

REFINE – REcognising Formal, Informal and Non-formal Education

ESTONIA National report

January 2005

An overview of the tested tools: Euro CV and Portfolio

Euro CV

We translated the European Curriculum Vitae form and the Instructions for using EuroCV from English to Estonian.

Portfolio

For working out our Portfolio form, we collected different forms from France and UK, compared them with each-other and translated one French Portfolio (from the University of Haute Alsace) and one English Portfolio User Guide (from the University of East London) to Estonian. For the next step we adapted the French Portfolio form more suitable for our needs, added some parts and tried to make the form and language more understandable for the people from different sectors and different levels.

Portfolio consists of four chapters:

- A – Personal data
- B – Education
- C – Work experience
- D – Other activities

We compiled the Learners Guide for using this Portfolio, the Advisers Guide and the Assessors Guide.

Testing of those tools was done from September to December 2004 within three sectors by local partners:

1. Youth sector – by Estonian Association of Youth Councillors;
2. Vocational education sector – by Tartu Vocational Education Centre;
3. Higher education sector – by University of Tartu.

Higher education sector

Partner organisation: **University of Tartu**

Name of person conducting the test: **Aili Saluveer**

The University of Tartu is a national University. Following good academic traditions, this one and only classical Estonian-language University offers research-based graduate and postgraduate degree programmes and deals with both fundamental and applied research. Catering to the current needs of society, the University does pioneering work in application of innovation to its training and research.

The University of Tartu is the first one in Estonia, who worked out APEL system and there is need for improving it. Testing the tools is good for working out the tools for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning and getting some experience in this field.

Vocational education sector

Partner organisation: **Tartu Vocational Education Centre**

Name of person conducting the test: **Eda Anton**

Tartu Vocational Education Centre (TVEC) is a regional vocational training centre in Tartu and its immediate service area is South-Estonia. The school, with its fields of vocational education, further education and career counselling, has been recognized in Estonia and internationally.

TVEC has a devoted staff. The high qualification of teachers, counsellors and instructors, their motivation, innovativeness, loyalty, and will to study and cooperate form the basis of the organizational

culture in TVEC. The school is student-centred; its work is organized professionally and effectively. The system of quality management ensures the success of the realization of the main processes. The information system supports the development of the school and its study processes.

TVEC offers a safe and modern studying and counselling environment, as well as enables to educate people according to their personal qualities, abilities, interests and needs, including special needs.

Youth sector

Partner organisation: **Estonian Association of Youth Councillors (EAYC)**

Name of person conducting the test: **Anne Kivimäe**

Estonian Association of Youth Councillors is an organisation established in 1998, which unites youth workers and civil servants responsible for youth affairs from local, regional and national level.

EAYC-s aim is to participate in discussions on the development of youth policy, provide bases for networking and exchange of best practise for different youth workers and youth policy coordinators.

EAYC is a partner organisation in different youth related issues for Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, a member of Estonian Youth Policy Council.

How did we proceed?

In every sector we found some people who were interested in trying to assess their experiential learning, chose some of them, who had more competence suitable for evaluation, had some counselling with candidates and after that they worked with Portfolios and EuroCV-s. In the University of Tartu the Portfolios were given to the assessors for the evaluation. The process of evaluation is now completed.

In other institutions the process of piloting Portfolio and EuroCV ended with completing the portfolio and CV without assessment, just for self evaluation.

Where?

In the University of Tartu; in the Tartu Vocational Education Centre; in volunteer organisations (organised by youth councillors).

The candidate

In every sector we tested both tools with 5 candidates:

Euro CV – 3 x 5 = 15

Portfolio – 3 x 5 = 15

Age: 17 – 71

Gender: M, F

Purpose of participation:

1. Higher education – students and candidates (possible future students) looking for studies at baccalaurean, master or PhD level;
2. Vocational education – people looking for some vocational courses and for the development of self-evaluation skills;
3. Youth sector – volunteer young people looking for self evaluation.

He or she is a:

- Volunteer in a third sector organisation
- Trainee
- Student
- Other – intended to be a student (working full time in the field they are looking for accreditation)

Purpose: *Why did he or she participate?*

- For entry to a formal training course
- For the completion a part of the curriculum

- For self confidence
- For the development of self-evaluation skills

Comments from testers:

Concerning both tools there is a need to clarify formulations and terms in order to get adequate information.

There is a need for guidance filling up the tools, especially for the portfolio, but also the Euro CV needs clarifications.

Comments from candidates:

Euro CV

The participants found the tool easy to follow and fill. The form together with explanatory notes provided good structure for CV. Positively was noted the possibility to include information about social competencies and interests.

Some technical remarks were about the electronic version and the fact that it was not explained, how thorough and detailed the answers should be. The part concerning education needs more concrete structure – in the present form it is too unclear what sort of information is needed.

Portfolio

All the participants found the tool to be very thorough and time consuming. In order to provide all the details asked it would need very long and guided process. Also some questions were repeated in other parts of the document. Also too much detailization in the work-related part was noted.

As a positive aspect the participants found the tool important as it allowed to describe both formal and non-formal learning.

All candidates found that compiling the portfolio is useful for developing self evaluation skills.

Problems:

In university level one obstacle is connected with Universities Act: *In the Bachelor's programme the University may, in evaluating the completion of the curriculum, accredit previous study results in an extent of up to 50 per cent. In the applied higher education, Master's and Doctoral programmes, the University may, in evaluating the completion of the curriculum, acknowledge prior learning results and work experience connected with the speciality in an extent of up to 50 per cent.*

We had two candidates with good work experience suitable to achieve the Bachelor's level programme, but there is no possibility for them to get accredited, because the Act does not allow recognition of the work experience in the Bachelor's programme.

In the secondary vocational education there does not exist system for accreditation of experiential learning. All previous learning is accredited on the basis of the certificates, because there is no possibility to assess previous experiential learning and to take it in account in the completion of the curriculum.

Conclusions

EuroCV was easy to fill and understandable for all participants. Some difficulties were for younger people in specifying social skills and in the heading of education and training.

Candidates presumed that EuroCV is more detailed and will give better perception for employer about applicant.

In the University EuroCV was good basis for initial evaluation of the candidates: do they have enough experience for more detailed evaluation – for compiling the portfolio and getting possible accreditation of learning from experience.

Euro CV is quite suitable for general CV. More thorough analyses based on the CV information would need additional work both on the tool and the instructions/help material.

EuroCV is useful for:

- job application
- preliminary testing of candidates

The Euro CV would benefit from technical improvement.

Compiling of the Portfolio was more difficult and it needs more self evaluation skills, especially for younger candidates with limited work experience.

The portfolio provides good bases for assessment of competencies, but the process of filling up the form should be planned, structured for long period.

There is an idea to use this tool for development of the self evaluation skills in the vocational education and in higher education in the future.

Portfolio is useful for:

- Development of self evaluation skills
- Evaluation of experiential learning
- Self confidence
- Professional development

The portfolio needs more work on the structure. The process of filling up the form should be planned and explained in the portfolio as well.

On the next phasis of the project we work on modification of tools and support materials.

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