Name or title of the recognition tool/practice:

European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers

Developed by:

Council of Europe in cooperation with experts and partners such as the European Commission and the European Youth Forum

Short description:

The Portfolio is a tool developed for intercultural youth work, based on the values and principles of the Council of Europe. It is a tool through which youth workers, volunteers or professionals, can identify, assess and describe their competencies based on European quality standards and set learning and professional development goals.

Type of the tool/practice:

Self-assessment tool, Publication/Handbook, Portfolio, Website/Platform/Blog

Recognition dimensions addressed by the tool/practices:

Self-recognition, Social recognition, Political recognition

Level of influence of your tool/practice:

Organisational, Local/Regional, National, International

Target group(s) for the tool/practice:

The primary target group for the Portfolio are youth workers and youth leaders. In addition to them, on a political level, the target group are all the representatives of the European Steering Committee on Youth, as they have a mandate to promote the tool nationally. So, target groups are also policy makers on the national level, as well as on the European level.

Background and the context of development of the tool/practice:

The European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers is an initiative of the Council of Europe in cooperation with experts and partners such as the European Commission and the European Youth Forum. It aims to contribute to the recognition of youth workers' and youth leaders' experience and skills and also to increase the recognition of youth work and non-formal education and learning.

Development process:

The Portfolio was developed between 2004 and 2009 and it has since been translated in 7 languages (English, French, Dutch, German, Russian, Latvian, Turkish and Bulgarian). The Portfolio was developed by a team of experts and originally tested through a training course in 2006.

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In 2013, a process of revising the Portfolio was initiated, in order to update it and take into account the current processes of recognition. A first revised text of the Portfolio was prepared in early 2014. Two expert

meetings were organised in order to receive feedback on the Portfolio and in order to take into the landscape of youth work and recognition of today as much as possible.

A focus group with youth workers and youth leaders was organised in April 2014. This was followed by several rounds of feedback from key experts and European partners involved in the processes of recognition of youth work and non-formal education.

Objectives:
The Portfolio can be used as a tool for three interlinked purposes:
- the self-assessment, personal and professional development of individuals, teams and organisations conducting youth work
- the validation and recognition of the competence of youth workers and youth leaders, and by extension of youth work
- quality development of the youth work conducted in a specific context by organisations and institutions active in the field

Description of the tool:
The European Youth Work Portfolio is a tool for the assessment and development of youth work competence. It is aimed at individuals, teams and organisations doing youth work around Europe and is intended to help them to better understand their competence and the aspects of their youth work they would like to develop. When the development process is done, the revised version of the European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers will contain the following 4 parts (chapters):
- Chapter 1 is called 'Context' it defines who this self-assessment tool is for and presents a definition of youth work, informed by history and experience, as the basis for understanding the kind of competence that shall be assessed using the tool.
- Chapter 2 is called 'Guidance' and outlines the information and instructions users need for using it. It presents instructions on how to make a self-assessment, a team assessment, or an organisational assessment of youth work competence and how to make a 'development and learning plan'.
- Chapter 3 is called 'Tool' and provides the assessment infrastructure users need for making an assessment and developing a 'development and learning plan'. You can also find links to other resources with advice and exercises to help you practice reflecting on self-assessment.
- Chapter 4 is called 'Further information' and contains background on the development of the European Youth Work Portfolio, its European context, a section with useful information and references, a glossary and acknowledgements.

In comparison to the initial version of the Portfolio which was a paper-based tool, the new version will be a fully online tool.

Outcomes, results and impact:
The tool has been evaluated several times: in 2006, a training course was organised as a way to assess the tool itself, in 2013, a survey was launched to gather feedback on the tool, its effectiveness and input for its revision and finally an evaluation discussion which involved with key partners, gathered in an expert group. In brief, the tool was seen as very useful in training situations, to raise awareness about youth work and providing a useful framework for self-assessment.

Most of the training courses of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe have made use of the Portfolio framework, which has helped disseminate the tool and the practice around it.

With the help of translations into languages other than the official languages of the Council of Europe, the dissemination of the Portfolio has reached to the national context, providing a tool for the recognition of youth work.