

European Commitment Portfolio for the Valorisation of non-formal education

Why such a tool?

The training and learning sector together with the sector for the promotion of European and International actions in les Francas have started to work together on the contents of a European Portfolio for voluntary commitment that could be used as a tool for the recognition of non-formal and informal education gained through civil commitment (eg. Commitment in organisations representing the civil society). As a matter of fact, the first REFINE experimentation year showed us that most of the European tools proposed were not putting forward this kind of education. Moreover the European Union wants to focus on citizenship and civic participation in many of its educational programmes and politics (eg. Citizens for Europe programme for 2007-2013). Moreover a study group has been created by the French Youth and Sport Ministry together with French youth organisations on the subject.

Who are the partners?

We have tried to mobilise our European Youth and Third sector partners on the reflection. At the French level, The Croix Rouge Française (REFINE partner), Interechanges (EVS sending organisation) and the CNOSF (National Olympic Committee for Sport) have been informed of our work. As the FIEEA (International Federation for the Educational Exchange between young people and Children) is the setro co-ordinator of the REFINE project through les Francas, its European members should be associated to the reflection during the next meeting at the end of June. We hope that a discussion will be led with those partners.

How should the ECPVNFE be built?

Here are a few ideas we had during our last meeting on April 13. :

- The portfolio could be divided into 2 parts: 1) A description of competencies acquired with a description of how they have been developed or used. 2) A memory of all the experiences with certificates, diplomas and references certifying the participation of the volunteer to activities.
- We should establish a list of key competencies such as social competencies, technical competencies, ... that can be dealt with as a volunteer on civic activities. These competencies would be there to support the person in filling in her/his portfolio but would not be exhaustive. Those competencies would be illustrated with examples of activities where they could be developed or used.
- The portfolio could be a diary with a page for each competence or skill. The owner could write whenever a new experience brings a new knowledge or gives the ability to use a skill. The portfolio is not rooted, it is there to evolve with time and experience.

- The portfolio could be in accordance with NTIC be electronic. It could be easier to deal with as old experience could be erased. Self-assessment could be updated more easily.

What needs to be thought of?

- Who writes the open glossary of competencies?
- How to have this portfolio recognised and by whom?
- How could this portfolio be named so as to take into account the wide diversity of definition for voluntary work and civic participation in Europe?
- How to give a European dimension to this portfolio which comes for the moment out of a French reflection based on the study of several European documents (Francas portfolio for voluntary commitment)
- ...