host organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible to ensure that the learning dimension of EVS is included in EI and project application. • Responsible to organise the project in a way that it encourages the volunteer to learn and that it gives him/her opportunity to fully realise his/her potentials. • Agrees with volunteer about training courses he/she attends and organises them. • Finds a host mentor who is able to establish a productive relationship with volunteer.
Project coordinator in sending organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates with volunteers and project coordinators in host organisations to ensure good conditions for their learning process during the project.
Trainers on EVS trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and implement training courses according to demands of EVS and the Youth in Action Programme and according to the needs of specific groups of volunteers • Provide information for volunteers about learning in EVS and Youthpass • Support learning processes of volunteers through training methods • Are available to respond to the volunteers' questions and dilemmas about learning. • Inform about Youthpass and support the Youthpass process of volunteers

Questions for reflection:

- Roles differ from organisation to organisation because of various organisational cultures. Which roles are - by your experience - most dependant on various organisational cultures?
- Did you as a trainer sometimes have the feeling that one or more support people didn't fulfil their tasks related to the Youthpass process? How did you react in such situations?



3.7 Learning to learn

Nowadays it is not enough for young people to just learn, their task is more complex. They have to learn how to learn for the rest of their lives.

Recognising the learning process during EVS, identifying interests and setting objectives can be quite a demanding challenge for volunteers, especially for those who do not have prior experiences with learning and reflection techniques. To be able to handle it, volunteers also have to deal with how to learn.

Of course, developing the 'learning to learn competence' is primarily a task for volunteers, but everyone is also invited to provide support according to their competences. Since EVS trainings aim to equip volunteers with 'skills to make the best out of their EVS', developing the 'learning to learn competence' should be included into EVS training programmes.

What is the 'learning to learn competence'?

The original wording of this key competence is:

'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 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.⁶

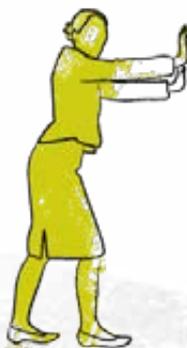
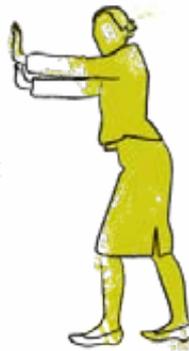
⁶Key Competences for Lifelong Learning: European Reference Framework. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007

3 The learning dimension of EVS

The 'Learning to learn competence in EVS'

If we apply original wording to EVS, the knowledge, skills and attitudes the volunteer could gain are:

- discovering different meanings of the concept of learning
- learning how to keep and motivate learning
- the ability to recognise and use various opportunities to learn
- the ability to learn in an intercultural environment
- the skill of identifying learning interests and setting learning objectives
- skills of self-directed learning (taking lead and responsibility for his/her own learning)
- the use of individual and group reflection methods
- the ability to use information and communication technology for learning
- the ability to integrate knowledge into different environments, and many others.



The 'Learning to learn competence' is a complex mixture of knowledge, skills and attitudes that should be addressed step by step. One cannot expect huge results in only a short amount of time, but EVS trainings often lack time to satisfy all the needs.

The lack of learning to learn competence can be significant with some volunteers, especially those with little experience with non-formal learning.

In formal school system, lots of learning is still produced by reading, repeating and learning by heart. Besides that, learning processes are not often reflected and made conscious. Life itself, youth work and EVS present a complementary added value in developing learning to learn knowledge, skills and attitudes.

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

During EVS the volunteers will participate in maximum four training courses. The aim of the training courses is to give guidance and support to the volunteers in different phases of the entire EVS period. They are structured in such a way that they will contribute to the educational process and to the personal development of the volunteers. At the same time they offer a space where volunteers are supported in dealing with conflicts and in living and working safely in a different country. The training courses can play an important role in risk prevention and they also offer space for reflection and evaluating the EVS experience.

The EVS training and evaluation cycle follows a 4-step format:

- Pre-departure training - sending country
- On-arrival training - host country
- Mid-term evaluation - host country
- Evaluation of the activity - sending country

The training courses in the training cycle have the same overall aim, but each training course has its own objectives tailored for each phase of the EVS project.

The basic standards to be expected in the training courses can be found in the Programme guide of the Youth in Action programme.⁷

The duration of the training courses in different countries varies from 1 – 12 days. This has an impact on how the training courses are organised and implemented, and has an influence on how the Youthpass/learning process will be highlighted and supported.

Questions for reflection:

Please take into account that the previous training course could have taken place in another country.

- How could you ensure a good flow between trainings?
- How could you avoid repetition of training aspects or exercises between different trainings?
- How can you ensure that all necessary aspects are covered in the overall training cycle?



⁷ Read more in the Programme guide of the Youth in Action Programme p.53 ff

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

4.1 Flow and approach of the Youthpass process - outside and inside the different training courses

The mentor accompanies the volunteer through the Youthpass process. He or she will help the volunteer identifying learning interests and setting their learning objectives, understanding, assessing and evaluating their EVS experience from a learning point of view. To what extent mentors are able to support volunteers properly and have been trained in several aspects themselves, differs of course from person to person.



It is very important to acknowledge this reality of volunteers before looking into how to approach Youthpass in the EVS training cycle. The reason for this is to be very clear about the needs of the volunteers. One of the needs of the volunteers is to be helped on the road of self-directed learning, to discover the tools and receive support during their learning process. If during the training courses these aspects are covered, volunteers will be equipped to describe their learning outcomes in the end of the EVS project, and they might be able to ask the mentor to give appropriate support.

The EVS training courses offer a unique opportunity to learn from other volunteers. The mentor can guide and help volunteers along their path of learning, but the discussions, comparisons and sharing of experiences available during the training cannot be offered by the mentor. The dialogue

between mentor and volunteer is invaluable, but so is the dialogue between the volunteers and between the volunteers and the trainer.

Another aspect is that trainers deal with learning on a professional basis and are thus able to give structured and professional support to the volunteers during the training courses.

When approaching Youthpass in the EVS trainings different aspects that make up Youthpass will have to be taken into account. The most important part is to support the learning process of the volunteers during their EVS period and to give information and guidance on self-directed learning.

Is receiving information on the technical aspects of how to generate a Youthpass certificate important for volunteers? The answer is a clear no, volunteers need to follow their learning process and create a description of their learning outcomes in the end of the project. The mentor is responsible for generating the Youthpass certificate, not the volunteers. The reality is that many volunteers come to the trainings with questions, and many of them will not have any interest in learning to learn until they have a clear picture of what Youthpass entails. Sessions on the background and the reasons for Youthpass are essential for volunteers who have not received this information from their projects.

Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle 4

In each training course there should be a different focus on the Youthpass process. Elements to be tackled in the different training courses can be split in the following 3 categories – of course in different phases they might have a different intensity and different intention:

- general information on Youthpass
- Support and information on the learning (process)
- Supporting the Youthpass/learning process

Please find in the following table a proposal on how to deal with it in general – of course this has to be adapted to the different country and training design/ cycle contexts.

Training cycle	General information on Youthpass	Support and information on learning	Support and information on learning
<p>1. Pre-departure training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background about Youthpass • Existence of Youthpass • What is Youthpass? • Why does Youthpass exist? • Who is responsible for what? <p>(Political context of recognition of non-formal learning and Youthpass)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to learning in EVS • Why and how identifying learning interests and setting learning objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal reasons for choosing EVS • Reflection and sharing of experiences so far • Are we already learning? • Prepare for the adventure • Expectations • Intercultural learning • Prepare for the unexpected • Identify learning interests/Set learning objectives
<p>2. On-arrival training</p> <p>Create continuity and build on work done in previous training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background of Youthpass • Depending on level of knowledge • Responsibilities • Has everyone got a mentor? • What to expect from the mentor? • Responsibility for the learning process and for support • Key competences • No in-depth explanation at this stage, just de-mystify them • Emphasise that they are a framework for describing learning outcomes • Use the supportive potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap learning interests/objectives • How do we learn? Introduce Kolb's learning cycle or similar • Self-directed learning • What are learning outcomes? • How to reflect on learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on EVS journey so far • Incorporating many aspects: People, attitudes and support from home country, reasons for going to EVS, feelings about project, new home, new people and supports • Reflection on what has been learned so far • Creating an understanding of the EVS experience, and foresee adjustments where needed • Revise and adjust objectives, set new ones if needed • Acknowledging challenges and how to deal with them and what to learn from them?

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

Training cycle	General information on Youthpass	Support and information on learning	Support and information on learning
<p>3. Mid-term evaluation</p> <p>Create continuity and build on work done in previous training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on who will generate Youthpass (mentor's responsibility!) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning outcomes: Offer support to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify, describe and formulate learning outcomes translate learning outcomes into key competences identify the context Youthpass is needed for Key competences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and flexibility of the key competences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection on the journey so far Reflection on learning Conceptualise and understand learning Revise objectives, reformulate or describe the reached ones Acknowledge and deal with challenges and discover their learning potential
<p>4. Evaluation of the activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has everyone received a Youthpass Certificate? If not, how can you still get it! How can the volunteers use Youthpass? What is the value of the Youthpass? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summing up the learning process Transfer to future life and plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the experience and note any learning that is still in process Creating a new learning plan and setting new learning interests Transferring gained knowledge into different environments in life

Questions for reflection:

- How do you implement Youthpass elements in the EVS training cycle?
- What are different methodologies you can use?



4.2. Role / position of trainer

In chapter three the responsibilities of different involved partners in the learning process of EVS were presented. Although some roles often overlap, it is important that 'everyone is doing their work' to support the learning potential of EVS.

Trainers have a very specific role in EVS with all its constraints e.g. spending little time with the volunteer limits the trainer's influence, but nevertheless the training time is an added value. They are not mentors or project coordinators.

Systems of EVS trainings are country-specific, but they share at least three common challenges related to the volunteer's learning process:

- In comparison to mentors they spend the lowest amount of time with volunteers.
- It is practically impossible for trainers to follow the volunteer outside a training course.
- Trainer often only spend time with the volunteer in one training, so no personal follow up is possible.

What is the specific role of the trainer in supporting the learning and Youthpass process? In chapter three, learning in EVS as a process of experiential learning was introduced with Kolb's learning cycle. The experiential learning approach of the cycle can be applied to long-time processes such as EVS as well as to short-term processes such as single training course.



Here the role of trainers will be presented in 3 different contexts of EVS:

- in EVS as a long-term experience,
- in a specific training course of the EVS training cycle, and
- in a specific training session e.g. in an on-arrival training course.

Role of a trainer in the whole EVS project

EVS is learning by doing all the time. For volunteers it is so full of experiences and impulses that there is a high chance not to reflect and re-conceptualise them. All these experiences and impulses emerge in an intercultural context and are much more difficult to explain, understand and assess than if the volunteer would be in the home, well known context. Volunteers need time for reflection and abstract conceptualisation and need someone to support them during their learning process; also for that the need for the mentor. At the same time the mentor is part of the EVS cultural environment. From time to time volunteers need the time and space to create a distance.

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

Within the training courses the trainers offer the possibility to socialise with other volunteers coming from other cultural environments. They provide a chance for in-depth debriefing. Relaxed time away from everyday work gives volunteers the opportunity to reflect. Listening to other peoples' problems and trying to help solving them is a brilliant opportunity for a quality process of reflecting and abstract conceptualisation.

With the support of the trainer, volunteers can process their experiences and enter the phase of active experimentation, the phase of doing things in a new and different way, when they return to their project. Training courses have the potential for major changes in the flow of EVS projects and volunteers' perception of them.



Role of a trainer in the context of a training course

Not only EVS as a whole, also one single training course can be seen as a learning cycle. It should be planned in the way to:

1. 'Grasp' the experiences of volunteers taken from their everyday life
2. Reflect on these experiences
3. Recognise the challenges
4. Look into the future, what could be done different?
5. Provide the opportunity to experiment with different ways of doing things in the safe environment of a training course

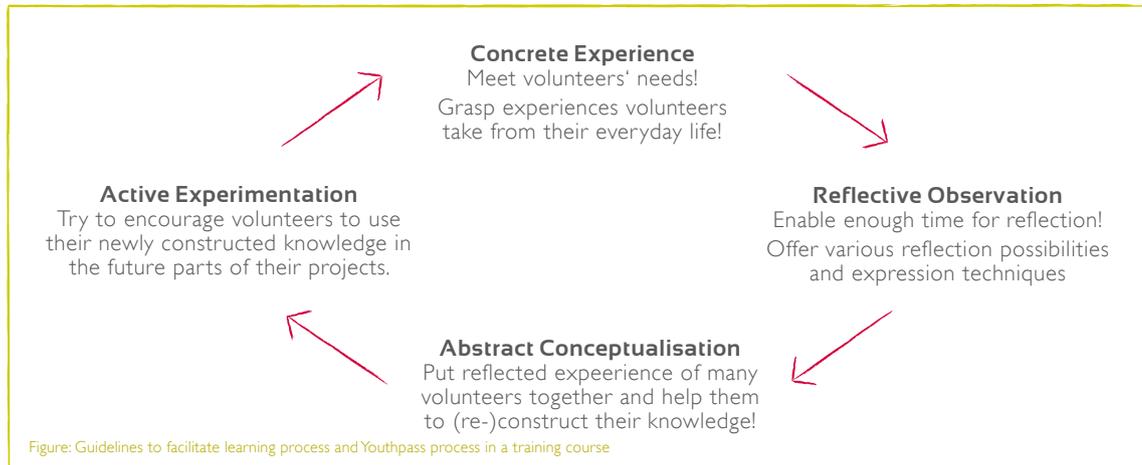
These five points seem very common and they are applicable to nearly every situation, but how to deal with them during a training course?

First the trainer has to collect the experiences participants made during their EVS journey. They should provide time and space to reflect upon these experiences. Here especially feelings and emotions are very important: Supportive questions are 'How did you feel in this situation? Does it remind you about earlier situations/feelings in your life?' After recognising and maybe naming these feelings, an abstract conceptualisation can be made.

In this phase some learning to learn skills can be explained or the concept of Youthpass can be presented. This is probably the most suitable moment for trainers' inputs – if any.

The first days of a training course should be reserved for sharing experiences and debriefing, establishing

a common language. The middle of training course is usually where the most of in-depth theory and conceptual changes can be made. And the last couple of days or sessions should be directed to the future, to creating concrete steps, strategies and practicing skills that participants will probably need for the future learning.



Role of a trainer in the context of a single training session

When planning specific sessions aimed to support the learning/Youthpass processes of a volunteer, the trainer should be careful choosing methods, tools and further transfer to theory in order not to make it too complex or difficult. This would de-motivate participants within their further contribution and involvement in the process. The session should not be too basic and simple either in terms of content and activity, to catch and keep their interest.

The key question while planning a specific session is: What do participants already know; which

experiences do they already have? One of the theorists of experiential learning, Kurt Lewin⁸, once said: 'It is easy to plan a training course if you assume that participants are tabula rasa.' And of course they are not 'tabula rasa', they have certain learning to learn competences, they are the best experts of their own lives and most of them already know something about Youthpass, this should be the starting point.

Asking them about their experiences and facilitating them to share, are often great starters, but it is not sufficient. In later phases the process should also

⁸In: Kolb, David A. (1984): *Experiential learning – Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice-Hall Inc., Engelwood Cliffs, New Jersey.

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

bring abstract conceptualisation, some conceptual changes and something useful for the future. Finally, there will be different people with different learning styles in the group. And not to offer all four phases of Kolb's learning cycle means losing those who primarily learn from a certain type of activity and did not yet develop skills to learn well from the other types!

The two main tasks of a trainer

In the context of implementing Youthpass into the EVS training cycle, there are two main tasks a trainer has to fulfil:

- **Task 1:** Supporting the volunteers' learning/ Youthpass processes.
- **Task 2:** Providing additional information for volunteers on Youthpass.

The first task supports the development of the volunteers in their project and the second one is more informative, both are equally important.

The trainers should use the opportunity to explain Youthpass with all its potential, background and limitations. They should know the conceptual background of Youthpass, the role of the key competences, ways how to acquire and reflect on them, and finally ways how to express learning outcomes. They should know who is responsible for what, but they should also have knowledge on the wider social context of Youthpass and the recognition of non-formal learning – the role of other stakeholders such as employers, educational institutions, other youth organisations etc.)

Trainers know individual or group learning methods. They have tried out many of them and had the opportunity to observe their effects on people with various learning styles. They should be able to see the volunteers' situation from an objective point of view and try to provoke changes in their perception or give them support through active listening. The trainers should also be the ones who could – because of their practice – support volunteers identifying the learning potential of their EVS projects and help them to plan how to make the most out of it. And of course in conflict situations, it is not their responsibility to advise to change the project but to encourage a volunteer to take the responsibility to do so.

When supporting volunteers' learning processes trainers should:

- enable time and space among volunteers to reflect upon their EVS project environment and by providing this empower them to be able to speak about their experiences and learning process,
- offer volunteers the opportunity to become more familiar with learning terminology and concepts such as reflection, evaluation, debriefing, competences, knowledge, skills, attitudes, transferring knowledge, etc.,
- show them some practical methods of individual and group learning and reflection,
- give attention to various sources of learning in EVS (see chapter 3) and possible learning outcomes, coming from these sources,
- provide space to reflect on responsibilities and potential of the various partners in EVS projects in



the context of learning (see chapter 3) and offer support when somebody does not/can not fulfil his/her tasks,

- contribute to the motivation of volunteers to learn through EVS,
- inform and support volunteers transferring gained knowledge, skills and attitudes back to home environment.

When providing information about Youthpass trainers should:

- collect information on what participants already know about Youthpass and encourage them to share this,
- identify and collect cases of good practice to show usefulness of Youthpass as a concrete experience,
- encourage reflection among volunteers on why

4.3 Key competences

The key competences are a set of commonly agreed competences within the context of the European Union. They were adopted by the European Commission in 2006 as a reference instrument for policy makers, employers, educational institutions and of course for the learners themselves.

They are the competences that equip people for adult life, and are the basis for lifelong learning. These competences are needed for personal fulfilment and development, for active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.

to have Youthpass, where to use it, what to write down,

- present the background of Youthpass and esp. its process behind to show volunteers the importance of giving value to non-formal learning in their international experience,
- ensure that volunteers know the concept of 8 key competences as a framework for describing learning outcomes and as something very useful for their future development – personal or professional,
- ensure that everybody knows how Youthpass looks like and how it works in practice,
- encourage volunteers to practice expressing learning outcomes, and
- offer volunteers the opportunity to learn how to translate their individual learning outcomes into the framework of the 8 key competences and into the appropriate language of various stakeholders.

To be able to develop a Europe of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth⁹, it needs people who are able to adapt to changes and people who, for instance, can deal with globalisation. It needs people who can plan their own learning in order to stay connected with the changes that happen around them!

Technologies change so fast that it is hard to keep up to date, but staying up to date is necessary in order to be employable. Increasingly more people move between countries for all kind of reasons, so



⁹Europe 2020:

A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/index_en.htm

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle



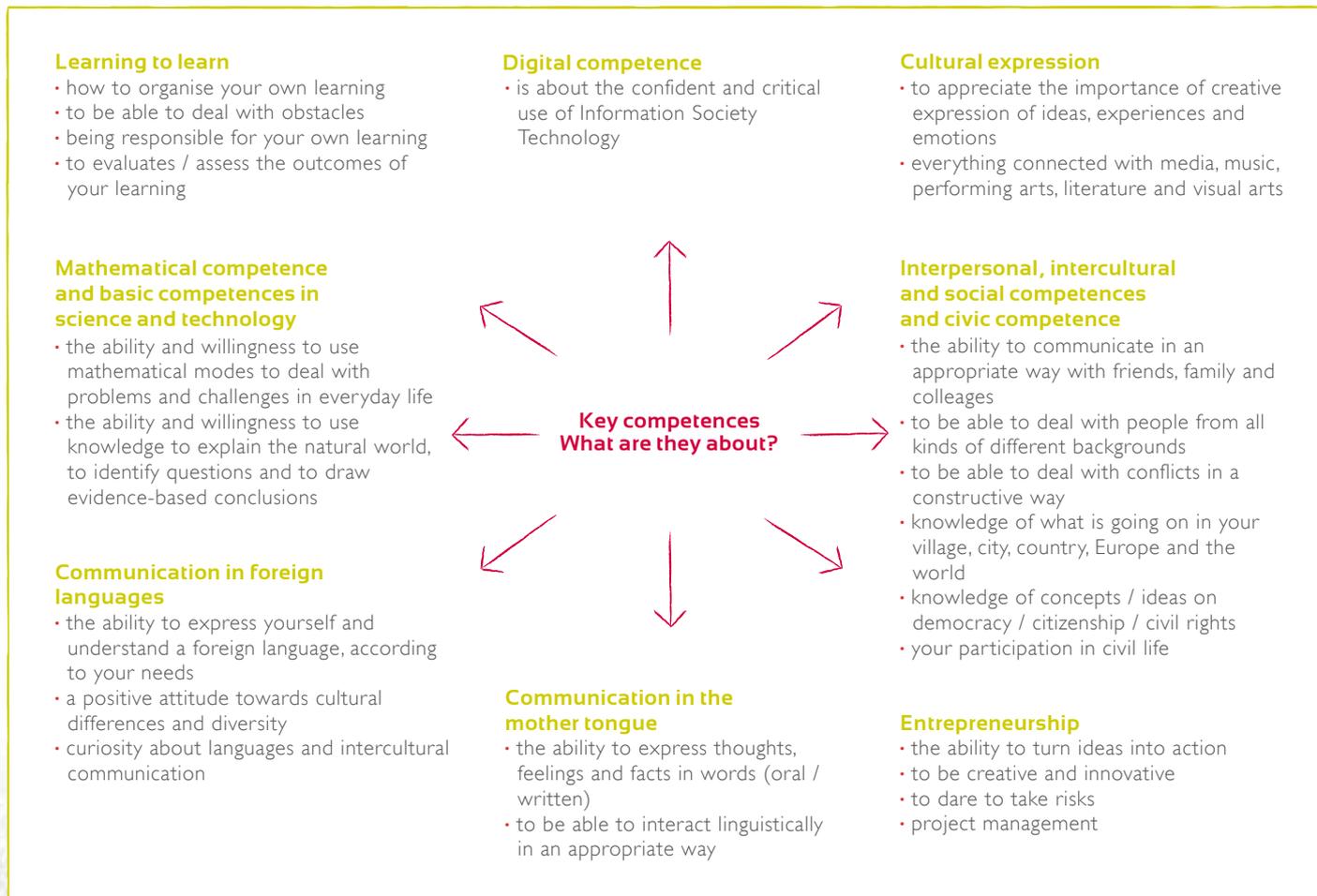
¹⁰The table was developed by Paul Kloosterman and is taken from the Youthpass guide, p. 39.

it is needed to develop intercultural competence or language skills. These are only a few examples.

Many competences are developed during formal education, in school, college and university, but as well in other not so formal contexts like e.g. in youth work. And during the whole life they will need to be extended, updated and adjusted.

This process is an ongoing area of and for learning and further development.

Below is a table showing all 8 key competences. In this table the key competences are adapted to learning in the youth work context¹⁰:



4.4 Key competences in the EVS training cycle

When introducing Youthpass in training courses, many volunteers want to know about the key competences first. There can be doubts like: They are so complicated! How should they be used? The language is so difficult! Why only eight key competences?

Experience with Youthpass over the last years showed that the key competences are not as difficult to handle as it seems. This of course is easy to say, but what people need to remember is that in EVS they are used as a framework - a framework to **express learning outcomes**.

If volunteers are clear about what they have learned, translating that learning outcome into the framework of the key competences is a next step. This step can help volunteers understand how they can transfer that learning into their life. For instance, did they only learn how to communicate in a foreign language? Or did they also observe how they learned the new language and what strategies they used in order to learn the new language? If so, this learning outcome can also be used in the 'learning to learn' competence. If volunteers have decided that they want to teach this new language in their home country and they have already undertaken steps for doing so, then this same learning outcome can be used in the sense of entrepreneurship competence. Using this example, it

can be said that the key competences can indicate in what area of their life volunteers can use their learning outcome.

The process of describing learning outcomes keeping the various stakeholders in mind or, translating learning outcomes from the language spoken by volunteers or organisations, into the language of those stakeholders, raises the validity of learning and makes learning more valuable not only for volunteers but also for other stakeholders.

Transferring this to the EVS training cycle might indicate that there is no need to give an in-depth explanation of the key competences in the pre-departure or on-arrival training. At this stage it is enough to provide a basic understanding of the key competences. It is important that they are mentioned; volunteers have heard about them and can be worried that they will not be able to complete their Youthpass certificate if they do not understand them. During the first two trainings in the cycle it is more important to make sure that volunteers know how to plan, follow, recognise and express what they learn and to support them using tools like diaries, blogs etc. Doing this will ensure that they will be able to formulate their learning outcomes in the end of their EVS project.



4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle



During the mid-term evaluation it becomes important to actively work with the key competences. Information is needed on the further Youthpass process. Will they use the Youthpass certificate for personal development, for a future employer or an educational institution? They need to decide where

and when they will use their Youthpass certificate, who is their target audience. They should get support translating their learning outcomes into the language of this target. But before this, they need to understand how to transfer their learning outcomes into the framework of the key competences.

4.5 Importance of reflection

When working with learning processes, taking into account Kolb's cycle of experiential learning, it becomes clear that reflection is a crucial element in learning. It is through reflection that one can look back at experiences, understand them and incorporate them into new concepts or ways of thinking. This process of re-conceptualising is generally strongly connected to a reflective process.

Volunteers in EVS trainings have already got a solid experience, their EVS experience. During the training courses it is important to build connections between volunteer's experience and their way of thinking, living so far etc., to motivate and help them to start the process of reflection. Many volunteers will live their EVS experience fully, but do not stop to look back or digest it. The EVS training cycle should create the space and time for this essential step in learning.

Recommendation for implementation:

Before implementing any of these steps, a warm, safe and stimulating environment has to be created.

Make sure that the training programme includes moments to record the participants' thoughts, feelings, hopes, fears, solutions and learning. This could be done between any of the steps below. Recording is essential as this can be the starting point of their Youthpass process. (Please find in brackets the number where you find the method in the respective part.)

Step 1: Connect volunteers to their EVS experience, going through it step by step. The main issue here is to make the volunteers aware of how complex and full their experience is and to give volunteers a chance to stop and look back.

You can use:

- a meditation (5.1.1)
- creating a timeline/collage (5.1.2)
- a story/song/poem
- a Lego structure (see description in chapter 5) etc. (5.1.3)

Recommendation for implementation:

- Step 2:** Invite volunteers to share feelings, discoveries, thoughts, fears and/ or hopes.
This step is often incorporated in the methods used during the previous step, but is an essential part of the reflecting or learning process:
- yourself, use a diary (5.1.4)
 - in a couple (5.1.5)
 - in a small group
- Step 3:** Look for different perceptions and learning outcomes.
This generally happens during the process of sharing. Listening to other people's stories, relating these stories to their own experience will help volunteers to step back, see events from different perspectives. Solutions will often arrive through these conversations. Guiding questions can be important here.
- talk with others
 - try to look at situations from a different perspective
 - ask for feedback from peers
 - compare stories
 - record AHA moments – flashes of understanding
- Step 4:** Express experiences, feelings and perceptions to help understanding.
This step deepens the previous step, and makes the learning and understanding visible to others.
- role play to search for perceptions or to express learning (5.1.7)
 - drawing/painting
 - creating a song
 - create a statue (5.1.8)
- Step 5:** Plan ahead, how to incorporate all the above into real life?
- Write a letter to your future self (5.1.9)
 - Identify people in your EVS project who can give you feedback
 - Decide how to improve situations
 - Decide how you will deal with a similar situation next time it happens
 - Create connections with other volunteers, they can be a great support
 - Look for a support system you can put in place (5.1.10)
 - Think about how you want to include your mentor
 - Write a message to volunteers who have just started their journey giving them advice, and share the learning outcome. (5.1.11)
 - Plan the process of finalising your Youthpass Certificate. Which support do you need? (5.1.12)
- Step 6:** Go and live it!

4 Implementing Youthpass in the EVS training cycle

There is a vast variation between the willingness and the ways of being able to reflect – not just for volunteers. For some it is easy, others are struggling with it. Some people can only start reflecting by talking to someone, while others need to have space for themselves before they are able to speak about it. Some people need to do something with their hands while reflecting, perhaps something artistic, while others like to read something in order to feel connected to the experience they are reflecting on. For the training courses this is important to recognise, reflection time needs to be guided and all volunteers need to get a chance to reflect in a style that suits them.

Another way to support reflection is the use of guiding questions. They can help people to focus their attention to specific areas and they can help directing them towards a deeper reflection and a greater understanding.



Here are some examples:

- What were your best moments, what happened, what made it the best?
- What were your worst moments, what happened, what made it the worst?
 - How did you act and how would you have liked to act?
- What surprised you in general or in a specific situation? Why were you surprised?
- How can you increase the positive experiences? How do they make you feel?
- How can you decrease the negative experiences, how do they challenge you and what can you learn from them?
- Did you experience something entirely new? Would you call this experience learning?
- What did you learn and through which situation did you learn it? How can you use this in your future work or life?

Another option is to use a goal setting diagram, using it to reflect on the past instead of looking ahead. This diagram is generally used for goal setting; experience has shown that it is not always easy to plan learning. Using it for reflection first can make goal setting easier. It creates an understanding of how much can be learned from our experiences, it puts our learning in a context and it is a great way to record the learning that has already happened.

For setting objectives/identifying learning interests:

What do I want to learn?

How would I like to learn it?

Who needs to help me learning it?
(Whom do I need to learn it?)

When do I plan to learn it?

For reflecting:

What did I learn?

How did I learn it?

Who helped me learning it?

When did I learn it?
(AHA moment)

Before starting this reflection process, it might be a good idea to collect some of the reasons for doing so. Understanding the background of reflection, reflective and experiential learning will create appreciation and satisfy the needs of many volunteers. Most people have been educated through formal education, and many find it hard to identify with these new ways of learning and the fact that they will have to direct their own learning.

Questions for reflection:

- What is the general attitude of your participants towards reflection?
- What different methods for reflection do you use in your practise as a trainer?

Youthpass in EVS is a practical instrument to recognise learning outcomes. It also has the potential to communicate learning outcomes to other stakeholders. But there is another potential. Through recognising what one has learned, one recognises him-/herself. And this is one of the most powerful sources for personal and professional developments.





5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

The following chapter provides methods that can be used in the different types of training courses of the EVS training cycle.

This chapter has been structured as follows:

- 5.1 Methods that are connected to the theory in this publication – exercises to support the experiential learning process and how to approach the key competences
- 5.2 Methods developed during the training course 'Recognise your learning, recognise yourself' in Slovenia

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1 Methods connected to the publication

5.1.1 Meditation time

Short description	Exercise to help volunteers to reflect on their journey so far
Aims & objectives	Supporting the volunteers in reflecting their journey and becoming aware of all the aspects surrounding it <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To connect fully with the experience• To create awareness of all aspects involved in their experience• To discuss with and get support from other volunteers in the group• To use the session as a basis for further reflection, learning and planning
Useful in...	On-arrival training – preferably first exercise of the 2nd or 3rd day Mid-term evaluation – but more focussed on looking ahead
Group size	Any
Duration	90 minutes
Materials needed	Pillows (get from bedrooms), Cosy and warm room (preferably with curtains closed, set the atmosphere), calm music, diaries, art materials (as many as you have available). pens, glue

Implementation

Preparation	Prepare the room Have quiet music ready Have the art materials organised
Implementation step by step	Step one: Volunteers come in and get pillow <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone makes him-/herself comfortable on the ground or on a chair, wherever they want to be for the next 10 to 15 minutes• Everyone closes eyes• Trainer talks them through their journey<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From the moment they heard of EVS up till now - Where were they? Who was with them? What steps did they take? Who helped them? How did family and friends react to them going away, what did you do on the last evening, how was it to arrive in the project? Who collected them in the airport? What is their new house like? Who lives there? Who do they meet in their project? What do they do when they do not feel well? Who do they go to for support? etc.• Give them time to think of their challenges past, now or foreseen in future.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where did/do they find support?• What can you do to support yourself?• Who can help you?



- Give them time to think of their challenges past, now or foreseen in future.
 - Where did/do they find support?
 - What can you do to support yourself?
 - Who can help you?
- Slowly let the group come back to the room

Debriefing and evaluation

- Wake up, go in small groups or in couples, share the journey
- Choose a way to record the journey so far. They can use all paper and art materials and dairies
- Guiding questions can be used:
 - What were your best moments and why?
 - What were your worst moments and why?
 - How did you act and how would you have liked to act?
 - What surprised you and why?
 - How can you increase the positive experiences?
 - How can you learn from the negative experiences?
 - What did you learn and through which situation did you learn it? How can you put this into practise?
- Feedback to group with one thing that surprised them

Further tips for facilitators

This exercise can bring up a lot of emotions and can go quite deep, be prepared for this. This exercise is a basis for further work and it can be taken into many directions, depending on the group.

Submitted by: Mieke Neven McMahon and Dermot O'Brien

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.2 Our journey - made visible

Short description	Creating a timeline/collage, in the shape of a river: their EVS river
Aims & objectives	Supporting the volunteers in reflecting their journey and to become aware of all the aspects surrounding it <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To connect fully with the experience• To create awareness of many aspects involved in their experience• To discuss with and get support from other volunteers in the group• To use the session as a basis for further reflection, learning and planning
Useful in...	all four training courses
Group size	Any
Duration	30 – 90 minutes, depending on where it is placed in the training course
Materials needed	Art materials, old magazines or newspapers, flipcharts – large size paper sheets, some participants might like to stick two flipcharts together, scissors, glue

Implementation

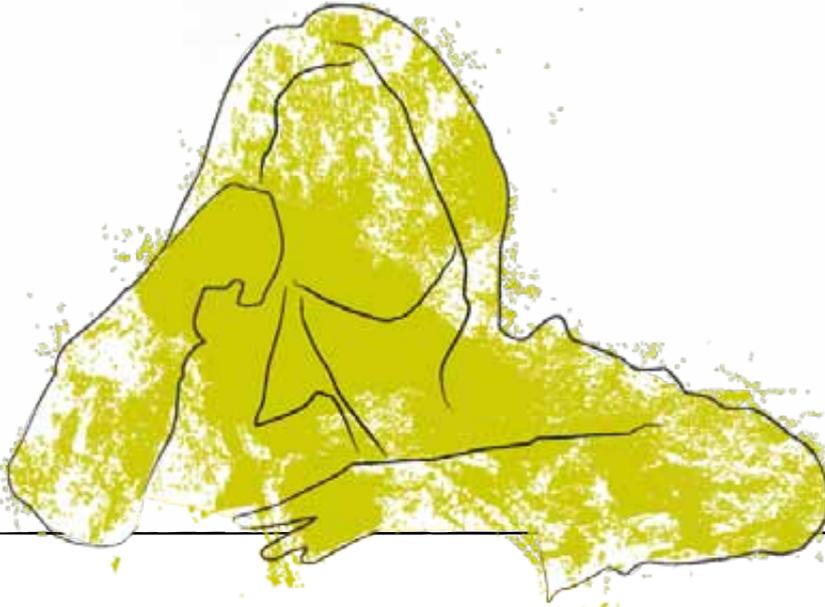
Preparation Ensure all materials are around

Implementation step by step This exercise can be used in many different ways. The basic concept is that it will help participants to reflect and digest their EVS experience. It can be used as a follow up of a group discussion, personal reflection time, or it could be used as the starting point for reflection. Where and at which point to use this exercise depends fully on the training course programme and the participants.

Start the session by giving participants the time to think back to their EVS experience so far. Ask participants to draw/create a river of their journey, showing all important aspects of the journey so far: funny moments, important moments, important people, challenges, conflicts etc. You could give examples of symbols: a dam to show blockages or challenges, a bridge to show connections, currents to show interesting experiences, a boat to show support etc.

In small groups share the rivers that have been created

Feedback to large group



Debriefing and evaluation

De-brief in large group should be short and mainly focus on the process of the exercise.

- How was it for you?
- Was it difficult to create this river?
- What surprised you?
- Did you learn anything new?

Further tips for facilitators

- You could use the journey of method 5.1.1 as preparation for this exercise.
- It is important to have many different materials ready for this exercise, as not everyone finds it easy to express themselves artistically. Magazines, cut-outs of bridges or boats might be helpful tools.
- This exercise could be followed by writing their personal diary
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you hear anything from the other participants that you could use as advice?
 - Was it easy to share the journey, were there aspects you could not share, and if so, why not?
 - If you could repeat the journey, what would you do different? The same?

Submitted by: Mieke Neven McMahon

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.3 Let's play with LEGO!

Short description Exercise to help volunteers to reflect on their learning outcomes and learning environment

Aims & objectives Participants discover dimensions of learning

Useful in... Mid-term evaluation

Group size Any, divided into subgroups of 3-5 people

Duration 90 minutes

Materials needed LEGO bricks

Implementation

Preparation

- Divide participants into groups of 3-5 people.
- Every group should have enough LEGO bricks to remain creative (app. 1 box per group) on the table or on the floor if possible.
- Bricks should be prepared in advance so that people start to play intuitively when they enter the room.

Implementation step by step

Step one: Every individual group member builds his/her own symbol: what learning meant to me when I was 7?

Step two: Share the meaning of the symbols in the sub-groups

Step three: Explain LEGO method in brief:

- DEFINITION: Using LEGO bricks not as a toy but as a tool for learning
- QUESTION: Did somebody of you get the experience of Lego in his/her childhood? What did you learn through it?
- CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING THROUGH LEGO:
 - Constructivism
 - Multiple associations possible
 - Mental models
 - Interactions
 - Processes, planning
 - Modelling
- ADVANTAGES: one can build, break, transfer, change, compose ...
- LEGO will be used to model the learning outcomes in EVS.

Step four: Ask participants to (individually) build the 2nd symbol which should present sources of their learning in EVS. Set the question 'Who do you learn from as volunteers? It can be a mentor, service, friends, private life or anything else. And what do you learn from them?' One individual can build more than one symbol.

Step five: Sharing again in the sub-groups.

Step six: Creating learning environment of EVS: every group should use built symbols to present a learning environment of EVS. Members of the sub-group can put multiple symbols together, break them apart, set them in different order, build new symbols etc.

Step seven: Reflection in sub-groups. Optionally: reporting between different sub-groups.

Step eight: Listing learning outcomes. Tell: 'What you have in front of you, is a learning environment of EVS. It presents a whole set of possibilities, events or situations, a volunteer can learn from. Now try to list what you have learned from your environment! Try to identify different sources and describe what you learnt from them.' The list can be made into a diary, onto a flip-chart or again, using LEGO bricks.

Step nine: Share results in the plenary.

Step ten: Evaluate the method.

Debriefing and evaluation

Evaluation should tackle following points:

- Perception of using LEGO bricks as a method (various target groups have very different associations – to some it might be childish, to others too structured, some are really encouraged to become creative, others feel invited to recall memories over their childhood and for those the method encourages biographical learning ...)
- Concrete outcomes of the method: What did I discover about myself and my learning?
- How was the process in a small group? How intensive and personal was your communication? Could you express more with symbols you could express with words only?

Further tips for facilitators

Method offers lots of possible extensions. Instead of listing learning outcomes you could place a volunteer into his/her learning environment. He/she could be presented through skills, abilities, ... Learning environments of different groups could also be merged together.

The question 'What do you see in the symbol your colleague has built?' can be very useful for the trainer / facilitator. It opens space for various interpretations and encourages people to construct their own visions.

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.4 My learning diary

Short description	Creating a learning diary to record learning, experiences, feelings, discoveries, thoughts, fears and or hopes, important moments etc.
Aims & objectives	Creating a learning tool that can be used during the entire EVS experience
Useful in...	It could be started during the pre-departure training or during the on-arrival training.
Group size	Any
Duration	Depending on the group or when it is used
Materials needed	A diary, preferably a A5 or A6 size note book, without lines Participants can create their own notebook from A4 paper folded in half. If last option is used you need to provide something to bind the diary – staples, punch and thread etc. General art materials: Magazines, scissors, glue, coloured paper, pens, markers, etc.

Implementation

Preparation	Prepare all the materials Quiet background music during reflective writing is generally appreciated
Implementation step by step	<p>The diary seems to be very effective if it is introduced after a strong reflective exercise. Decorating it can be part of the quiet time needed after a deep reflection.</p> <p>The diary can be used at many different times during the trainings, depending on the trainer's decision that could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To record learning, experiences, feelings, discoveries, thoughts, fears and or hopes, important moments, after a reflective exercise.• To record specific tasks during the training: the objectives setting table, learning outcomes, key competences etc.• To record future steps• To record possible solutions for conflicts• To record support structures available for volunteers• To write messages of support for each other etc. <p>Heading that could be used in the diary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My learning plan• Important people in my life• Important people in my EVS• Where can I go for support?• What would I like to bring home?• What have I learned?

- Have I grown or changed in any way?
- What would I never want to forget?
- Things I never did before?
- Risks I have taken
- 1st time experiences

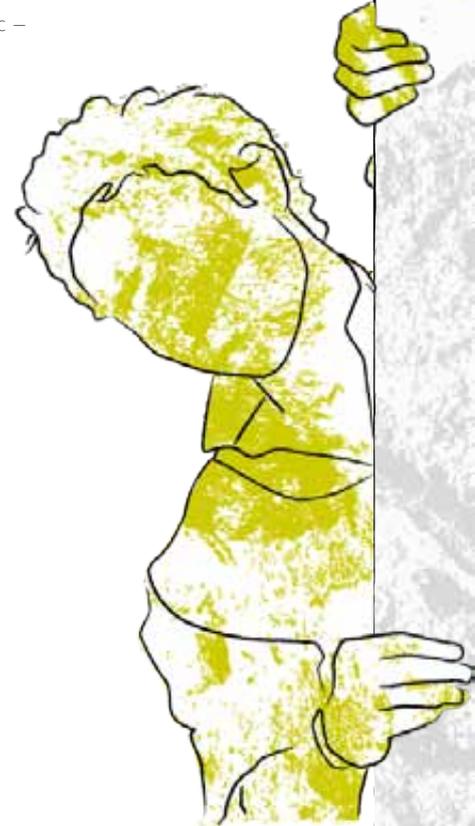
Envelopes to keep mementos, tickets of journeys, concerts etc.

Debriefing and evaluation

Debriefing in couples or small groups. The diary is a personal journal, so it needs to be stressed that participants only share if they feel the need to share.

Further tips for facilitators

- It is a good tool to use during the training course and it promotes good practise for recording learning.
- Personalising the diary is an important step for connecting with it and to give it importance. Give enough time to do so!
- Ensure that there are materials available for people who are not artistic – stickers with letters, magazines etc.
- Participants might prefer to write in their own language. It is important to tell them that this is ok.
- Some groups love using their diary, if this is the case, give them enough time.



5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.5 Buddy time

Short description	Evaluation method; work in pairs
Aims & objectives	To evaluate the day on the training course
Useful in...	All training courses that last more than 1 day
Group size	Any
Duration	Every day of the TC, 60 minutes
Materials needed	Handouts (see below)

Implementation

Preparation	Prepare all the materials Quiet background music during reflective writing is generally appreciated
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Implementation step by step	<p>This method needs special attention already when constructing a daily timetable of a training course. Team of trainers should reserve a fixed time slot of 60 minutes or two time slots of 30 minutes every day, possibly same hour every day.</p> <p>Method has 2 parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work in couples and• Group reflection. <p>Both parts can be implemented separately or together. Example: work in couples can be done from 6 to 6:30 pm, group reflection can be done from 9 to 9:30 am next day.</p>
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At the beginning of the training course participants should be split into couples. Depending on characteristics of the group couples should be prescribed by team of trainers or decided by participants. Couples will play the role of buddies to each other throughout the training course. The task of a buddy is 'to be on the way with his/her partner' and to help and accompany him/her on the journey of the training course.

There are at least two possible ways to choose buddies:

- people of the same interests, origin, language etc. together or
- various people / random people together.

Both options are possible, have their pros and contras. Team of trainers should decide which option is suitable for specific situation and group needs.

The 1st half of the method should be represented as 'buddy time'. Buddy time is time to go away, to reflect, to step out of the training course, to look from the distance. The relationship between buddies is permanent throughout the training course and as such it enables more in-depth conversations and reflection.

This handout could be passed to participants to help them to reflect with their buddies:

Buddy time – support questions:

1. What is my impression about the day?
(feelings, motivation, relationships, group, ...)
2. Learning outcomes
(‘Now I know...’; ‘Now it’s clear to me...’; ‘That’s what I expected!’)
3. Quality of the training course
(Which parts were perfect, which were good, which could have been better?)
4. Open questions, dilemmas, ...

2nd part – group reflection – is described below.

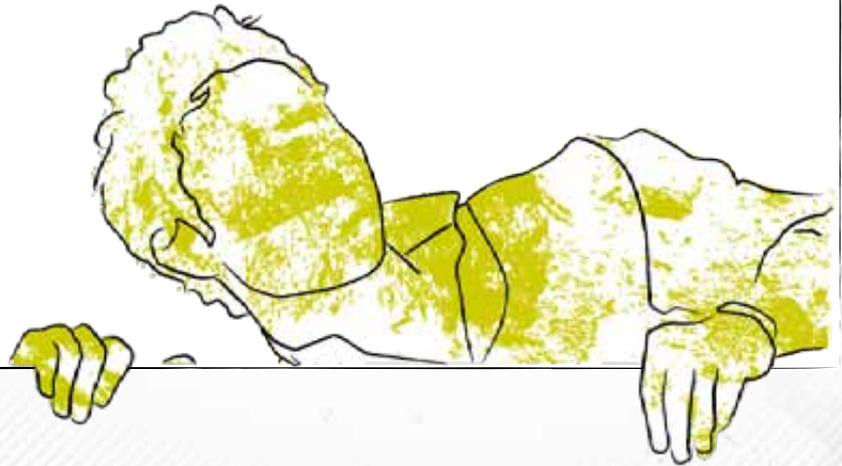
Debriefing and evaluation

Every couple should choose one among themselves to report. Together they should decide about 3 facts/statements they would like to report back to the group. These 3 facts/statements could refer to one of the 4 questions in the handout or can be something totally different which came up during the conversation.

Trainer team facilitates the discussion which often leads to suggestions for the further process and structure of the training course.

Further tips for facilitators

Besides personal empowerment of participants, this method can also serve as a strong communication channel between team of trainers and group of participants.



Submitted by: Matej Cepin

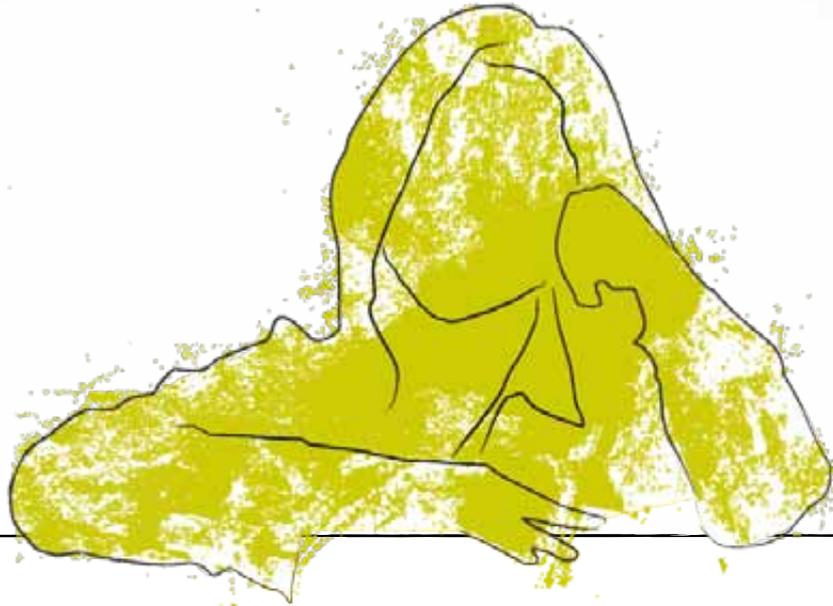
5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.6 Give me advice!

Short description	Collecting possible solutions of challenges from different perspectives.
Aims & objectives	Group contributes to solutions of challenges volunteers face in their everyday life.
Useful in...	On-arrival training and/or mid-term evaluation
Group size	Any
Duration	90 minutes
Materials needed	Flip-charts, coloured papers, markers

Implementation

Preparation	Prepare material (flip-charts, coloured papers, markers)
Implementation step by step	<p>The method is based upon the simple fact that the more people are around the more solutions can be identified for a challenge.</p> <p>Step one: Volunteers define challenges for their future life in EVS using other reflection techniques (see 5.1.1 - 5.1.5). E.g.: to improve my relationship with my mentor.</p> <p>Step two: Each volunteer chooses one challenge he/she would like to solve and formulates a question. E.g.: How to improve my relationship with mentor?</p> <p>Step three: On a coloured paper, each volunteer writes an anonymous letter describing the situation to other volunteers. He/she concludes it with the question what to do. E.g.: I've been in the EVS project already for some months and I have a problem. I have my mentor who is a volunteer and doesn't show up often in the organisation. He is a cool guy and I have a good feeling every time we meet. But the problem is he is studying at different places and he doesn't have lots of time. What should I do?</p> <p>Step four: The team of trainers collects the letters and puts every letter on a single flip-chart paper. Flip-charts are put around the room for participants to read.</p> <p>Step five: Time to react. Participants are able to read letters and give answers to the individual cases. They write answers on flip-charts and they can read answers / suggestions from others. This part should last around 30-45 minutes and should be implemented in silence with some music background.</p>



Step six: Distribute the individual cases back to participants and give them time to read the answers. Care for privacy if needed!

Step seven: Debriefing and evaluation.

Debriefing and evaluation

In the debriefing and evaluation trainers should focus into following aspects:

- Was I able to express the right challenge and question?
- What do you think of challenges of the others? How do you deal with them?
- What are your feelings about the answers you got?
- Did any answer surprise you? Why?
- What are you going to do about your challenge?

Further tips for facilitators

Try to adopt the method to the level of confidence among participants in the group!

Submitted by: Matej Cepin

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.7 Creating a statue

Short description

Sculpting is an activity derived from the work of Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal. It is known as Image Theatre.

One of the principles behind Image Theatre is that it is easier to make pictorial representations of feelings, ideas and attitudes than it is to express them by language.

An advantage of sculpting as a technique is that it generally expresses the initial ideas, stereotypes, and surface-feelings of the individual, thereby removing these as obstacles to deeper discussion and reflection in the subsequent conversations.

A second major advantage of sculpting is that it allows a participant to make an image of their feelings using another person as the 'material' to be sculpted. By doing this they can literally 'step back' from their image and view it alongside several other images from other participants. They can effectively, therefore, say something and not be in the spotlight while expressing it. It also allows them to hear other people's responses to the image – essentially getting feedback more honestly because no-body remembers who made what image and are therefore not hindered by the question of offending the speaker.

Aims & objectives

- To express aspects of learning
- To express participants' perception on learning
- To start a discussion on learning

Useful in...

All four training courses

Group size

Minimum 8

Duration

10 to 40 minutes - depending on how the method is used

Materials needed

None

Implementation

Implementation step by step

In a session on learning:

Step one: Divide the group in two sub groups - A and B, ask the sub-groups not to talk with each other

Step two: Ask sub-group A to express learning using the bodies of sub-group B: ask them to make a 'sculpture' expressing learning. Sub-group B is asked to be like clay, and to follow the suggestions of sub-group A

Step three: When all sculptures are created, ask members of sub-group B to remember exactly how they were sculpted.

Step four: Ask all members of sub-group A to come to one side of the room, and all members of sub-group B go to the other side, and they go back onto their position.

Step five: All member's of sub-group A have a look at the B's without speaking

Step six: After everyone had an intensive look, they can start giving suggestions on what has been expressed in the statues.

Step seven: Now A and B switch place, B will sculpt A

Debriefing and evaluation

Debriefing is an essential part of this method.

- Have a general discussion on what was expressed in the sculptures
- How did it feel to be a sculpture or the creator?
- What was expressed in the sculptures?
- What can this tell us about learning and our attitude towards it?
- Where does our perception of learning come from?

Further tips for facilitators

- This is just one way of using the method, it can be used and adapted to many different situations.
- Instead of working with couples, you can ask one person to sculpt a group of people. This way you can create more complex situations.
- Make sure that the sculptures have a chance to move after a while, no-one can stay in one position for too long!



Submitted by: Mieke Neven McMahon - based on Augusto Boal's theatre of oppressed

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.8 A letter to myself

Short description	Writing a letter to myself which I will receive some months after the training course.
Aims & objectives	To increase ownership for individual's future plans.
Useful in...	On-arrival training or mid-term evaluation
Group size	Any
Duration	30-45 minutes
Materials needed	Stamps, postcards or paper & envelopes.

Implementation

Preparation No special preparation needed.

Implementation step by step

Step one: After defining future steps (using other methods) the trainer reminds participants that wishes at the end of training courses are often high, but they often get lost back in everyday life.

Step two: Introduction to the method: 'We are going to write a letter / postcard to ourselves. Yes, you heard right! We've got twice as many people as you can see in this room. There is you now and there is also you after some (2, 3, 4, up to 6) months! Time changes people, so everybody of us really is two persons! And now your 'now person' is going to write a letter to your 'after some months person'.

Step three: Explain guidelines to write the letter (if needed). Usually letters consist of these parts: explanation of

- the situation during the training course and learning outcomes,
- current feelings,
- planned future steps,
- motivation for these steps, and
- encouraging words for the future.

Step four: Participants write letters, put them in the envelopes and add address and stamp.

Step five: The trainer collects letters, and keeps them until they are sent back to participants after some months.

Debriefing and evaluation No special debriefing needed. If the method is implemented during the on-arrival training course and if majority of participants stays the same also at mid-term training, debriefing can be done there.

Submitted by: Matej Cepin¹¹



¹¹Augusto Boal:
Theatre of the
Oppressed (Get
political), 2008, Pluto
Press, ISBN 978 0
7453 2838 6

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.9 Must, should, could

Short description Defining objectives for future actions or learning and dividing them into 3 categories according to their importance.

Aims & objectives

- Planning future steps
- Setting priorities

Useful in... On-arrival training or mid-term evaluation

Group size Any

Duration 30-45 minutes

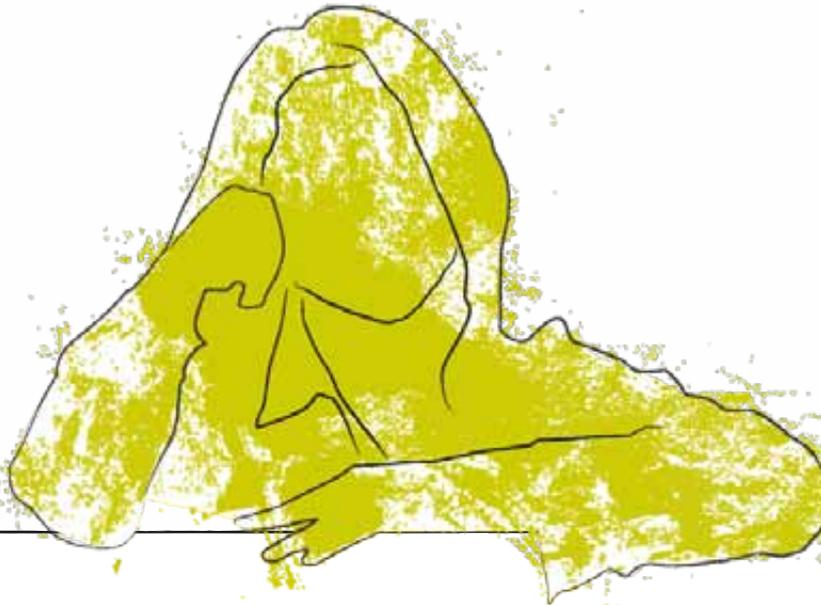
Materials needed Pen & paper for everybody; flip-chart

Implementation

Preparation No special preparation needed

Implementation step by step

- Step one:** Participants collect as many future steps or learning objectives as possible. This can be made with any known method: individual as group one – or any other creative technique. Future steps or learning objectives should be put onto post-its - one by one.
- Step two:** 'Must, Should and Could' terminology using a poster with 3 concentric circles:
- Must (inner circle) presents future steps or learning objectives that we (or me personally) have to reach.
 - Should (middle circle) presents those which we should certainly not forget; they should be reached but are not of life importance.
 - Could (outer circle) presents those steps / outcomes that would be nice to have but are not in our main focus right now.
- Step three:** Participants prioritise their future steps or learning objectives. They put every post-it into one of the 3 circles or outside the circles (which means they feel this post-it is not of importance at all). This step can be made individually or in group(s) depending on the concrete objective of the activity.
- Step four:** Planning concrete actions. Through a discussion or an individual step/action the prioritised steps/objectives can be made concrete (e.g. use the SMART¹² form).



¹²A SMART form can be found in the SALTO tool box:
<http://www.salto-youth.net/tools/Evaluation/evaluationcdrom/planevaluate/evaluationaims&objectives/>

Debriefing and evaluation

- Are we satisfied with our final outcome?
- Do we have too much / too few priorities for the amount of time / energy we have?

Further tips for facilitators

The method can also be used at the beginning of the training course to express expectations of participants.

Submitted by: Matej Cepin

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.10 Write a message for volunteers who have just started their journey.

Short description	Give advice to volunteers in the on-arrival training
Aims & objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect volunteers to their EVS experience.• This exercise will help volunteers to understand their struggles.• It will help them to look for solutions or to understand how they deal with them.
Useful in...	Mid-term evaluation or evaluation of the activity
Group size	Any
Duration	60 minutes
Materials needed	Coloured paper, markers and pens

Implementation

Preparation	No special preparation needed
Implementation step by step	<p>Step one: During the reflection period consider how this EVS experience has influenced you, and is still influencing you.</p> <p>Step two: Ask yourself the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you grown or changed in any way?• What was the most difficult experience during your EVS project?• How did you deal with it?• What advice would you give to someone when arriving in the hosting country for an EVS project? <p>Step three: Share these reflections with the buddy or in sub-groups.</p> <p>Step four: Write encouraging messages for next volunteers, taking into account the questions above.</p> <p>The trainer will ensure that the messages are going to be delivered to the volunteers in the next on-arrival training course.</p>



Debriefing and evaluation

No debriefing needed

Further tips for facilitators

This exercise should be used after a method of reflection on the EVS journey so far. This exercise is not only beneficial for the participants of the mid-term evaluation. The volunteers in on-arrival training courses are generally very touched by the messages. Ensure proper and focussed reflection before writing the messages. Inform trainers of on-arrival training course that you will have messages for their group so that they can incorporate them in their programme.

Submitted by: Mieke Neven McMahon

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.1.11 How to approach writing key competences?

Short description A structured method that can help participants to translate their learning outcomes into the key competences framework

Aims & objectives Connect volunteers to their EVS experience

Useful in... Mid-term evaluation

Group size Any

Duration 90 – 180 minutes

Materials needed Paper – or diary, pens

Implementation

Preparation Usually volunteers will have many learning outcomes by the end of their EVS project. They might have a record of their outcomes in a diary, a blog or any other method of recording of their choice. These learning outcomes need to be organised, analysed and prepared for the key competences section in their Youthpass certificate. The exercise is designed to help volunteers to write their learning outcomes for their Youthpass certificate. It is important not to forget that the learning outcomes described in the Youthpass certificate are the outcomes of a process. The Youthpass certificate will generally only show a very concise and reduced version of this process.

Implementation step by step

- Step one:** Ask the volunteer:
For whom will I describe my learning outcomes? (This will define the style of writing)
- For myself, to record what I learned during this period of my life?
 - For a future employer
 - For an educational institution
 - For a policy makers
 - Or for any other relevant situation ...
- Step two:** after answering the first question:
Ask yourself the following questions:
1. Where and for what will I use my Youthpass? Taking into account the above.
 2. What did I learn? Use the learning outcomes already described during the EVS project.
 3. Where, when and how did I learn this? Put it in the context of the activity, show concrete examples.
 4. You can start with a long and precise version of personal development and for a specific context you can reduce the longer version!

It is recommended to use first person singular as it is a personal description. Here are some beginnings of sentences which can help to describe learning outcomes – taken from the Youthpass guide¹³:

- I feel more comfortable now...
- I found out...
- I learnt...
- I feel confident...
- I made progress...
- I'm able to...
- I know now how...
- I developed...
- I have a clear view now...

Recommendations:

- Your mentor will sign together with you the Youthpass certificate, so it is good to reflect with him on your learning outcomes.
- For an outsider: Try to tackle and write each competence in the same style, as it will be easier to read.
- Describe what you have learned, not what you are planning to learn.
- You are not obliged to make use of all the key competences. Use only the ones you want to focus on! Key competences not filled in will not show up in the certificate.
- KISS: Keep it short and simple.
- Try to be brief, concise and accurate. And above all, honest. Credibility of the Youthpass certificate is attached to your honesty and commitment to your learning!
- The length of the text for your learning outcomes for each key competence is not limited. But for instance 250 words is already a lot. Keep in mind where you will be using the Youthpass certificate!
Ask yourself: Do you think that a future employer or a university professor will read it if it is very long?
- Last but not least, it is your Youthpass, observe yourself and your learning and you decide how you want to write it.

Debriefing and evaluation

No debriefing needed

Further tips for facilitators

- It might be good to print out this section and give it to each volunteer to bring it to their project
- Remind volunteers that this is only used after they have described their learning outcomes
- It might be good to use the goal setting diagram prior to this exercise (page 30)

¹³This was developed by Paul Kloosterman and is taken from the Youthpass guide, p. 45. <http://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/guide/>

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.2 Methods developed during the training course

'Recognise learning, recognise yourself', Dobrna/Slovenia, October 2009

5.2.1 Pieces of cake

Short description	Exercise to explore the key competences
Aims & objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get to know the key competences in an experiential way• Give opportunity to discover the key competences in an interactive way• Use inclusive examples to get to know the key competences• Link the key competences with learning in EVS
Useful in...	On-arrival training
Group size	10 or more
Duration	90 minutes (15 minutes introduction, 40 minutes game, 30 minutes debriefing and input about key competences), can be cut to 70 minutes (outside version)
Materials needed	<p>INSIDE version:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small round paper cakes divided in 8 parts for each participant• A big paper cake to put in the middle of the plenary• Big pieces of cake in paper with the single key competence (you can also use symbols, images etc) linked to that 8 papers with written key competences• 8 different paper pieces of cake toppings (8 different colours or taste) for each participant – this is additional for decoration• Tape, dices• Equipment (computer, etc) you need to run all the 'stations' <p>OUTSIDE version:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 'stations' - with each an A3 paper on which the tasks are written• 8 papers with same colour of papers as the 'Tasks' for the key competences• 1 big A3 paper with a picture divided in 8 parts (can be a football/-ball, cake, whatever linked to the place, time of the year)• Equipment (computer, etc) you need to run all the 'stations'
Implementation	
Preparation	Prepare the room Have quiet music ready Have the art materials organised

Implementation step by step

Each participant gets 2 dices (the 6 is covered). If you throw 1-8 you go to the piece of the cake that has your number. If you throw 9 or 10, you can choose where you want to go

- Once you have thrown you go to the place which corresponds with the number you threw. If there isn't any place available you can throw again.
- The game ends when everybody has the 8 pieces or when the 30 minutes are over.
- Another possibility is to skip using the dice and let the participants choose to go to different places according to their own decision – it is easier, faster and also gives a space to come up with their own strategy, priorities.

Examples of games to run for each area see annex I

PREPARATION – outside version:

- choose 8 different stations (2 can be run by the trainers – the one with computer and the one with a camera).
- Put the 'Tasks' on the trees/stations

Explain that the objective of the game is to go through as many stations as they decide and fulfil the tasks written there and that within 30 minutes time limit.

At the 2 stations (where the trainers are present) the task can only be read or explained by trainers – the trainers are only involved when being asked for help or more explanation.

Examples of games to run for each area see annex I

Debriefing and evaluation

Once finished you can check results with the group and start the debriefing.

Guidelines for debriefing :

1. How do you feel (feelings, first impressions, thoughts)?
2. Are you happy with the result?
3. How did you decide where to start? Which station and why?
4. Did you help or get help from other people (other participants, trainers)?
5. Which piece of the cake (station/task) do you like the most? Why?
6. Do you think you can do something differently than before?
7. Which difference you find in the activities of each piece of cake?
Which area you can find in each piece of cake?
8. How does it link with your learning in EVS?

Then reveal the fact that each 'Station – task' was linked to key competences – explain briefly what 'competences' mean and where the key competences come from.

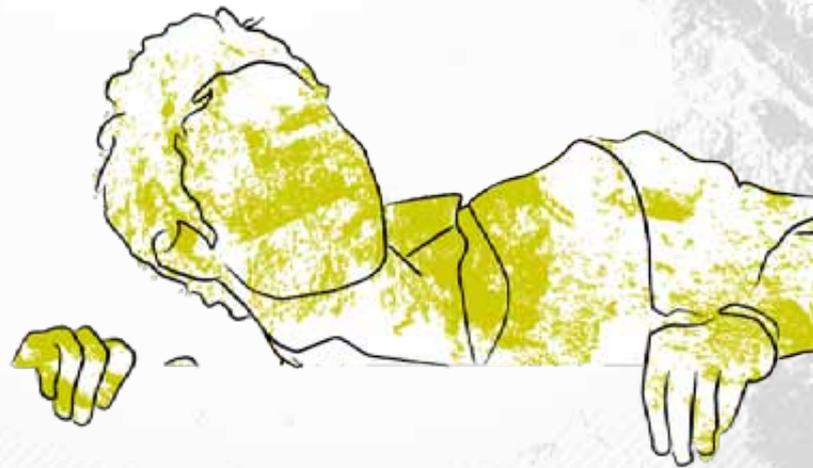
Then ask participants to help you to link the tasks and the key competences.

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

Annex1 - Pieces of cake

Examples of activities for pieces of cake: choose one fitting your needs

1. **Digital competence:**
 - a. Take 3 photos and download them in the computer as quick as possible and write down the time (easier – take 3 detailed/zoomed photos of the flowers with the I-phone).
 - b. Remove two rows in Tetris
 - c. Draw a dog with the computer
2. **Competence in your own language:**
 - a. Write a poem of 6 lines
 - b. Describe EVS in 5 lines in your own language
 - c. Present yourself verbally to someone in 1 minute in your own language
3. **Competence in foreign languages:**
 - a. Translate a word in 5 different languages
 - b. Translate a sentence in the language in the hosting country
 - c. Listen to the tape and pronounce the word you listen (in the language of the hosting country)
4. **Cultural expression:**
 - a. Make a sculpture to represent EVS (with plastecine)
 - b. Make a drawing of yourself
 - c. Make a list of the most popular songs which represent your country
5. **Mathematical competence:**
 - a. Make a simple Sudoku
 - b. Mathematical puzzle (small problem to solve)
 - c. Make a shopping list of products what you can buy for 5 EUROS here in Vienna.
6. **Entrepreneurship:**
 - a. Build a house with the materials you find in 3 minutes
 - b. Do something useful for somebody else
 - c. Do you have an idea of a personal project to implement during your EVS?
7. **Learning to learn:**
 - a. Write down in 4 lines what was the last thing you learned about yourself?
 - b. Simpson learning style questionnaire or similar
 - c. You've to learn how to make an origami in 1 minute
 - d. How and where do you prefer to learn (photos of different environments)
8. **Social and civic competence:**
 - a. Vote for the most active volunteer in the group
 - b. Create an ecological present for someone
 - c. Offer the others a help with 1 of the Tasks



5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.2.2 The journey of learning

Short description

This tool can lead to the topics of setting learning aims, importance of reflection and reflection styles/preferences.

Aims & objectives

- Promote EVS as a learning experience
- Support volunteers in their own learning process
- Help volunteers realise the importance of learning

Useful in...

Pre-departure or on-arrival training

Group size

Any

Duration

120 minutes

Materials needed

Relaxing music, photographs, paper, colour pencils, pillows, candles
learning map, space that allows separate corners-rooms

Implementation

Preparation

This exercise should be done in a safe, comfortable and intimate atmosphere. Identify 5 different points in the building or in the room. The points should be decorated according to the different aspects, e.g. in 1st point you could have photos or something else on the walls to stimulate, give ideas. Create a 'learning map' showing the different points, this can be given as a handout to the participants or created in large and put on the wall.

Implementation step by step

The volunteers receive a learning map with instructions to go through several meditation points to reflect on their own experiences. Also in this point they get/choose a sharing partner with whom they will meet after the 5th point. (The way of dividing the partners is up to facilitator.)

Point 1: (for the whole group): Why do you like to learn?
Personal reflection (2-3') and group brainstorming,
→ 15 min.

Point 2: My life-line: Think about strong/important moments in your own life and represent them in a time line. You can use different materials to create the life-line or just draw a time line, writing in it the moments you came up with,
→ 25 min.

Point 3: Choose one of the moments and describe it. What changes did this moment bring along? Express it through either drawing, collage or other material available for you. You can add it also to your life-line, made in previous meditation point.
→ 10 min.



- Point 4:** What have I learnt from it?
(Up to the facilitator to choose in which way it should be presented)
→ 10 min.
- Point 5:** How does this learning outcome influence your life?
→ 10 min.
- Point 6:** Meet your sharing partner and share your reflections
→ 20 min.

Debriefing and evaluation

Conclusion (whole group): a short feedback in the big circle (e.g. what did you discover about yourself? What did you find out?);
Explain the learning cycle (David A. Kolb), connecting it to the (future) EVS experience
→ 30 min.

Further tips for facilitators

Kolb learning cycle: <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm>

5 Methods that can be used in EVS trainings

5.2.3 The 'Road Map' to learning

Aims & objectives

- To promote the importance of support for learning
- To reflect on the added value of a learning tool
- To explore the concepts behind reflection and maximise its benefits
- To understand the importance of goal settings and tracking in learning

Useful in...

Best suited for on-arrival training

Group size

Any

Duration

180 minutes (Briefing 15', Preparation and resources 30', Exploring (all included) 90', Debriefing 45')

Materials needed

See in 'Implementation step by step'

Implementation

Implementation step by step

- Step one:** Divide the group in sub groups (e.g. 3-5 people in each sub-group) – it can depend on the team size.
- Step two:** Each sub group gets only a general description of the activity ahead (we are going out somewhere and you will get a task to complete). They get 30' to prepare themselves, including meeting, discussing, deciding a strategy, choosing what resources to take from the resource table, etc.
- Step three:** The trainers will have prepared a resources table in advance. It will include many different things, some helpful (but not 100% necessary for the task: for example a compass, a detailed map of the location, an umbrella, a waterproof hood, a sandwich, etc), others less helpful, others totally useless (magazines, nail varnish, balloons, etc). The number of resources must be limited, so that not all the groups will have access to the same things.
- Step four:** The sub-groups will have to choose 3 resources each. It's possible to make a game in the game in order to determine in which order they can choose. It is important to note that in this stage the participants will have only a generic idea of the task ahead of them.
- Step five:** The whole group + the trainers move to the destination. It can be an indoor location, a city centre, an outdoors place, etc. Once there, a simple map of the area and a more detailed introduction is given to the sub-groups. Then they will have 5-10 minutes before the activity will actually start. All these elements will be discussed later in the debriefing, so maybe the facilitators should observe the groups decisions and actions and take some notes.
- Step six:** The task will be a simple one: to get to a certain place (the final goal), by choosing from three different routes (A, B, C). Trainers will be placed in the three different points on the map.

Step seven: The three trainers will present each one relevant aspect of learning: A – support; B – reflection; C – challenges. We propose that these tasks are set depending on the environment, but an example would be: A will ask the group to perform a task by finding external support (ask the local people what are the 3 most important places in town, or learn 5 words in e.g. Estonian language), or by supporting each other with team work; B will ask the groups to reflect on the experiences from within the training, and to answer to a puzzle in order to move forward; C will represent a hard challenge (examples: to perform an activity blindfolded, to go through the 'spider net', and so on).

Step eight: Each sub-group will visit two stations out of the three. It is left to the trainers' initiative to decide which sub-group goes where. Important is that each sub-group will choose their first station, and visit two different stations in total.

Step nine: Once all the groups have arrived at the final destination (hopefully alive), find a quiet place where you can sit down and debrief, or go back to the training centre for the debriefing.

Debriefing and evaluation

Suggestions for debriefing questions:

- How do you feel?
- How did you like it?
- How did it go?
- How did you prepare for the activity? Did you feel you were prepared enough? Why?
- What did you feel / think when you were faced with the 'reality' of the situation?
- How was the sub-group work? Was it easy to take decisions? Did you feel supported by your sub-group? How did this help?
- Discuss what happened at the different stations. Confront situations and the groups' reactions.
- Can you identify a moment in which you had to reflect?
- Can you identify the challenges you faced?
- Did you look for support? Where and why? And why not?
- What do you think is the connection between this activity and the reality of EVS?
- What do you think is the connection between this activity and the learning process of EVS? And of Youthpass?

Open the discussion, leave the space for feedback and opinions, take the chance to introduce Youthpass in a step-by-step way and based on the experience just concluded. Good work!

Bibliography and Further Reading

Youth in Action

- Youthpass guide:
<http://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/guide/>
- Programme Guide for Youth in Action:
http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc/how_to_participate/programme_guide_10/guide_en.pdf
- Youthpass for ALL:
<http://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionpublications/inclusionforall/youthpassforall/>

Links for further reading

- Key competences for lifelong learning, European Reference Framework:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf
- Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Resources/Portfolio/Portfolio_en.asp
- Mini Compendium on non-formal education:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Portfolio/Compendium_NFE_en.pdf
- Bridges for recognition:
<http://www.salto-youth.net/BridgesForRecognition/>
- Coyote, A magazine on issues around "Youth-Training-Europe":
<http://youth-partnership.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/Coyote>

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In 2003 she joined Fishbowl Youth, and since, has gained experience in all aspects of managing, facilitating and coaching young people in carrying out their activities. She focuses mainly on supporting these young people in creating, running and learning from their own projects.

Within Fishbowl she has supported the hosting and sending of EVS volunteers. She works as a free-lance trainer for Léargas, the Irish National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme; where among others, she implements trainings for the EVS training cycle.

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