European Portfolio for youth workers and youth leaders working in the context of non-formal education / learning

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Directorate of Youth and Sport
Direction de la jeunesse et du sport

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Summary

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

1. The Portfolio: an instrument that aims to increase the recognition of non-formal education/learning and youth work

2. The Portfolio: a tool that reflects the Council of Europe's values

3. The Portfolio: an instrument that reflects the Council of Europe's approach to youth policy

4. A European Framework for Youth Policy

5. Non-formal education/learning a key youth policy and youth work approach

1. The Portfolio: an instrument that aims to increase the recognition of non-formal education/ learning and youth work

This European portfolio is an initiative of the Council of Europe. It has been developed as a concrete illustration of the commitment of the governments of the member states of this Organisation to promote the recognition of non-formal education/ learning of young people, and of competences acquired in this framework through the practice of youth work. If you look at Recommendation N° 2003 (8) from the Committee of Ministers to the member states (Part IV, Appendix III), you will see what measures and actions governments and the Council of Europe are called to take in order to achieve this. You will also notice that the creation of a European portfolio is explicitly mentioned in the recommendation.

The portfolio has been designed from the experience and practice of the Council of Europe in the youth field since the early seventies, and particularly in the area of youth leader and youth worker training. During more than 30 years, the Council of Europe youth sector has developed a wide range of training courses for youth leaders, multipliers, young democratic leaders involved in different areas of public life, young researchers, and civil servants from across Europe. These courses cover a large range of subjects, including organising international activities, working in international youth structures, international youth co-operation, human rights education, conflict management, youth participation, citizenship and many other topics. In this context, the Council of Europe has also developed numerous innovative educational and training tools and research work, for example on young people, non-formal education/ learning, youth work and associative life, and has elaborated criteria and quality standards for youth work and youth policy.

In it's work the Council of Europe builds on cooperation with a number of partners, in particular the European Commission. This cooperation is based on a common understanding of the value of youth work and the role of youth policy as expressed in the White Paper 'A new impetus for European Youth'. It led to joint activities and outcomes, amongst them the working paper "Pathways towards validation and recognition of non-formal learning".

This sum of experience and practice has inspired the concept and methodology of the present portfolio, which will hopefully help you to identify, assess and describe your profile of competences and situate it in relation to the common reference standards of the Council of Europe.

2. The Portfolio: a tool that reflects the Council of Europe's values

It goes without saying that the way in which we practice youth work, and the context in which we do it, be it within a youth organisation, a youth centre or any other youth structure or body, reflects our vision of society and the values we believe in.

This portfolio has been designed in coherence with the values, principles and standards which underpin the overall action and policy of the Council of Europe in the field of youth.

The Council of Europe's primary goal is to achieve a greater unity between its 46 member states in safeguarding individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy and which touch the lives of all Europeans in many different ways.

For those who will use the portfolio, it is important to be aware that the Council of Europe is an Organisation that is committed to promote a European society which:

- respects human rights and human dignity;
- promotes participative democracy by all citizens;
- struggles for better social cohesion and increased social justice;
- strives to achieve gender equality in all aspects of life in society;
- considers cultural diversity as a chance, not a problem;
- believes that living together in a multicultural society is a factor of social and economical progress;
- encourages the development of civil society;
- promotes tolerance among people and combats racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and islamophobia;
- refuses any kind of discrimination regardless of an individual's social and ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation;
- considers that Europe has a responsibility in contributing to make the world a better place for all.

3. The Portfolio: an instrument that reflects the Council of Europe's approach to youth policy

Based on its long experience and practice of youth policy and youth work, the Council of Europe youth sector has developed a European framework for youth policy, which provides policy makers and actors in this field with guidelines on how to formulate and implement such policy.

For the Council of Europe, youth policy is not only about managing youth problems or risk prevention. It is also about enhancing the positive prospects available for young people. It means seeing young people as a resource rather than a problem.

As you can see from the graphic in section 4 below "*A European framework for youth policy*", the hard core of youth policy is above all to help young people become ***active citizens.*** And to accomplish this, youth policy should provide young people with *a* ***minimum package of opportunities and experiences*** through which they can learn the necessary competences which they need in order to increase the probability of their successful role as actors of democracy and of their social integration (***citizenship competences***).

However, learning about citizenship is not an exclusive task of youth policy. Other policy domains are also aiming at promoting young people's citizenship (the school, for example). What makes youth policy different from other policy sectors is the way in which the above opportunities and experience are being provided.

In this respect, one of the key ***approaches*** of youth policy is non-formal education/ learning, which is above all a process of social learning, centred on the learner, through activities taking place outside the formal educational system [see table in section 5 "Non-formal learning: a key youth policy and youth work approach"].

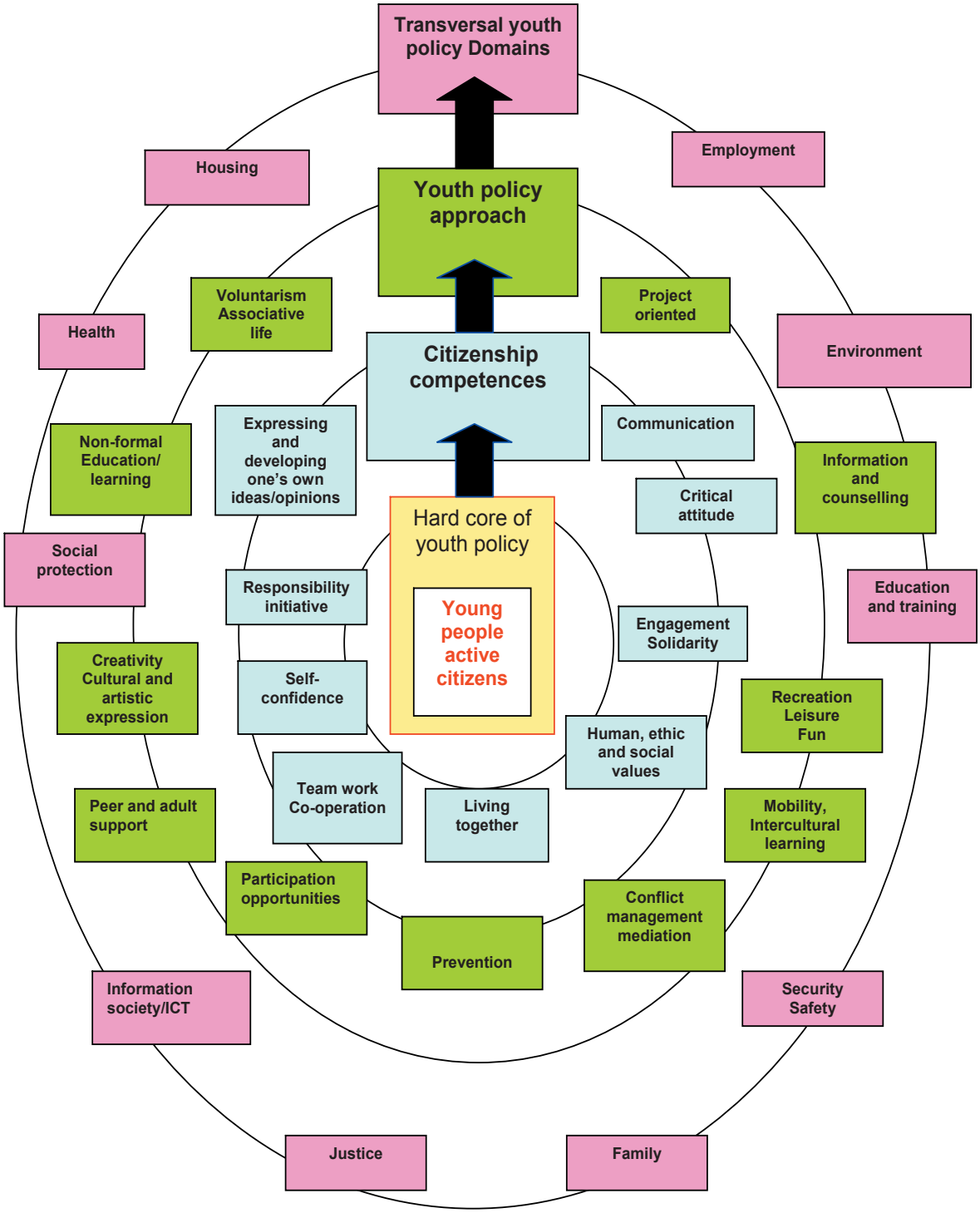
Non-formal education/ learning is by definition voluntary and intentional, and covers a wide variety of learning fields: youth work, youth clubs, sport associations, voluntary service, and many other activities, which organize learning experiences. In addition to taking place "outside school", non-formal education/ learning also involves "another way of learning" and concerns mainly objectives related to the integration and active participation of learners in society in all respects.

The objectives, as well as the methodologies of non-formal education/ learning, take into account the overall development of the individual and, to a large extent, the personal experience of the learner. Therefore, non-formal education/ learning provides an appropriate framework for responding to individual aspirations and needs and for developing creative and social skills.

For the Council of Europe, it is also important to stress that the concept of non-formal education/ learning involves, as an integral part of the development of knowledge and skills, a whole range of social and ethical values as referred to above. These are in particular human rights, tolerance, the promotion of peace, solidarity and social justice, inter-generational dialogue, gender equality, democratic citizenship and intercultural learning.

In many countries and for the Council of Europe as well, youth work is seen as an appropriate and powerful instrument for implementing youth policy. Therefore, it is important that the Council of Europe's values, principles, and approach concerning youth policy are well reflected in the practice of youth work. You will see, when using this portfolio, that these values, principles, and approach, have been embraced in the core functions of youth leaders and youth workers, as identified in this portfolio, and which will serve to assess your profile of competences.

4. A European framework for youth policy



5. Non-formal education/ learning : a key youth policy and youth work approach

Structural features	Methodological features	Basic values	Key competences of non-formal education/ learning practitioners
• takes place outside the structures of the formal education system and differs from this in the way it is organised and the type of recognition this learning confers; • intentional and voluntary; • aims above all to convey and practice the values and skills of democratic life	• balanced co-existence and interaction between cognitive, affective and practical dimensions of learning; • linking individual and social learning, partnership-oriented solidarity and symmetrical teaching/learning relations; • participatory and learner-centred; • close to real life concerns, experimental and oriented to learning by doing, using intercultural exchanges and encounters as learning devices	<u>Values linked to personal development</u> • autonomy • critical attitude • openness and curiosity • creativity <u>Values linked to social development</u> • communication capacity • participation and democratic citizenship • solidarity and social justice • responsibility • conflict resolution <u>Ethical values</u> • tolerance and respect for others • human rights • intercultural learning and understanding • peace/non-violence education • gender equality • inter-generational dialogue	• using collegial and participatory methods • using diversity as a positive learning tool • making critically reflective links between the concrete and the abstract, in order both to facilitate the learning process and continuously to improve their quality • knowledge about young people's lives and cultures in Europe

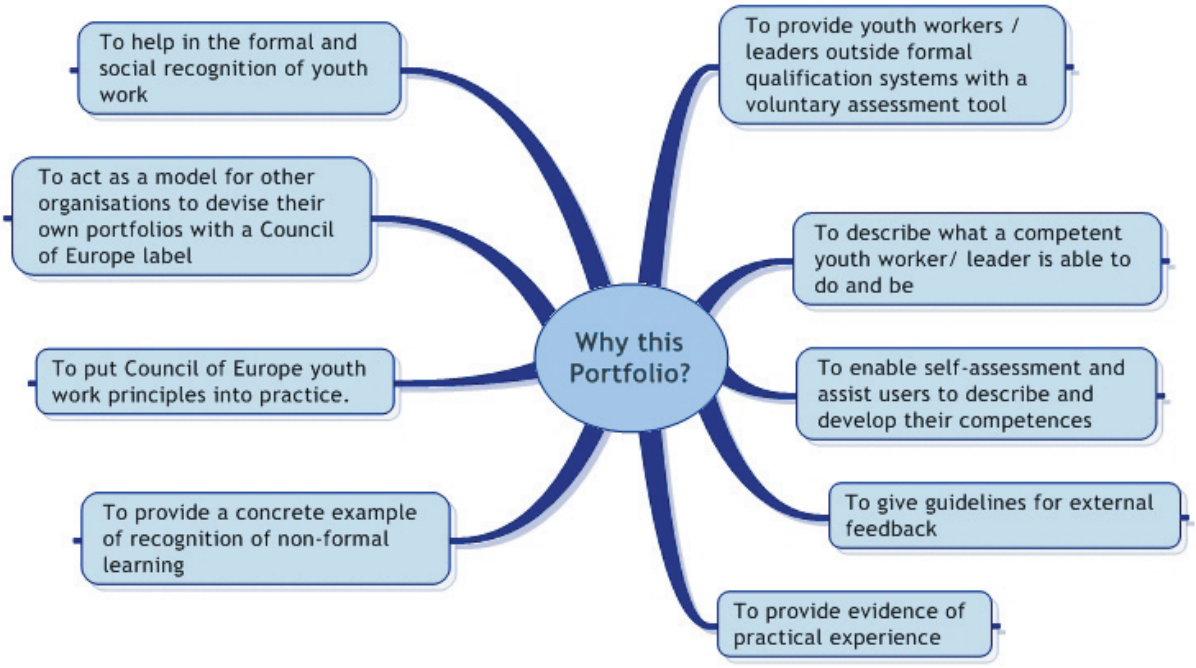
PART II

THE AIMS OF THE PORTFOLIO

Looking at developments across Europe, we see a need from youth workers and youth leaders in non-formal education/learning settings to have an instrument which could help them:
a) to identify, assess and record their competences,
b) describe their competences to others, and
c) to set their own learning and development goals.

And that is precisely what this portfolio is designed to do.

More specifically, the aims of the Portfolio are:



This portfolio is intended for the use of:

youth leaders - which we understand to refer essentially to young adults holding a responsibility in a youth organisation, network or any other youth structure, mainly on a voluntary basis, and
youth workers holding the same kind of responsibility mainly on a professional basis.

Most of the users will probably be people who have gained experience and skills in youth work through being active as youth leaders or youth workers, without having any formally recognised qualifications in the field. Feedback we have already received suggests that the portfolio may also be useful for qualified professionals who would like to review their current situation and plan their continuing professional development.

PART III

WELCOME TO THE PORTFOLIO

1. Instructions
2. The youth work context
3. Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values
4. What is a youth leader/youth worker ?
5. Youth leader/youth worker functional analysis
6. Competence framework: assessing my competences
7. Feedback to my self-assessement
8. Personal development and learning plan

1. Instructions

Each person is different and approaches the construction of a portfolio in ways appropriate to themselves.

Have a quick look at sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 on the next pages, which are constructed as entry points to the portfolio. Whichever is most attractive to you is the right place to start! Some people have also found it useful to go through all three sections, as they gained some important elements for reflection.

Read the introductory material and think about your place in the triangle youth worker/leader – young people – youth work.	**Section number 2**
Or: Take some time to complete the drawing of the youth worker/leader – what skills, knowledge, attitudes and values are needed?	**Sections number 3**
Or: Compare your experience of being a youth worker/leader with the functional analysis/occupational profile.	**Section number 4-5**
Go to the competence tables and reply to the statements, reflecting on yourself. For each table, complete also the section on evidence for your ratings.	**Section number 6, etc.**
Find someone or some people you trust and who have direct experience of your performance as a youth worker/leader. Give them the competence tables and ask them to give their views on each statement as applied to you. Agree a set time to talk individually with each one about their feedback.	**Section number 7**
Use the feedback you receive to help in your reflections about your own competences. Then use the Personal Development & Learning Plan to prepare your ideas for future action.	**Section number 8**

↓

After a few months, go back to your self-assessment and Personal Development & Learning Plan and check what your impressions are now and how you are doing with your plan.

If there are terms which you want to verify, then please make use of the Short Glossary at the end of the Portfolio.	**Part IV, Section 1**

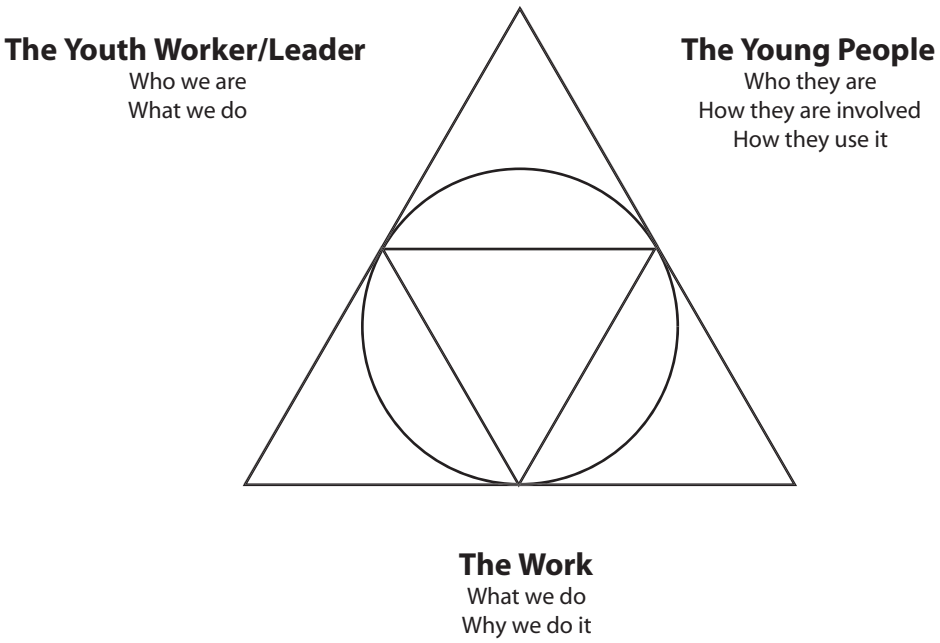
You may wish to use other instruments like the *Europass* which can help in gaining recognition for your competences. http://europass.cedefop.eu.int. This portfolio is very much a "work-in-progress": we realise that it will be used in very different circumstances and that the terminology used here may be challenging. Therefore, we would really appreciate your feedback about the use of this Portfolio, especially in this test phase – so please feel free to send your evaluation to : youthportfolio@coe.int or to the European Youth Centre, 30 rue Pierre de Coubertin F 67000 Strasbourg Wacken.

2.The youth work context

Youth work takes place in all sorts of places, settings, times and for very different reasons.

As we can see in the following model[1] , youth work is essentially made up of different relationships. As with all models or maps, it does not tell "the whole story"; rather it can be seen as a useful entry point for reflection by youth workers/leaders as part of an internal and external dialogue about their competences.

We start with looking at the relationship between youth workers/leaders, young people and the work we do:



Consider how you think this model fits together:

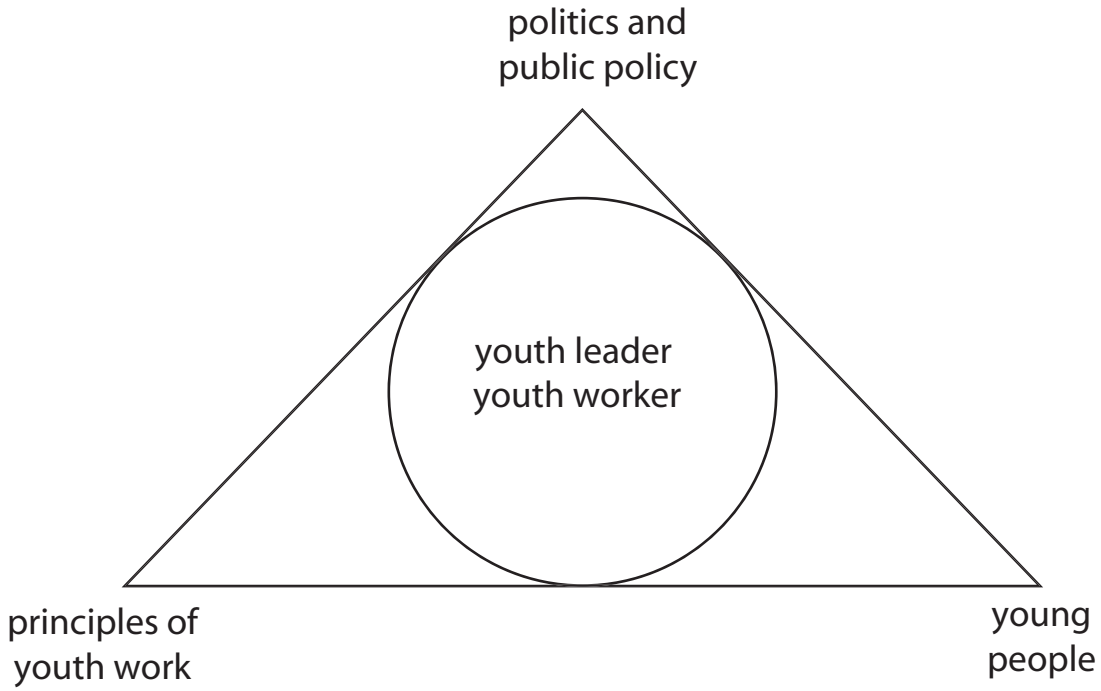
- In order to be purposeful in our work, we must understand there are three com ponent parts to youth work (the base triangle).
- We must be equally aware of all three areas to be effective. These areas are interconnected (the circle).
- While youth are a part of the groundwork, they are also at the centre of how we do our work (the inner triangle).

And this means:
"The Work" is about what we do and why we do it.
"The Young People" is about who they are and how they use it.
"The Youth Worker/leader" is about who we are and what we do.

Think about the model, do you see it in your practice?

[1] This model has been adapted from Woods et al.

And we can go further, in seeing how youthwork is part of a broader picture of youth policy and research – including young people, governments, youth NGO's and youth services[2] :



As a youthworker/leader, you can enrich your role by thinking about how you combine the different influences on your work.

Answering the following questions might be helpful in thinking about all of this:

- to what extent has governmental youth policy in your country an influence on your approach to and practice of youth work? In what ways?

- how does the reality of young peoples' lives and expectations influence your concept and practice of youth work?

- how do you gain knowledge and understanding of young people?

- which principles guide your youth work? where do they come from?

- How do you think it is possible for you and young people to influence youth policy in your country? in Europe?

[2]Adapted from: Williamson, Howard: Trends and tensions in young people's socialisation. In: Bos, Arjen: Final report of the first pilot course on European citizenship. Strasbourg, 2002. www.training-youth.net

3. Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values

Given that some people are more visual in their thinking and learning, you might find it useful to freely associate your own ideas of the competences necessary to be a youth worker/leader.

As with everyday youth work, this Portfolio is seen as part of an interactive process, in which you play a major role in determining what is relevant for your situation. In considering the functional analysis, you may feel that there are elements missing – for example, you may miss references to non-verbal skills… here is also a chance to define the specificity of the youth work you do.

As in French, competence can be broken down into three components:
savoir : knowledge [such as knowing about different phases in conflict]
savoir faire: knowing how to do [such as knowing how to communicate in different situations]
savoir être: knowing how to be [such as empathy]

One competence which becomes increasingly important as we go forward into the 21st century is that of "knowing how to live together" – defined by UNESCO as being one of the four pillars of learning. How does this idea fit in your youth work?[3]

Look at your own youth work, and answer the following questions:

- What should a youth worker/leader know [head]?
- What should a youth worker/leader be able to do [hands]?
- What emotional and personal competence should a youth worker/leader have [heart]?
- What should a youth worker/leader have in their backpack?

You can use the drawing to add your results:

[3]Learning the Treasure Within, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, UNESCO Publishing, 1999, ISBN 92-3-103274-7

4. What is a youth leader / youth worker?

When you think of yourself as a youth worker or youth leader, what is it that you do? What functions do you fulfil?

In order to describe the competences necessary to be a youth worker/leader, one of the most important elements we found when putting together this Portfolio was to build upon a functional analysis of the youth worker/leader. Some would prefer to call it an occupational profile. Another way to look at it would be to say that we are trying to describe the DNA of the youth worker/leader.

Putting together the functional analysis was a challenging process and we based our efforts on the values expressed in the introduction – we were very conscious of wanting to describe the youth worker/leader whose work is based on the values of human rights and democracy.

We know that we are trying to cover many different settings across Europe. So you are encouraged to reflect critically about the functions described here in order to see how far they could or should apply to you. You will find that some of the functions overlap as every part connects to others; for example, being able to "work creatively with conflict towards peaceful solutions" is also essential outside intercultural contexts.

Please look at this functional analysis and compare it with your own situation in youth work.

We used the functional analysis – which tells us what the youth leader/worker should do – to find out what competences would then be necessary to be able to carry out those functions. This gave us the Competence Framework of section 6.

Once you have gone through this analysis, you can start working on answering the statements in section 6.

5. Youth worker/leader functional analysis[4]

When reading these functions, you are encouraged to consider the international dimension to your work. Where do you see your work and the realities of young people as having links to other countries and people? Think globally, act locally is as important as acting globally and thinking locally!

5.1 Function: To empower young people

The youth worker/leader is able to

1 enable young people to participate through developing collective action and learning;
2 involve young people in planning, delivery and evaluation of activities;
3 enable young people to work towards their goals;
4 help the development of the confidence, knowledge, skills and understanding of young people;
5 get in touch with young people on an emotional level;
6 widen their awareness of the concepts of power and change.

5.2 Function: To develop relevant learning opportunities

The youth worker/leader is able to

1 target individuals and groups;
2 provide young people with appropriate guidance and feedback;
3 take advantage of spontaneous learning and development opportunities in everyday situations;
4 identify any special learning needs;
5 use a range of educational methods and techniques;
6 stimulate the creativity of young people.

5.3 Function: To accompany young people in their intercultural learning process

The youth worker/leader is able to

1 facilitate young people's recognition of their cultural background, values and behaviour;
2 promote active tolerance and interaction with people from other cultures at home and abroad;
3 work creatively with conflict towards peaceful solutions;
4 assist young people to define their place in a changing world.

5.4 Function: To contribute to organisational and youth policy development

The youth worker/leader is able to

1 find resources and manage them;
2 manage others and work effectively in teams;
3 work for change and development within organisations
4 cooperate with others to shape youth policy

5.5 Function: To use evaluative practice

The youth worker/leader is able to

1 plan and apply a range of participative methods of evaluation;
2 use appropriate information technology tools when necessary;
3 demonstrate skills in report writing and presentation for a variety of audiences;
4 research and use results to influence practice.

[4]This functional analysis owes much to the influence of the work done by the Scottish Community Education Validation & Endorsement Unit in their analysis of community educators which also covers youth work there.

6. Competence Framework: assessing my competences

Using the functional analysis as a starting point, we have produced the following tables which form a core set of common competences. Although everyone works in different situations, most of what follows should either be recognisable in your practice as a youth worker/leader or give you pause for thought to discover whether the statement might be applicable to you.

Please read each statement and see to what extent it applies to you in your practice. (Each statement has a short aid to reflection which can be a further explanation, a question or a challenge). You will see there are boxes at the end of each statement and this gives you the opportunity to engage in some self-assessment.

KEY	■ Applies to me	◘ More or less applies to me	⊡ Does not really apply to me	⊘ Does not apply to me	⁇ This competence has no relevance in my situation

Usually, you should find that your answers will be ticking one of the first four boxes. As we realise that the Portfolio will be used in an infinitely varied set of ways and places it may be that, after reflection, you really feel that one or more of the competences would not make any sense for you and your situation. It is for this reason that we include the box "⁇".

After each table, there is space for you to describe your evidence for your answers. This is an important part of the process, as it helps you both to analyse yourself and to start putting your competences into words. This will also help you in putting together supporting materials which demonstrate your experience and competences, such as: certificates from courses and seminars; letters from young people, employers or institutions referring to your involvement in youth work.

Give yourself adequate time for completing this exercise – the more thought you put into it, the more valuable will be the outcome!

Function: **To empower young people**

Competence	*Aid to reflection*	■	◘	⊡	⊘	⁇
1. I understand and work with group dynamics	*Each group is different and goes through phases in a unique way. Identifying those phases helps you to know what kind of intervention is necessary and when.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I have good facilitation skills	*Agreeing ground rules with a group and helping them to communicate well.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I know how to motivate and interest young people	*Understand young peoples' concerns and needs, have respect for them, arouse their curiosity.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I am ready to have my ideas challenged	*Are you open to constructive criticism? What are the limits?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I know my own emotional hot points and how to control them	*You can also make mistakes – none of us are perfect!*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I can work with concepts of power relations with young people	*Who holds power? How is it used? What rights do young people have? How can young people influence what happens in society?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I work in a democratic and participative way	*Young people have a say in what happens; ensure that all in the group can speak and act.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I work for equal opportunities	*What is the balance of participation in your activities?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other competences may be added , if needed.		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

KEY	■ Applies to me	◘ More or less applies to me	⊡ Does not really apply to me	⊘ Does not apply to me	⁇ This competence has no relevance in my situation

My evidence for the competences I have acquired or am on the way to acquiring

Function:.....

Competence: .

When did I last demonstrate this competence?

Who was involved?.....

What happened?.....

What would I do differently next time, if anything?.....

Based on my answers here, what do I need to put in my Personal Development & Learning Plan? .....

Do I have relevant certificates or letters or other types of proof with which I can demonstrate my competence here?.....

Function: **To develop relevant learning opportunities**

Competence	Aid to reflection	■	◘	⊡	⊘	⁇
1. I pay attention to situations which can provide learning experiences	*When the unexpected happens – what do you do?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I can analyse the different learning needs and styles of young people	*One size does not fit all! What do you look for? How process-oriented are you?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I can apply appropriate educational approaches and methods	*What is adequate for the particular situation, the people involved and the aims behind what you do? Adaptability and flexibility needed when using your toolbox.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. When I do not know the answer, I know where to refer young people with specific questions	*We cannot know everything, but we do need a good network and to ensure that it is up-to-date.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I work towards a positive learning environment, based on active participation, creativity and joy!	*Being playful can be fun and can also achieve serious goals. Giving respect to people and adapting activities to their needs.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I can give relevant feedback	*When requested by an individual young person, how do you reply? How do you try to actively understand why people act as they do?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other competences may be added , if needed.		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Function: **To accompany young people in their intercultural learning process**

Competence	Aid to reflection	■	◘	⊡	⊘	⁇
1. I have explored and know my own cultural background and values	*Knowing your own roots and examining your own values helps in getting to know others and makes you aware of your own prejudice and stereotypes*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I can cope with ambiguous situations	*When things don't turn out the way you think they should, or your ideas are not immediately accepted – what do you do?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I reflect about my own intercultural learning process	*What happens when you are in contact with people from other cultures? What do you learn from the experience?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I can explain the principles of intercultural learning to young people in a way they understand and can help them to experience intercultural learning	*There is a lot of academic research about intercultural issues, but how do you translate them into young people's realities? What do you know about other cultures and sub-cultures?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I can speak at least one foreign language	*Being able to communicate in another language gives you a different perspective to your own*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I can organise activities involving young people from different cultures	*What aspects do you need to consider which are different from working with a mono-cultural group? What is the difference between "intercultural" and "international"?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I can take appropriate action in conflict situations	*Can you analyse conflicts? Can you think of alternative actions to propose? Conflicts can be transformed into learning situations.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8 I can name European dimensions in my work	*European societies are increasingly linked – where does your work fit in? Remember: Europe is not a planet!*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I know about the situation of young people in other countries in Europe and the rest of the world	*What trends are there in the lives of young people across Europe and beyond? How do the life chances of your young people compare with others?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other competences may be added , if needed.		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Do I have relevant certificates or letters or other types of proof with which I can demonstrate my competence here?.....

Function:	**To contribute to organisational and youth policy development**

Competence	Aid to reflection	■	◘	⊡	⊘	⁇
1. I put project management principles into practice	*Understanding how project cycles work is becoming increasingly important for people involved in youth work – often in order to survive*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I understand and can take different roles in teams	*A "team" composed completely of leaders or of support people is not a team. Which roles have you played recently?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I can motivate others to take an active role	*Listening, paying respect and giving encouragement are all crucial here*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I can develop partnerships with other actors and interested parties	*To what extent do you develop relationships with people and organisations outside of your own?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I work for change and development in my organisation	*An organisation which does not learn will eventually die. How do you help your organisation live?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I know about the youth policy situation in the country where I live and I act with others to help shape necessary changes	*Which channels do you use to help influence youth policy – locally, nationally and even at European levels?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other competences may be added , if needed.		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

KEY	■ Applies to me	◘ More or less applies to me	⊡ Does not really apply to me	⊘ Does not apply to me	⁇ This competence has no relevance in my situation

My evidence for the competences I have acquired or am on the way to acquiring

Function:.....

Competence: .....

When did I last demonstrate this competence?

Who was involved?.....

What happened?.....

What would I do differently next time, if anything?.....

Based on my answers here, what do I need to put in my Personal Development & Learning Plan? .....

Do I have relevant certificates or letters or other types of proof with which I can demonstrate my competence here?.....

Function:	**To use evaluative practice**					
Competence	**Aid to reflection**	■	◘	⊡	⊘	⁇
1. I am always interested in young people's views	*How often do you ask for opinions? When do you take the time?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I am able to find the information I need and use it appropriately	*What are your sources for information? How do you select what you want?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I can apply appropriate evaluation methods and use the results	*Evaluating requires a diversity of approaches and a strategy for putting the results into practice*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I have the necessary report-writing and presentation skills	*Increasingly, people involved in youth work have to explain what they do to outsiders (such as funders and decision-makers).*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I can use information technology for help in evaluation	*Which relevant computer programmes can you use?*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I know how to work for change, both personal and organisational	*The capacity to be self-critical is important here as is the ability to recognise that change can be a difficult process for all involved.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I keep up-to-date with research about young people and youth work and use it in my practice	*Which publications do you read about youth work? When did you last meet a youth researcher?!*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other competences may be added , if needed.		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

KEY	■ **Applies to me**	◘ **More or less applies to me**	⊡ **Does not really apply to me**	⊘ **Does not apply to me**	⁇ **This competence has no relevance in my situation**

My evidence for the competences I have acquired or am on the way to acquiring

Function:.....

Competence: .....

When did I last demonstrate this competence?

Who was involved?.....

What happened?.....

What would I do differently next time, if anything?.....

Based on my answers here, what do I need to put in my Personal Development & Learning Plan? .....

Do I have relevant certificates or letters or other types of proof with which I can demonstrate my competence here?.....

7. Feedback to your self-assessment

Spending time in self-assessment is very enriching and can reveal a lot to each of us. And yet, there is much to be gained in using others to give us feedback.

Developed by Joseph Luft, a psychologist, and Harry Ingram, a psychiatrist, the Johari Window has proved itself to be a useful tool in explaining the role of feedback in educational settings.

	Known to self	***Not known to self***
Known to others	**arena**	**blind spot**
Not known to others	**façade**	**unknown**

The top left window **arena** covers the aspects of yourself that are known to you and are clearly evident to others – usually easily identiable facts, but still useful to check others' perceptions…
the **façade** covers the aspects that are known to you but hidden from others – usually related to your motivation for doing things, your thoughts…
the **blind spot** covers those aspects that are known to others but not to you – often you will find that others have a different perception of your actions and their consequences, things which you will not have thought about before….

Feedback is necessary to help us **decrease** the **blind spots** and **increase** the size of our **arena**. The better we know ourselves, the better youth workers and youth leaders we can be.

You are encouraged to find suitable reference persons for feedback. Examples could include young people with whom you have worked; colleagues and other peers; educators with more years' of experience; line managers; etc.

Give them a copy of your completed competence tables and the evidence you have gathered – then set a time and place to meet where you can discuss their impressions of you as a youth worker/leader. Encourage them to give concrete examples of what they have seen, heard or experienced with you.

Take some time to make sure you have understood their feedback. Then look back at your self-assessment and make any changes which the feedback has suggested to you.

You are now ready to complete your own Personal Development & Learning Plan.

8. Personal Development & Learning Plan

Becoming a reflective practitioner means putting your competence in evaluative practice into action for yourself. As you have gone through the self-assessment process you have been encouraged to make notes of areas you want to develop. Once you have also received feedback you have a lot of information about yourself. This personal development and learning plan is a simple form, designed to help you give your ideas a shape and form.

Experience has shown that you can be most effective in this if you make your plan as specific as possible. For example, if you have the aim of learning another language, then you should plan by which date you will be able to hold a normal conversation in that language.

You might also want to spend some time thinking about how to overcome anything which could be a barrier to achieving your goals – again, be realistic, but keep up your spirit!

Remember to set a date for yourself to return to the plan and your self-assessment to find out what progress you have made.

Good luck!

Personal Development & Learning Plan

AIM (& mayby WHY)	TYPE (skills, knowledge, attitudes)	HOW	WITH WHOM	WHEN

Personal Development & Learning Plan

AIM (& mayby WHY)	TYPE (skills, knowledge, attitudes)	HOW	WITH WHOM	WHEN

PART IV

APPENDICES

1. Short Glossary

2. References

3. Council of Europe Recommandation on the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/learning of young people

4. Acknowledgements

5. Evaluation form

1. Short Glossary

Some of the language used in the portfolio is fairly new to youth work practitioners and so we decided to include this short glossary to help with understanding the wider context.Please note that these terms are part of the "work-in-progress" of attempting to describe non-formal education/learning in the youth work field – the debate is still open! The glossary is drawn from a paper written by Lynne Chisholm for the Bridges for Recognition conference held in Leuven in early 2005. She called it "Recognising non-formal and informal learning in the youth sector. Terminology Cheat Sheet" and we thank her for permission to use it here. As things develop these terms will be further defined and others will join them on the website of the European Knowledge Centre: http://www.youth-knowledge.net/

Object of recognition

Potential refers to all the cognitive, affective and practical capacities and achievements that a person could develop and that could be fostered by motivation and desire, by effort and application, by learning and life experience.

Capacity is similar to potential, but is typically used in a more specific way to refer to particular kinds of individual potential and also implies having some kind of related knowledge, skill or competence.

Ability refers to capacities that someone can already demonstrate that s/he possesses, such as having the ability to speak a certain language.

Capability refers to what someone can demonstrably or presumably do, and therefore it is similar to the terms skills and competence.

Knowledge: it is impossible to provide a satisfactory account of the conceptual background behind the term 'knowledge' in a few words. In the everyday world, the meaning of the term knowledge appears self-evident: it is what someone individually knows or the sum of what a given civilisation collectively knows. But what does it mean to know something? What is it that is known, how do we come to know it, why does it count as something worth knowing, and what do we do with it when we know it? In educational practice knowledge is what there is to learn, but it is not necessarily useful and worthwhile of its own accord. It has to be joined up with skills and competences (to become useful) on the one hand – and no less importantly, with principles and values (to become worthwhile) on the other hand.

Skill means having the knowledge and experience needed to perform a specific task or job – someone who has learned what to do (possesses the knowledge) and how to do it (can transfer the knowledge into real practice), which also means that someone else can observe the skill in action.

Competence is often used interchangeably with the term skill, but they do not really mean the same thing. Competence means the ability to apply knowledge, know-how and skills in a stable/recurring or changing situation. Two elements are crucial: applying what one knows and can do to a specific task or problem, and being able to transfer this ability between different situations.

Forms and Procedures

Documentation refers to a (virtual or real) paper or visual record. Documents stand for evidence, either because of the information they actually contain (for example, the love letter), or because the content bears recognised witness to the truth and accuracy of what it claims (for example, the university degree certificate).

Comparison means to set one thing next to another (or several other things) in order to be able to see and perhaps measure the similarities and differences between them. Comparison only makes sense if the items to be compared either can be held to belong to the same category of phenomena or can all be set in relation to a quality external to themselves.

Evaluation: in English, evaluation only means to make a reasoned judgement about or to give a plausible account of something. It does not imply any specific purpose (such as grading individual performance), nor does it imply any particular method of evaluation (such as a written test), and nor does its outcomes automatically suggest that something is of greater value or importance than something else (such as Council of Europe activities in comparison with SALTO activities).

Assessment takes place when evaluation has a comparative dimension that involves setting individuals, activities or institutions into a ranking order of performance or achievement. The ranking may be set in relation to criteria that are specific to the context, process or outcomes that are being assessed (such as: who swam the river fastest, or which EVS agency has the highest success rate in attracting socially disadvantaged young people into the programme). Alternatively, relative performance may be assesses against an external standard (such as in the case of the PISA attainment tests for 15-year-olds in different countries).

Formative evaluation or assessment refers to a dynamic process over time, which tries to capture the developmental dimensions of learning, performance and achievement. It records the pathways and the changes between two points in time, with the primary accent on what lies between those points and how the journey has unfolded.

Summative evaluation or assessment refers to assembling a picture of the outcomes of an activity in relation to the aims and purposes with which it began and/or in relation to a set of performance criteria that apply to all comparable activities. This kind of evaluation or assessment places the primary accent on comparing the starting and ending points of a process, but is less concerned with what happened along the way.

Learning outcomes are the results of a learning process, which may be expressed in a variety of ways. In fact, the outcomes that are recorded and measured at any one point in time are interim moments in a learning process, that is, a snapshot frame in a film (which could also run backwards).

Learning achievement or attainment is somewhat more narrowly defined than when using the term ‘outcome’. These terms refer to the set of knowledge, skills and/or competences that an individual has acquired and is able to demonstrate at the end of a given learning process.

Certification refers to a standardised process of formally validating knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences acquired by an individual or represented through a learning/service provider.

Certificates or diplomas are the 'piece of paper' which record the outcome of the certification process. It most frequently has the status of an official document, but this is not an absolute prerequisite.

Qualification can also simply be a synonym for a certificate or diploma. In the world of formal education and training in Europe it is usually an official record or document testifying to the fact that a person has successfully completed a given course or reached a given standard of achievement for a specified field, skill or competence.

Accreditation: formally or socially recognised authorities or instances accredit courses, activities and their outcomes. This means they testify that organisations and individuals meet standards to which all have agreed to conform. They vouch for the credibility of the certificates and diplomas that are issued, and hence for the reliability and validity of the monitoring, evaluation and assessment of the individuals and the organisations whose judgements are given the stamp of approval.

Accreditation of prior experience and learning (APEL) refers to the application of some kind of formal recognition to the knowledge, skills or competences that individuals have acquired in non-formal and informal ways during the course of their lives.

Validation of non-formal/informal learning: APEL is one way of validating non-formal and informal learning, that is, evaluating (possibly assessing) and recognising learning progress and outcomes. In the world of research methodology, the adjective 'valid' means that there is an accurate link between a theoretical concept (an idea) and its empirical indicator (a measurable observation). More simply, this means we assume, in good faith and with reasonable confidence, that something we can observe (and perhaps measure) in real life does genuinely reflect an idea in our heads.

Valuing learning: to value learning may simply mean that one thinks that learning as such is a good thing. More precisely, it refers to the process of encouraging participation in learning of all kinds and making its outcomes visible, so that (more) people and society as a whole become more aware that learning is an intrinsically worthwhile activity and thus to enhance the rewards that learning brings.

Social recognition points to the status and esteem ('feel good factor') that individuals, organisations or sectors receive as a consequence of displaying certain characteristics, reaching certain achievements or engaging in certain activities – such as learning. It might also extend to material rewards, such as higher incomes for those with higher level qualifications.

Codified recognition: for education and training purposes, regardless of sector and level, this term specifies a formal and often official (including legal) recognition of learning participation or outcomes, such as a certificate or a diploma.

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3. Council of Europe Recommendation N° 2003 (8) on the promotion and the recognition of non formal education/learning of young people

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to the objectives of the Council of Europe in the youth field and in the field of education;

Having regard to the Final Declaration adopted by the 5th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth in Bucharest (27-29 April 1998), in particular the reference to non-formal education, and to the Final Declaration of the 6th Conference (Thessaloniki, 7-9 November 2002);

Having regard to Recommendation 1437 (2000) of the Parliamentary Assembly on non-formal education;

Having regard to the experience and achievements of the youth sector of the Council of Europe regarding non-formal education/learning, in particular the work of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and the Symposium on Non-Formal Education held at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg from 12 to15 October 2000;

Having regard to Recommendation Rec(2002) 6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on higher education policies in lifelong learning;

Having regard to the activities undertaken since 1999 by the Council of Europe in the field of education for democratic citizenship, and Recommendation Rec(2002) 12 on this issue, adopted by the Committee of Ministers;

Considering the important role attached to non-formal learning in the Lisbon process and the present debate on lifelong learning in the European Union as well as in the White Paper of the European Commission “A new impetus for European youth”; taking into consideration the ongoing co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union in this field;

Convinced that lifelong learning has an important role to play in reducing social inequality and social exclusion, and in promoting active participation in democratic life; and that non-formal education/learning can contribute to secure all the knowledge and capacities which young people need to succeed in contemporary societies;

Convinced of the necessity to mobilise the full learning potential within children and young people, in view of the social and cultural transformations resulting from the emergence of knowledge-based economies and societies in Europe and the world as a whole,

1. Recommends that the governments of member states:

reaffirm that non-formal education/learning nowadays constitutes a fundamental dimension of the lifelong learning process, and therefore work towards the development of effective standards of recognition of non-formal education/learning as an essential part of general education and vocational training, and this with regard to:

– the qualification of professional and voluntary staff in charge of offers of non-formal education/learning;

– the quality of the education/learning offer itself;

– the monitoring of learning progress made by participants within non-formal education/learning programmes, both individually and as part of a group;

b. support the creation and the use of a European portfolio as a description tool aiming to record experiences, skills and knowledge (learning outcomes) acquired through non-formal education/learning, bearing in mind the example of the European Language Portfolio;

c. promote equal opportunities for all young people, in particular for the socially-disadvantaged groups, by creating equitable conditions of access to non-formal education/learning in order to fully develop its potential with regard to reducing social inequality and social exclusion;

d. actively encourage innovative non-formal education/learning experiences by supporting the effective dissemination of relevant documentation about good practice, training methods and achievements of non-formal education/learning;

e. introduce support measures for non-formal education/learning initiatives aiming to encourage young people's commitment and contribution to the promotion of values such as active citizenship, human rights, tolerance, social justice, inter-generational dialogue, peace and intercultural understanding;

f. actively engage the non-formal education/learning sector, alongside the formal educational and vocational training systems, in the development of a common European area for lifelong learning;

g. actively use the potential of non-formal education/learning as a complementary means of facilitating the integration of young people in society, by supporting their increased participation, in particular those from transition countries, in relevant European exchange programmes;

h. promote dialogue between actors of formal and non-formal education/learning and encourage better understanding of different approaches concerning non-formal education/learning in the different European countries;

i. support and further develop existing research work in the field of non-formal education/learning, as well as the use of its results; encourage the gathering and diffusion of examples of good practice in the field of non-formal education/learning, at national and European levels; and further support existing co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union in this respect;

j. make non-formal education/learning a significant element of national youth policies, and of European co-operation in this field;

k. secure sufficient human and financial resources for the implementation and the recognition of non-formal education/learning programmes and their outcomes, with a view to enabling non-formal education/learning to have an adequate space within the learning community;

2.Instructs the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to transmit this recommendation to the governments of those states parties to the European Cultural Convention which are not members of the Council of Europe.

4. Acknowledgements

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Kees SCHUUR
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Norah SWEETMAN
Jan VAN HOVE

EVALUATION FORM

European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers

Evaluation

Please send your completed evaluation by 2 July 2006 to: youthportfolio@coe.int

Details of the user

Name
Organisation
Number of years in youth work
Volunteer or Professional?
Youth worker or youth leader

Aims of the portfolio

Do you have any comments in relation to the aims proposed ?

What was your motivation for using the portfolio ?

Please indicate your motivation on a scale from 0= none to 3 = a lot		*Please rate the usefulness from 0 to 3 (0 = not at all ; 3= very)*
0	For assessing and recording my own competencies	0
0	For describing my competencies to others	0
0	To set my own learning and development goals	0
0	To have external feedback	0
Other :		0

Portfolio Content

The following contents are appropriate and helpful

0 = not helpful at all
3 = very helpful

Introduction (Part I)	0
Instructions (Part III, section 1)	0
The youth work context (Part III, section 2)	0
Knowledge,skills ,attitudes and values (Part III, section 3)	0
What is a youth leader/youth worker (Part III, sections 4 and 5)	0
Feedback to your self-assessment (Part III, section 7)	0
Glossary (Part IV, section 1)	0

What was the most valuable part/section ?

What was the least valuable part/section ?

If ou felt that some elements of these parts/sections were not useful please tell us why :

Do you have any comments or suggestions to help us improve these parts/sections ?

Concerning Part III, sections number 4 and 5 : does it reflect your youth work reality?

Yes ☑

No ☐

Why? :

Part III, Section Number 6 : Competence Framework

Bearing in mind that the list of competences is not intended to be exhaustive, do they cover the function ?(3= completely/2= more or less completely/1 = not completely / 0= relevant competences are missing)

How do you appreciate the aid to reflection ? (3= very useful / 0= totally useless)

	List of competences	Aid to reflection
To empower young people	0	0

List of competences / Comments :

Aid to reflection / Comments :

	List of competences	Aid to reflection
To develop relevant learning opportunities	0	0

List of competences / Comments :

Aid to reflection / Comments :

	List of competences	Aid to reflection
to accompany young people in their intercultural learning processs	0	0

List of competences / Comments :

Aid to reflection / Comments :

	List of competences	Aid to reflection
To use evaluative practice	0	0

List of competences / Comments :

Aid to reflection / Comments :

	List of competences	Aid to reflection
To contribute to organisational and youth policy development	0	0

List of competences / Comments :

Aid to reflection / Comments :

Part III, Section Number 7: Feedback to my self-assessment (Johari window, etc)

Who did you find to give you feedback?

How helpful was this process for you?

Part III, section Number 8: Personal Development & Learning Plan

Did you use this plan to prepare your ideas for future action ? YES/NO

Do you have any comments concerning this plan ?

General Comments

What suggestions do you have for improving the portfolio?

Would you recommend the Portfolio to others?

Yes/no? ☑ ☐

Why?

To what extent do you think that people need training in order to use the Portfolio effectively?

Please send your completed evaluation by 2 July 2006 to: youthportfolio@coe.int

European Youth Centre
30, rue Pierre de Coubertin
67000 Strasbourg/France

THANK YOU!!

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Directorate of Youth and Sport
Direction de la jeunesse et du sport