Europass e-portfolio

Background document

Document prepared for the expert workshop taking place on 5 December 2018

promoted by the European Commission

Executive summary

e-portfolios can be understood as a digital dynamic tool that enables individuals to document, display and manage their skills, qualifications and experience throughout the lifespan of their career. e-portfolios help individuals be reflective, support their personal development, allow them to showcase their skills, qualifications and experience, and enable (self-) assessment of their skills. Existing e-portfolios comply with one or more of these purposes, but none appears to combine all in one tool only.

Following the Decision on the new Europass framework adopted in April 2018, web-based tools shall be made available to support individuals in documenting and describing their skills and qualifications acquired through learning and work experiences (including through mobility and volunteering). These web-based tools will be part of the new Europass e-portfolio which endeavours to be more comprehensive than other e-portfolios currently offered in the market.

The Europass e-portfolio will depart from and build on the success of the current Europass Online Editor to ensure and optimise business continuity. It will primarily target individual end-users, such as learners, jobseekers, workers and volunteers (regardless their employment status or digital skills), but also NEET (i.e. youngsters aged between 16 and 24 who are *N*ot in *E*ducation, *E*mployment, or *Tr*aining). They may be European citizens, but also third country nationals. They will actively use the e-portfolio to document and describe their personal information, and to manage their careers and lifelong learning. Other stakeholders will also benefit from the Europass e-portfolio and contribute to its promotion and gradual use by end-users. These comprise entities that will particularly assist end-users to document their skills and qualifications and manage their career through the e-portfolio, or will receive and process the personal profiles and documentation of end-users (e.g. a recruiter or education and training institution).

Six interconnected web-based tools will be accessed from the Europass e-portfolio dashboard:

- *Profile*, which helps end-users create and manage a personal profile, and compile and store any relevant documentation;
- *Online Editor*, which allows end-users to create and download a Europass CV, a Language Passport and a Cover Letter;
- *Skills Profiler*, which transforms end-users' Profile into a set of skills and qualifications or other structured information that can be used as input for defining goals and matching skills;
- *Goals*, which supports end-users to identify their interests, goals and aspirations in relation to future learning, work and volunteer experiences;
- *Skills Match*, which provides end-users with suitable learning and job opportunities based on their skills, qualifications, experience and preferences; and
- *Applications Tracker*, which enables end-users to prepare, edit, submit and keep track of their learning and job applications.

The e-portfolio dashboard is envisaged to operate as a hub and centralised gateway for the e-portfolio web-based tools (namely, the Profile, Skills Profiler, Goals, Skills Match and Applications Tracker), along with other Europass web-based tools (e.g. the Online Editor, self-assessment tools). The Europass e-portfolio and associated web-based tools will be made available for free without requiring registration for its basic functionalities. However, end-users that decide to sign in and/or create an EU Login account will have access to advanced functionalities.

To sum up, the Europass e-portfolio web-based tools are thus aimed at supporting end-users to manage their careers and lifelong learning through a unique and well-rounded tool.

List of abbreviations

CV	Curriculum Vitae
DLV	Deliverable
EC	European Commission
EQF	European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning
ESCO	European Classification of Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations
EU	European Union
EURES	European network of Employment Services
EPSO	European Personnel Selection Office
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IT	Information Technology
MS	Member State

Glossary

Unless otherwise mentioned, the definitions provided below were developed by the authors of this publication for the specific purposes of this project.

Active job search – Individuals perform an active job search when directly contacting employers or HR professionals either for a spontaneous application or an application to a specific job opportunity.

Certificate – An official document, issued by an awarding body, which records achievements of an individual following an assessment against a predefined standard[1].

Certificate supplement – A document attached to a vocational education and training or professional certificate issued by the competent authorities or bodies, in order to make it easier for third persons – particularly in another country – to understand the learning outcomes acquired by the holder of the qualification, as well as the nature, level, context, content and status of the education and training completed and skills acquired[2].

Certification of learning outcomes – Process of issuing a certificate, diploma or title formally attesting that a set of learning outcomes (knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual have been assessed by a competent body against a predefined standard.[3]

Competence – Ability to apply learning outcomes adequately in a defined context (education, work, personal or professional development)[4].

Digitally-signed credential – Electronic statement which is issued by an awarding body to an individual to confirm and provide proof of her/his learning outcomes. Digitally-signed credentials are interchangeably referred to as 'digital diplomas' in this document.

Diploma supplement – A document attached to a higher education diploma issued by the competent authorities or bodies, in order to make it easier for third persons – particularly in another country – to understand the learning outcomes acquired by the holder of the qualification, as well as the nature, level, context, content and status of the education and training completed and skills acquired[5].

Document and manage – Functionalities that allow individuals to compile and describe information on their skills, qualifications and experience and to continuously improve and update it.

e-portfolio – Digital dynamic tool that enables individuals to document, display and manage their skills, qualifications and experience throughout the lifespan of their career.

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[1] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office.

[2] DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC.

[3] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office.

[4] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office.

[5] DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC.

Europass supplements – means a set of documents, such as diploma supplements and certificate supplements, issued by the competent authorities or bodies[6];

Experience – Knowledge, skills and competences which an individual gained by undertaking an activity for a certain period of time.

Guidance – A continuous process that enables individuals to identify their capacities, skills and interests, through a range of individual and collective activities to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and skills are learned or used[7].

Interoperability – Ability of organisations to interact towards mutually beneficial goals, involving the sharing of information and knowledge between these organisations, through the business processes they support, by means of the exchange of data between their ICT systems[8]. *Technical interoperability* means the ability of information and communication technology systems to interact so as to enable the sharing of information, achieved through agreement by all parties and owners of the information[9].

Lifelong learning – All learning activities undertaken throughout life, which result in improving knowledge, know-how, skills, competences and/or qualifications for personal, social and/or professional reasons[10].

Passive job search – Individuals perform a passive job search when currently being employed but open to hearing about new career opportunities. In this case, individuals do not actively seek out and apply to specific positions.

Personal profile – A comprehensive representation of the skills and qualifications of an individual acquired through working and learning experiences, including through mobility and volunteering.

Qualification – Formal outcome (certificate, diploma or title) of an assessment process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards and/or possesses the necessary competence to do a job in a specific area of work. A qualification confers official recognition of the value of learning outcomes in the labour market and in education and training. A qualification can be a legal entitlement to practise a trade[11].

Reskilling –Acquire new skills to do a current job in a different way, transition into another job or sector or prepare for the future workplace[12].

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[6] DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC

[7] DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC.

[8] European Union (2017). New European Interoperability Framework – Promoting seamless services and data flows for European public administrations. Luxembourg: Publications office

[9] DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC.

[10] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office.

[11] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office

[12] Adapted from the meaning of reskilling as described into the Cambridge and Collins dictionaries.

Share – Functionalities that allow individuals to publish or provide access to third parties to their information on skills, qualifications and experience.

Skill – Ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to compete tasks and solve problems[13].

Skills intelligence – Available quantitative or qualitative analysis of aggregated data on skills from existing sources in relation to the labour market and of corresponding learning opportunities in the education and training system which can contribute to guidance and counselling, recruitment processes, the choice of education, training and career paths[14].

Skill gap – Situation where an individual does not have the level of skills required to perform her or his job adequately. Skill gaps can be analysed at individual level (using a skills audit), at company/sector level, or at regional, national or international levels. Skill gaps can be linked to an insufficient level of qualification; they may also refer to situations where the workforce has the right level of qualification but lacks specific types of skills (such as management skills) or experience required to perform a task or a job adequately.

Store – Functionalities that allow individuals to save their information and documentation in electronic form, such as into their Europass account or download it for local storage.

Upskilling – Short-term targeted training typically provided following initial education or training, and aimed at supplementing, improving or updating knowledge, skills and/or competences acquired during previous training[15].

Wizard – Online assistance which provides individuals with a sequence of dialog boxes that guide them through a series of well-defined steps.

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[13] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office.
[14] DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC.
[15] Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy – A selection of 130 key terms (second edition). Luxembourg: Publications office.

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1. Introduction

In 2004, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Decision to establish Europass as a means to achieve better transparency of skills and qualifications, and rationalise and integrate existing instruments into a single framework (Decision 2241/2004/EC)[16]. In order to better communicate and present individuals' qualifications and competences throughout Europe, a personal, coordinated portfolio of documents was created. The Europass portfolio evolved throughout the last decade and currently comprises five document templates: the curriculum vitae, the language passport, the diploma and certificate supplements, and the Europass mobility.

In June 2016, the Commission presented the New Skills Agenda[17] bringing up the importance of skills for growth, competitiveness and sustainable jobs. The New Skills Agenda is divided into three priorities for action, one of which (advancing skills intelligence, documentation and informed career choices) proposes the revision of the Europass framework. The objective of this revision is to set up an online service platform to help individuals document and share information on skills and qualifications. As such, the European Parliament and the Council adopted in 2018 a Decision revising the Europass framework in order to provide better services for skills and qualifications (Decision 2018/646)[18]. The goal of the new Decision is to support the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications through web-based tools, as well as the provision of relevant information and guidance to learners, jobseekers, workers and volunteers (both through an online platform and national services).

Responding to the objectives of the Decision on a new Europass framework, the Europass e-portfolio will consist of a comprehensive set of web-based tools supporting individuals to document and describe their skills, qualifications and experience and to manage their career from a lifelong learning perspective.

This document builds upon an initial business analysis conducted by everis[19], and describes the objectives and scope of the Europass e-portfolio, along with its specific web-based tools.

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[16] Decision No 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass). Last accessed on 09/08/2018 at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004D2241&from=EN

[17] COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS of 10 June 2016 on a NEW SKILLS AGENDA FOR EUROPE Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness (COM/2016/0381 final). Last accessed on 26/07/2018 at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0381

[18] Decision (EU) 2018/646 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC. Last accessed on 09/08/2018 at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018D0646&from=en

[19] The 'Business Analysis for the future Europass2 platform' was a project framed within the specific request SC Num. 431 under FwC DI/7171 for the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and ran from February 2017 until July 2018. This project is hereafter referred to as *'previous Europass2 business analysis'*. One of its deliverables comprised a preliminary analysis of the Europass e-portfolio (DLV010). This project is hereafter referred to as *'previous Europass2 business analysis'*.

2. Europass e-portfolio

Traditionally, individuals have been documenting their skills, qualifications and experience using CVs, paper certificates and diplomas. Nowadays, they can also benefit from e-portfolio tools that have the ability to support individuals in this same task. An **e-portfolio** can be defined[20] as a digital dynamic tool that enables individuals to document, display and manage their skills, qualifications and experience throughout the lifespan of their career. Currently, e-portfolios are offered by career development and employment services websites, professional social network websites, CV creators, e-learning and upskilling platforms, among other stakeholders.

Existing e-portfolios comply in general with one or more of the following purposes (see figure below):

Help individuals be reflective
Aims to push individuals to think about what they achieved so far and aggregate the full extent of their learning and working evidences to back it up.

Support individuals in their personal development
Supports individuals to create a personal development plan and provides means to track and plan development opportunities.

Showcase individuals' information
Helps individuals select and share information about themselves and make this information available to potential employers, education or training providers or other organisations.

To assess individuals' skills and competences
Enables (self-)assessment of skills and competences. Assessment also fosters motivation for lifelong learning by encouraging individuals to fulfil their personal achievements.

Figure 1. e-portfolio purposes

Building further on the current understanding and concept of e-portfolios, the Europass e-portfolio has the ambition to be **more comprehensive than other e-portfolios** (while avoiding duplication with similar tools). It endeavours to **meet relevant needs** of a diverse spectrum of individuals (learners, jobseekers, workers or volunteers, regardless their employment status or digital skills) and to support them to manage their career with **one tool only**. Under its umbrella, the Europass e-portfolio will offer a set of web-based tools capable of responding to all four purposes as described above.

2.1. Scope

The Europass e-portfolio will build on the currently available portfolio of documents to achieve the following **objectives**:

- Establish a single entry-point for a set of web-based tools which exchange information between them and allow individuals to effortlessly switch from one tool to another;
- Guide individuals to create and manage a **personal profile**, describe their skills, qualifications and experience, and compile and store any relevant documentation or evidence of learning (e.g. open badges, digital diplomas) in a **Library**;
- Create and edit documents such as CVs and cover letters through an **Online Editor**;

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[20] A desk research undertaken during the previous Europass2 business analysis concluded that there is a lack of a common, widely-accepted definition for the concept of e-portfolio. Therefore, a definition of e-portfolio has been proposed based on the outcomes of the analysis conducted.

- Support individuals to develop their career by defining their **interests, goals and aspirations** and keeping track of their progress from a lifelong learning perspective;
- Provide individuals with suitable **learning and job opportunities** based on their personal profile, aspirations and preferences; and
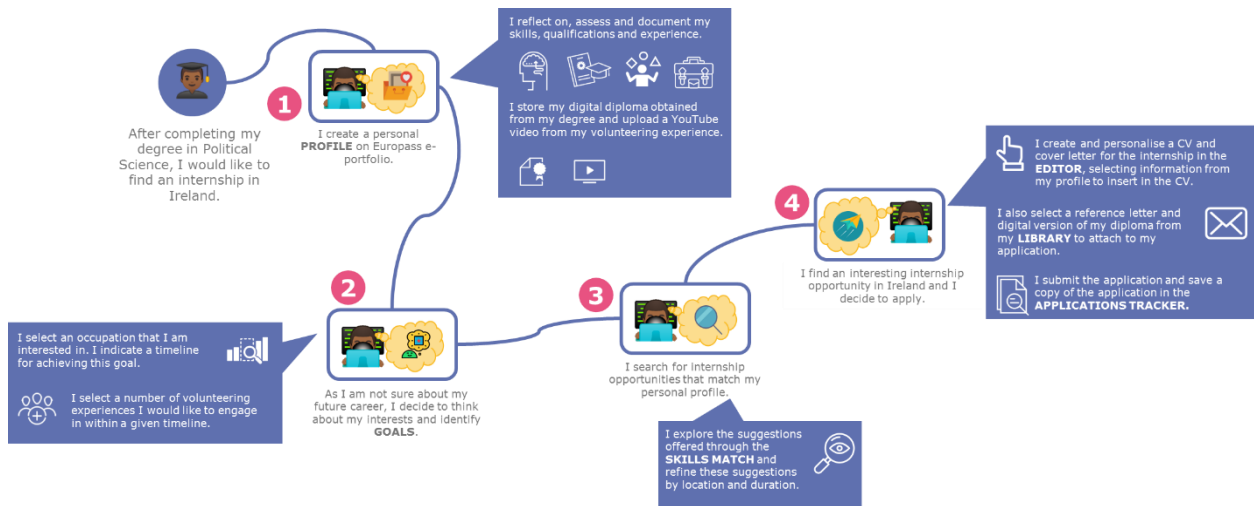- Enable individuals to prepare, submit and keep track of their **learning and job applications**.

Figure 2. User story showcasing the potential of Europass e-portfolio

To fulfil its objectives, the e-portfolio should include a **well-interconnected, comprehensive set of web-based tools** capable of supporting individuals to document, manage, store and share information on their skills, qualifications and experience (regardless of their digital skills). These web-based tools should be **free-of-charge, secure, accessible and user-friendly** and made available in **all EU official languages**.

In order to **ensure and optimise business continuity**, the Europass e-portfolio should build further on the success of the Europass CV and Online Editor. First, the Online Editor should not cease to exist so that individuals can create their CV with it. Second, the e-portfolio should **adopt the structure and data fields of the Europass CV schemata** as European citizens are already familiar and make extensive use of this CV format. Finally, the e-portfolio should enable individuals to **re-use previously created content** from a number of compatible sources (e.g. a Europass CV or from other online platforms such as EURES or Monster) to create their personal profile. As a result, individuals will be encouraged to gradually move to using the Europass e-portfolio as a sustainable, comprehensive and reliable add-on to the current Europass offering.

As the Europass e-portfolio is envisaged to offer the possibility of storing and sharing personal data of individuals, **data privacy** preferences should be compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as well as the Regulation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data (2018/1725)[21].

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[21] REGULATION (EU) 2018/1725 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC. Last accessed on 27/11/2018 at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2018.295.01.0039.01.ENG&toc=OJ:L:2018:295:TOC

To allow for a **common understanding and consistent references to qualifications, skills and occupations**, the Europass e-portfolio should be based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and possibly the European Classification of Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) (subject to discussion between the Commission and Member States). Both classification systems can support the consistent documentation of skills, competences, qualifications and occupations of individuals.

The Europass e-portfolio should be **interoperable** with other Europass tools, European Commission services (such EURES, EPSO and all EU institutions recruitment tools) and other platforms and digital tools of third parties (such as other e-portfolios, employment services websites, CV editing platforms, and e-learning services). This will be achieved through an open interoperability mechanism that will allow different ICT systems and software applications to connect and exchange data (provided that all parties and data owners agree to share information). The interoperability mechanism could potentially contribute to improving the aggregation of data for skills-based matching, finding learning and job opportunities, and ultimately reducing unemployment rates in the European Union[22].

The e-portfolio should support an **active and/or passive job search**[23]. Individuals may have the option to share their personal profile and other relevant documentation with employers and HR professionals to hear about new career opportunities, or to apply directly to companies or HR professionals.

Finally, the Europass e-portfolio could have the potential to serve as a **rich source of data and skills intelligence** for the European Commission and EU Member States (particularly for the EU Skills Panorama). Through the Europass e-portfolio, the Commission will be able to harvest relevant labour market information based on the personal profiles of anonymised individuals. This information can contribute to help the Commission and Member States to effectively address skills needs, gaps and mismatches, as well as to support the education and training sector in meeting labour market demands.

2.2 Target audiences

The e-portfolio will primarily target **individual end-users** (later in this document referred to as end-users), who will actively use the e-portfolio to document their skills and qualifications acquired through learning and work experiences, as well as to manage their career and learning. End-users include learners, jobseekers, workers and volunteers (regardless their employment status or digital skills), but also NEET (i.e. youngsters aged between 16 and 24 who are *N*ot in *E*ducation, *E*mployment, or *T*raining). They may be European citizens, but also third country nationals.

Other stakeholders will have a secondary role in contributing to the promotion and progressive use of the Europass e-portfolio. On the one hand, **facilitators** will assist end-users to document their skills and qualifications and manage their career through the e-portfolio. This target group includes guidance and counselling advisors, public employment services, national Europass centres, employers, education and training institutions, responsible national authorities, IT professionals, among others. On the other hand, **recipients** will receive and process the

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[22] The conceptual idea of the interoperability mechanism has been discussed in a workshop organised on 12/06/2018 within the framework of this project.
[23] Individuals perform an *active job search* when directly contacting employers or HR professionals either for a spontaneous application or an application for a specific job opportunity. They perform a *passive job search* when currently being employed but open to hearing about new career opportunities. In this case, individuals do not actively seek out and apply to specific positions.

personal profiles and documentation of end-users. The e-portfolio will offer different possibilities for end-users to share their personal profiles and other documentation with third parties. This target group particularly includes employers, education and training providers, HR professionals, along with other organisations interested in assessing the documented skills, qualifications and work experience of end-users.

The main roles and examples of the primary and secondary audiences of the Europass e-portfolio are summarised in the figure below.
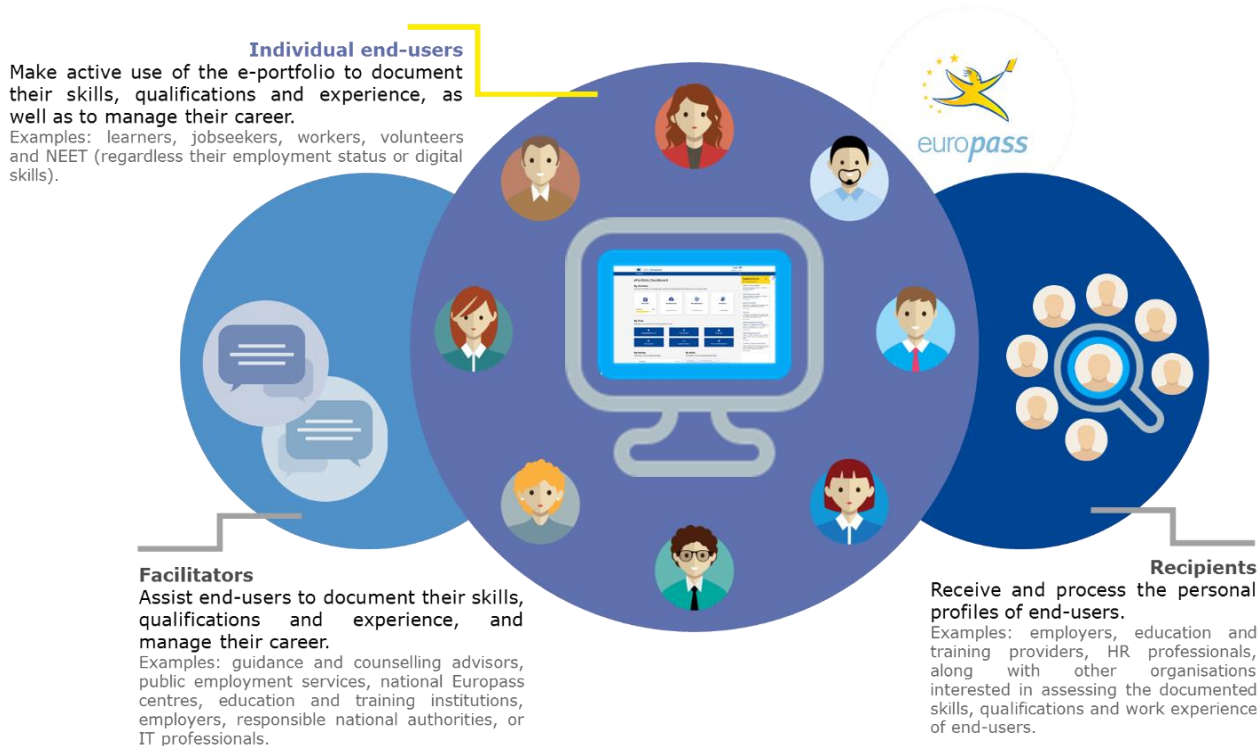

Individual end-users
Make active use of the e-portfolio to document their skills, qualifications and experience, as well as to manage their career.
Examples: learners, jobseekers, workers, volunteers and NEET (regardless their employment status or digital skills).

Facilitators
Assist end-users to document their skills, qualifications and experience, and manage their career.
Examples: guidance and counselling advisors, public employment services, national Europass centres, education and training institutions, employers, responsible national authorities, or IT professionals.

Recipients
Receive and process the personal profiles of end-users.
Examples: employers, education and training providers, HR professionals, along with other organisations interested in assessing the documented skills, qualifications and work experience of end-users.

Figure 3. Europass e-portfolio primary and secondary target audiences

The Europass e-portfolio web-based tools described hereafter solely consider the perspective of end-users. Although facilitators and recipients will benefit from these web-based tools, they are not currently planned to have any special access in Europass or a specific web-based tool targeted to them. End-users should be considered as the main target audience of the e-portfolio.

3. e-portfolio dashboard

The Europass e-portfolio dashboard **operates as a hub and centralised gateway** for the e-portfolio web-based tools (described below), along with other Europass web-based tools (e.g. the Online Editor, self-assessment tools[24]).

The main goal of the e-portfolio dashboard is to **provide a single entry-point** for a set of tools which exchange information between them and allow end-users to effortlessly switch from one tool to another. The e-portfolio dashboard and associated web-based tools are available free-of-charge to all end-users. However, only end-users that choose to **register** will have at their disposal the full range of e-portfolio functionalities. End-users can sign in with or create an EU Login account to access the Europass e-portfolio. The EU Login will verify their identity and recover their personal settings, history and access rights in a secure way. End-users should also have the possibility to sign in with their social media accounts[25].

The dashboard will provide end-users with a structured overview of the available web-based tools (including both the e-portfolio and other relevant Europass tools), along with other useful add-ons:

- A **Help & Feedback** service with relevant information, contacts and useful advice (e.g. put together a complete CV and cover letter or prepare to an interview), as well as a feedback option to ask questions, report a technical problem, assess their satisfaction with the e-portfolio, or provide suggestions for improvements;
- An **Activity Feed** with a log of e-portfolio information shared by end-users with third parties (i.e. to check with whom, when and what has been shared);
- **Calls to Action** to encourage end-users to further complete their personal profile, update their skills, or manage their goals;
- **Customised suggestions**[26] to help end-users make informed decisions when managing their career and lifelong learning. The e-portfolio dashboard will customise[27] the suggestions based on end-users' e-portfolio content and latest activities combined with up-to-date labour market information.

The e-portfolio dashboard will also help end-users to **manage their preferences** in relation to:

- Selecting the interface language for the e-portfolio (from the official languages of the European Union);
- Controlling data privacy settings; and
- Monitoring the amount and type of data stored.

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[24] Self-assessment tools will be analysed more in-depth and reported on a deliverable specifically dedicated to this topic.
[25] Signing in with social media does not require creating an EU Login account, but this possibility is only available for a limited number of European Commission services at the moment. A decision needs to be taken on whether the Europass e-portfolio will allow for signing in with social media.
[26] Concretely, as soon as end-users complete, for instance, their Profile and/or their aspirations, the e-portfolio dashboard will present them with tailor-made suggestions to guide end-users to relevant upskilling, reskilling and job opportunities.
[27] The customised suggestions will have a back-end system with algorithms that will rank content for end-users by relevance. The suggestions will be fed with information from other platforms and services (such as EURES) through the interoperability mechanism. The suggestions will match end-users' preferences, and the content of their Profile and Goals. This functionality will avoid duplication of information and sources.

The Europass e-portfolio displays six interconnected web-based tools (see figure below):

- **Profile**, which helps end-users create and manage a personal profile, and compile and store any relevant documentation in a **Library**;
- **Online Editor**, which allows for the creation and download of a Europass CV, a Language Passport and a Cover Letter;
- **Skills Profiler**, which transforms end-users' Profile into a set of skills and qualifications or other structured information that can be used as input for the Goals and Skills Match;
- **Goals**, which supports end-users to identify their interests, goals and aspirations in relation to future learning, work and volunteer experiences;
- **Skills Match**, which provides end-users with suitable learning and job opportunities based on their skills, qualifications, experience, goals and preferences; and
- **Applications Tracker**, which enables end-users to prepare, edit, submit and keep track of their learning and job applications.
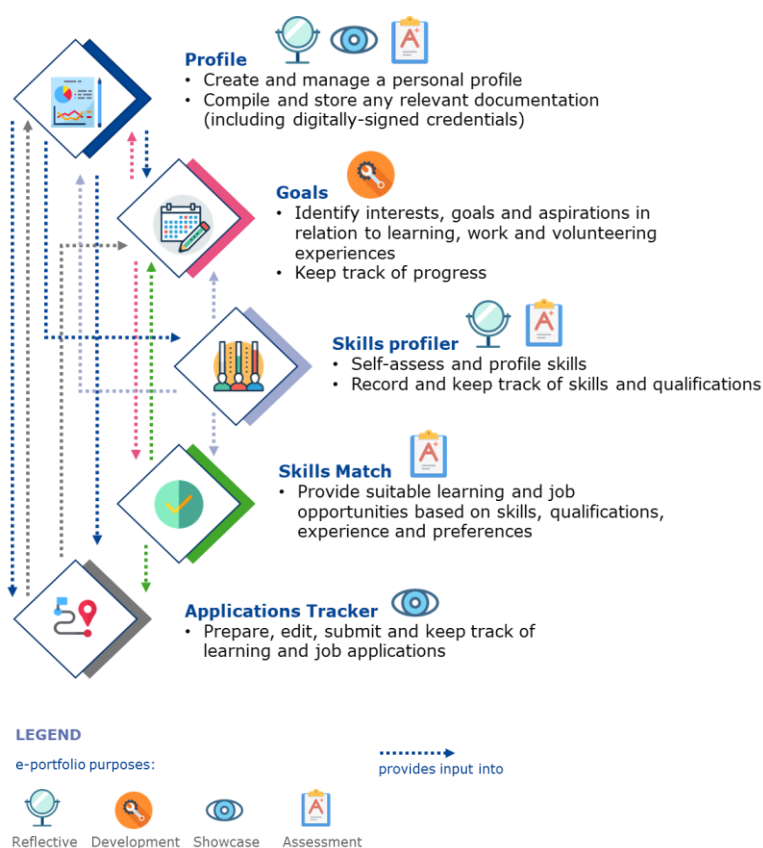

Figure 4. Europass e-portfolio web-based tools[28]

Each web-based tool is presented below in more detail.

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[28] The Online Editor is not represented in this figure as it will mostly interact with the Profile.

3.1. Profile

The Profile will build on the existing Europass Online Editor by adopting a similar structure and data fields of the Europass CV schemata. Moreover, end-users will be able to re-use previously created content from a Europass CV to create their personal profile and vice versa. The Profile will support multilingualism to allow end-users to create their personal profile in several languages.

This web-based tool is intended to be more dynamic than the Europass CV (or a common CV). While a Europass CV may represent a snapshot of end-users' skills, qualifications and experience each time tailored to the requirements of specific learning and job opportunities, the Profile will allow end-users to keep a complete overview of these dimensions throughout time. Furthermore, the Profile will **regularly encourage end-users to update and complete further their personal profile** (e.g. *has your position changed?*). End-users will then be able to select the most relevant skills, qualifications and experience they want to showcase to others through their Profile or a CV. It is important to clarify that the Profile does not behave as a social media platform through which individuals can be found. **End-users will be able to share parts or the integral version of their Profile** with other stakeholders either through a public or private URL (based upon a predefined Europass layout) created for a specific purpose or through the Applications Manager. Finally, end-users will also have the possibility to **store, manage and share documentation** (including digital diplomas). Their documentation will be stored on and managed from a Library within the Profile.

3.2. Online Editor

Currently, the Online Editor allows end-users to create and download a CV, a Language Passport and a Cover Letter. End-users also have the possibility of signing in to a cloud service (i.e. Google Drive or OneDrive) to store these documents and update them according to their needs. The functionalities of the Online Editor will not cease to exist and will remain at the disposal of end-users (whether they wish to register or not). Nevertheless, the functionalities of the Online Editor will be modernised by offering end-users the possibility to choose a template to personalise their CV and Cover Letter (while keeping the structure and data fields of the Europass CV schemata). The database of templates may be extended along time by allowing end-users to create new templates that comply with certain technical specifications (to be later defined).

All-in-all, end-users will be able to:

- Create a CV and Cover Letter;
- Personalise the look and feel of their CV and Cover Letter;
- Download an Europass CV and Cover Letter;
- Import information from a Europass CV to create a personal profile in the Profile; and
- Store created CVs and Cover Letters in the Profile.

3.3. Skills Profiler

The Skills Profiler can be understood as a **specialised profiling web-based tool and centralised record of skills and qualifications**. It contains an automated function that transforms end-users' Profile and/or CV into a set of skills, qualifications or other structured information. At the same time, and most importantly, the Skills Profiler **helps end-users to engage in a self-reflection process** to confirm, edit or add skills or qualifications as proposed by the automated function, and **to record and keep track of their skills and qualifications** across time. It centralises information about skills and qualifications in a separate web-based tool to empower end-users to undertake this self-reflection process in a user-friendly way. On the other hand, the Skills Profiler is a wealthy source of information that will especially contribute to collecting anonymised skills intelligence.

Considering the scope and goals of this web-based tool, it could also integrate self-assessment tools (such as the existing 'European language levels' or 'Digital competence') that end-users can explore to reflect on their skills.

3.4. Goals

End-users will be able to **capture their interests, goals and aspirations** in relation to learning, work and volunteer experiences. Concretely, end-users will have the opportunity to identify skills they would like to acquire or develop further, education and training goals, occupations they aspire to perform, or volunteering work they would like to engage in.

3.5. Skills Match

The Skills Match provides end-users with the possibility to **explore existing learning and job opportunities** from the European Commission services (e.g. EURES) and other third parties through keyword search and by setting additional criteria which reflect their individual preferences (e.g. location, type of work or learning). The advanced functionalities of this web-based tool provide end-users with suitable learning or job opportunities based on their personal profile, goals and/or preferences. The web-based tool will offer advanced matching algorithms with a strong focus on **skills-based matching**[29]. The potential use of ESCO in web-based tools such as the Skills Match is subject to discussion between the European Commission and Member States. In other words, end-users will be presented with opportunities that, on the one hand, match their current skills to perform a certain job and, on the other hand, with opportunities that are aimed at upskilling or reskilling. This web-based tool is intended to **match the end-user's profile and goals to learning and job opportunities**, being able to refine the matching results though keyword search and by setting additional criteria. End-users will receive information on how the opportunity relates to their profile, and will be able to receive automated suggestions based on their personal profile, goals or previously stored opportunities searches.

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[29] By complying with an agreed set of open standards, third parties (e.g. public or private employment services or e-learning providers) make their opportunities available on the Skills Match. This is envisaged to be set up through the interoperability mechanism, but its feasibility still needs to be carefully analysed.

3.6. Applications Tracker

The Applications Tracker will help end-users **apply in a uniform way** to learning and job opportunities through the e-portfolio, as well as to manage and monitor their applications. More concretely, end-users will be able to **prepare and apply to learning and job opportunities** following step-by-step guidance to prepare applications and directly apply to learning and job opportunities identified through the Skills Match. End-users will also have the possibility to **manage applications** in the Applications Tracker, either manually by keeping the application up-to-date and adapt the application status (when applying to third parties websites), or in a (semi)-automated way when applying to learning and job opportunities from the Skills Match Maker. In this case, end-users will benefit from an automated tracker of initiated and submitted applications. The operationalisation of this web-based tool is very much dependent on how Europass interoperability mechanism will be developed. The assumption is that recipients will use Europass open standards which will thus enable the exchange of information between recipients and the Europass e-portfolio (and its end-users). This exchange of information may entail e.g. end-users directly applying to opportunities via the Applications Tracker or recipients pushing back application progress information from their internal systems directly into the Applications Tracker. Until interoperability mechanism is fully operational and its pool of recipients has sufficiently grown, the Applications Tracker will allow for manually adding and managing applications. Over time and hand-in-hand with the development of interoperability mechanism, end-users will be able to benefit from the automated and semi-automated application and follow-up processes.

4. Concluding remarks

The Europass e-portfolio web-based tools will provide end-users with skills-based services aimed at helping them achieve their career goals. The e-portfolio takes a comprehensive approach to support career management and lifelong learning by providing **centralised access to a series of interconnected and complementary web-based tools through a dashboard**. These web-based tools respond to different career management needs in terms of:

- Documenting, managing, storing, and sharing information on skills, qualifications and experience (Profile, Online Editor and Skills Profiler);
- Supporting and guiding end-users' personal development (Goals);
- Finding suitable learning and job opportunities (Skills Match); and
- Preparing, submitting and following up on applications to relevant opportunities (Applications Tracker).

Even though other web-based tools on the market offer one or more functionalities envisaged for the Europass e-portfolio, none of them offers a **unique and free of charge combination of embedded functionalities** as planned for the Europass e-portfolio. The envisaged e-portfolio is more user-oriented, takes into account the needs of any end-user throughout their career and supports re-use of previously created content. It promotes interoperability within Europass web-based tools and with other platforms from third parties.

The added-value of Europass e-portfolio lies on its capacity to respond to all purposes associated with today's e-portfolios (i.e. reflective, development, showcase and assessment) under the umbrella of one tool. As a result, the e-portfolio will help learners, jobseekers, workers and volunteers (regardless their employment status and digital skills) to further enhance their learning and work experiences from a lifelong learning perspective.