



NEWSLETTER  
FROM THE TRAINING COURSE  
"THE YOUTHPASS: A HELP OR A CHALLENGE?"  
SION, FRANCE, 19 - 25 AUGUST 2009



## Foreword

Youthpass - it is not just a certificate. Youthpass is a philosophy – a tool for recognition of non-formal education. Together strongly believes in the value of non-formal education and the benefits it brings to young people. That is why we decided to organise the training course "The Youthpass: a Help or a Challenge?" and share our experience and knowledge with other youth organisations from different countries.

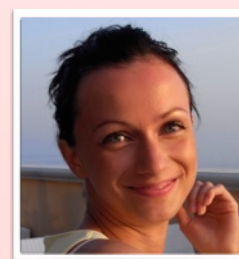
This training course follows a similar project "Youthpass for better quality in youth exchanges", organised in

Haapsalu, Estonia from 25 to 29 June 2009. The continuation of this project enabled us to use the experience and good practices gained during the previous projects.

We believe it is our small contribution to the recognition of non-formal education and that the participants of the training course will become "ambassadors" of this message in their local communities.

This newsletter is also part of the dissemination of results of the training course. It was prepared together by

the participants of the training course in France as well as in Estonia, with a limited assistance of the trainers. You can find inside information about the training course, about Youthpass and several methods for self-evaluation as well as other useful hints.



Anna Roganova  
Project co-ordinator  
Together France





## About the training course

Non-formal education takes a more and more important place in the society. It has a great influence and thus, needed to be developed and implemented with a quality.

There is a great need and demand of developing the methodology and tools of the ways of implementation of Youthpass (a certificate of recognition of non-formal education and the self-evaluation tool) in the "Youth in Action" programme.

We proposed to set up a training dedicated to organisations or young people, dealing with youth

exchanges and that need to increase their knowledge on Youthpass: evaluate the



existing experience and gain concrete tools in order to put it into practice during their activities and to implement it not just as a diploma, but as a motivating self-accessed recognition tool.

The participants lived through an exciting learning

experience themselves through various active methodology games and exercises.

The training was led by experienced Youthpass trainers from "Together" organisation network, participating in Youthpass implementation since its pilot experimental phase in 2006, and continuing to use Youthpass during their activities, Anna Roganova and Jiri Peterka.



## What is a Youthpass?

Youthpass is a part of the European Commission's strategy to foster the **recognition of non-formal learning**. As a tool to visualise and to **validate learning outcomes** gained in "Youth in Action" projects, it puts policy into practice and practice into policy:



## What is a Youthpass?

- Creating their Youthpass Certificate together with a support person, participants of "Youth in Action" projects have the possibility to describe what they have done in their project and which competences they have acquired. Thus, Youthpass supports the **reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process**.
- Documenting the added value of a "Youth in Action" project, Youthpass visualises and supports **active European citizenship** of young people and youth workers.
- Being a Europe-wide validation instrument for non-formal learning in the youth field, Youthpass contributes to strengthening the **social recognition of youth work**.
- Making visible and validating key competences through a certificate, Youthpass finally aims at supporting the **employability** of young people and youth workers.

(Source: youthpass.eu)



## Formal/non-formal/informal??? What is it???

- Informal learning happens nearly all the time in daily life (at home, on the street, in cafés, etc.) but it is not a planned activity;
- Non-formal learning is voluntary, is assisted by others and is planned;
- Formal learning is structured, regulated from the outsider and involves some form of certification.

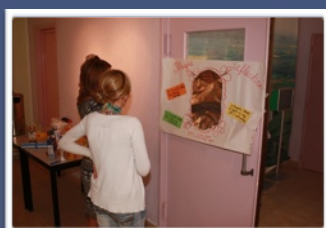
(Source: YouthPass Guide)



## Self-Evaluation Methods

Self-evaluation is an important part of personal learning process and the key role in the personal development. The methods that are used in this process are usually practised in a group of people (rather smaller groups, which makes the participants more open). This can make these activities more social and interactive.

Here you can find several methods of interactive self-evaluation:



### Magical Mirror

In this activity, you'd need a mirror as a symbol (you can make it from the paper) and a paper poster with questions. These questions can be divided into three groups: 1. Three character features that best characterise the person; 2. Three competences that the participant wants to learn; 3. Three competences that the participants needs for his/her job or other activities. The questions should be reflected individually and then shared with someone else in order to get in the evaluation process. This activity can help with defining their potential within reflecting over these questions.

### Picture Sea

There are different images of people and objects cut from the magazines (postcards or other) on the table (or on the floor) and every participant can select the one that he/she finds the best in describing him or herself during the learning process. This game gives a chance to reflect his or her way of learning in an interactive way.





## Self-Evaluation Forms

From the SALTO website ([www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/](http://www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/)), you may download various ready-to-use self-evaluation forms or cards. These tools contain tables, where the participant can write his own evaluation and define his/her strategic learning objectives and ways how to achieve them. This is more formal way, but still can suit to the needs of some of the participants (that should first of all define what type of learner they are).



## How is my Learning Flower Doing ?

The aim of this exercise is to visualise one's learning targets, his/her learning process and also the final results. The exercise is based on the parallel between learning and growing a plant.

The key words for displaying and dealing with different aspects of the learning process are:

**a seed** – one's talent, a plan, a wish, an idea, an ability, a skill, a learning objective, or whatever is supposed to be developed, to be grown

**a field** – one's surrounding, background, learning conditions: anything that is around us and influences our learning environment – from an actual room we are learning in, to a current social or political situation.

From a different point of view the field is also our potential, which we have to discover and further develop – it's certain that everyone is talented in a certain field and it is important for them to "plant on the fruitful soil".

**tools** - every seed needs to be watered and carefully taken care of in order to grow and finally give tasteful fruit. The same is with the learning objectives: if they receive enough efforts and a proper field, they will grow into a powerful competence.

**fruits** – after the whole process of learning the results finally come or maybe not. There is always a good, patient and hard working gardener behind a juicy piece of fruit, on the other side, without any care, trees get dry and bring no results.

How's my learning flower doing?? That is the crucial question we always ask during this exercise. Situation of our flower helps us reflect on the process and partial results of our learning. Other questions closely relate to the situation of the flower:

Does it have deep and stable roots? Does it actually grow or fade? Am I satisfied with planting my flower? Did I choose the right one? What am I going to do with the fruit? Is it worth pursuing the growing process?

We can easily find another type of questions related more closely to our concrete flower using the key words mentioned above.



## How can we promote Youthpass?

Participants of the training course got the chance to receive theoretical and practical knowledge, skills and competences necessary to promote Youthpass and use it in their organisations. We all undertake to become kind of "Youthpass Ambassadors" and share the philosophy further. During one of the training sessions, each of the participants prepared a specific action plan to use, promote and valorise Youthpass. Here you can see a few examples of ideas and proposals:



"We would like to persuade the leadership of our university, Czech Technical University, to recognise the competences gained through non-formal education. Many young people from our school take part in activities of different NGOs, and thus, learn many new things. They could gain university credits for these activities, as it is already the case for example in the UK" – Ivan, Czech Republic



"In Estonia, employers do not trust non-formal education very much. We would like to organise an initiative to inform employers about the Youth in Action programme and non-formal education and make them recognise its benefits." Raimo, Estonia

"I will organise a session in my organisation and inform other members and my colleagues about Youthpass and generally about the possibilities of non-formal education within the Youth in Action programme." Julie, France



## Training Course: "The Youthpass: a Help or a Challenge?"



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme

## Programme of the training course

	19.8.	20.8.	21.8.	22.8.	23.8.	24.8.	25.8.
9-9:45		breakfast	breakfast	breakfast	breakfast	breakfast	breakfast
10:00	arrivals	NGO market	learning as such and learning in YE	method fair	editing the certificates	presentation of Youth in Action	presentation of the Open Space projects
11:30		coffee break	coffee break	coffee break	coffee break	coffee break	coffee break
12:00		introduction to Youthpass and all around	what kind of learner am I?	what does it mean in practice?	What is learning in YE?	how to use YP in questioning the quality	evaluation working on personal YP
14:00		lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch
16:00	getting to know each other introduction to the programme	concrete presentation of YP and its background personal experiences - examples of recognition tools	you told COMPETENCES? global political concept	visit of Sion free time for self reflection	action plan	future projects Open Space I	departures
17:30	coffee break	coffee break	coffee break		coffee break	coffee break	
18:00	hopes, fears, learning objectives	presentations of the national groups conclusions	how we support learning? YP reflection group - intro, division, supporting	YP reflection group out in the nature	presentation of the results YP reflection group	future projects Open Space II YP reflection group	
20:00	intercultural dinner	dinner	dinner	dinner	dinner	dinner	
21:30		cultural evening	cultural evening	cultural evening	cultural evening	farewell party	

## Links

<http://www.youthpass.eu> – The official Youthpass web site

<http://demo.youthpass.eu> – Demo-version of the system for generating Youthpasses

<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/> - The official web site of the Youth in Action programme

<http://www.network-together.eu> – Website of Together Network

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