



## Youth employment in Europe: How Europass can help

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### Kurz gesagt

Liebe Leserin, lieber Leser!

Mit der gegenwärtigen Ausgabe wird der Europass-Newsletter zum Europass-Magazin. Mit dem neuen Titel glauben wir dem Anspruch dieser Publikation besser gerecht zu werden, denn wir wollen Ihnen mehr bieten als eine Auflistung von Neuigkeiten. Es ist bereits eine Tradition, jede Ausgabe einem wichtigen politischen Thema in Europa zu widmen; einem Thema, zu dem Europass entscheidend beitragen kann und das zugleich eine breitere soziale und ökonomische Perspektive abdeckt.

Diesmal hat das Europass-Netzwerk Beiträge zum Thema Jugendbeschäftigung in Europa zusammengetragen. Jugendarbeitslosigkeit stellt eine ernste Herausforderung für die gegenwärtige und künftige soziale und wirtschaftliche Stabilität des Kontinents dar. Doch sie eröffnet auch neue Aussichten, denn sie macht eine bessere Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Mitgliedsstaaten, den europäischen Institutionen und – ganz entscheidend – mit den einzelnen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern zwingend erforderlich. Artikel zum Thema Jugendbeschäftigung und wie Europass dazu beitragen kann, finden sich auf den Seiten 2 bis 9. Auf Seite 10 wird der Beitritt Kroatiens zur EU gefeiert, und die Seite 11 bringt einen Bericht zum letzten Europass-Plenarmeeting.

*Das Europass-Netzwerk wünscht Ihnen  
sonnige und erholsame Sommertage!*

### En bref

Cher lectrice, cher lecteur,

Vous l'aurez remarqué: le bulletin d'information Europass change de peau et devient le Magazine Europass. Plus qu'une simple revue d'actualité, la nouvelle formule affiche une nouvelle ambition: aller à la rencontre des lecteurs.

C'est désormais une tradition bien établie: chaque bulletin (ou plutôt chaque Magazine) est consacré à un aspect clé de la politique européenne dans lequel Europass peut jouer un rôle décisif, dans une perspective sociale et économique plus globale.

Vous trouverez dans ce numéro une série d'articles rédigés par les membres du réseau Europass sur l'emploi des jeunes en Europe. Si ce thème représente un sérieux défi pour la stabilité sociale et économique du continent européen, il ouvre des perspectives et appelle à une meilleure coopération entre les États membres, les institutions européennes et, surtout, les citoyens.

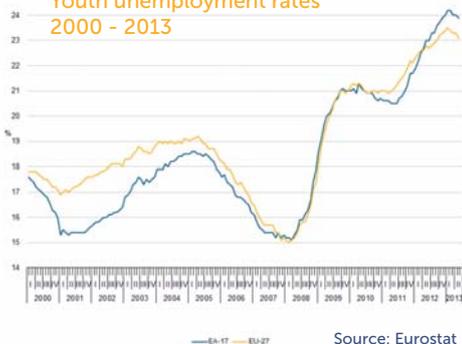
Les pages 2 à 9 sont consacrées à une série d'articles sur l'emploi des jeunes, et l'utilité d'Europass en la matière. En page 10: Bienvenue à la Croatie dans l'UE! Enfin, page 11, vous trouverez un compte-rendu de la dernière assemblée plénière Europass.

*Le réseau Europass vous souhaite un très agréable été.*

# Youth (un)employment in Europe: Facts & Actions

Young people hold the key to Europe's future dynamism and prosperity. Their talents, energy and creativity will help Europe to grow and become more competitive as we move beyond the economic and financial crisis. Yet young people have been hit particularly hard by the crisis. At present, nearly 6 million people in Europe under the age of 25 are unemployed and a total of 7.5 million are not in employment, education or training. Youth unemployment rates in Europe stood at 23.5% in the first quarter of 2013, more than twice the - already very high - rate for the population at large. In some countries, more than half of the young people who want to work are unemployed.

Youth unemployment rates  
2000 - 2013



The Commission has proposed a number of practical and achievable measures that have the potential to make an immediate impact, most recently in the December 2012 Youth Employment Package and the March 2013 proposals for the EUR 6 billion Youth Employment Initiative. Some of these proposals have been agreed at EU level and must now be translated urgently into opportunities for young people. Others are yet to be agreed at EU level, in particular those linked to the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2014-2020.

	YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RATE				YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATIO		
	2010	2011	2012	2012Q4*	2010	2011	2012
EU-27	21.1	21.4	22.8	23.2	9.0	9.1	9.7
Euro area	20.9	20.8	23.0	23.7	8.7	8.7	9.6
Belgium	22.4	18.7	19.8	22.0	7.3	6.0	6.2
Bulgaria	21.8	25.0	28.1	28.4	6.7	7.4	8.5
Czech Republic	18.3	18.1	19.5	19.3	5.7	5.4	6.1
Denmark	14.0	14.2	14.1	14.2	9.4	9.6	9.1
Germany	9.9	8.6	8.1	7.9	5.1	4.5	4.1
Estonia	32.9	22.3	20.9	19.3	12.6	9.1	8.7
Ireland	27.6	29.1	30.4	29.4	12.0	12.1	12.3
Greece	32.9	44.4	55.3	57.9	10.0	13.0	16.1
Spain	41.6	46.4	53.2	55.2	17.8	19.0	20.6
France	23.6	22.8	24.3	25.4	8.9	8.4	9.0
Italy	27.8	29.1	35.3	36.9	7.9	8.0	10.1
Cyprus	16.6	22.4	27.8	31.8	6.7	8.7	10.8
Latvia	37.2	31.0	28.4	24.7	13.9	11.6	11.4
Lithuania	35.3	32.2	26.4	24.2	10.4	9.0	7.7
Luxembourg	15.8	16.4	18.1	18.5	3.5	4.2	5.0
Hungary	26.6	26.1	28.1	28.8	6.6	6.4	7.3
Malta	13.1	13.8	14.2	14.5	6.7	7.1	7.2
Netherlands	8.7	7.6	9.5	9.8	6.0	5.3	6.6
Austria	8.8	8.3	8.7	8.7	5.2	5.0	5.2
Poland	23.7	25.8	26.5	27.5	8.2	8.7	8.9
Portugal	27.7 <sup>e</sup>	30.1	37.7	38.4	8.2	11.7	14.3
Romania	22.1	23.7	22.7	22.2	6.9	7.4	7.0
Slovenia	14.7	15.7	20.6	23.2	5.9	5.9	7.1
Slovakia	33.9	33.5	34.0	35.1	10.4	10.0	10.4
Finland	21.4	20.1	19.0	19.3	10.6	10.1	9.8
Sweden	24.8	22.8	23.7	24.1	12.8	12.1	12.4
United Kingdom	19.6	21.1	21.0	20.7	11.6	12.4	12.4

\* the quarterly youth employment rate is seasonally adjusted; e: estimate

Source: Eurostat

The Commission report on youth unemployment sets out steps to be taken without delay to get young people back into work, education or training. These steps cover:

- » the implementation of the Youth Guarantee;
- » investment in young people through the European Social Fund;
- » the front-loading of the Youth Employment Initiative;
- » support for intra-EU labour mobility with EURES;
- » steps to ease the transition from education to work by boosting the supply of high quality apprenticeships and traineeships and addressing skills shortages;
- » an acceleration of reforms to deliver a genuine EU labour market in the longer run; and
- » measures to support job creation in the immediate term, especially by SMEs, and to incentivise the hiring of young people.

In many of these areas, the groundwork has been done. The priority now is to accelerate and front-load implementation. Success will depend both on the political will of the Member States and the capacity of the private sector to create opportunities for young people. The EU cannot substitute for the work that is required at national level. But it can help to make things happen, by pinpointing the most critical reforms through the Country-Specific Recommendations, disseminating best practice, channelling investment from the EU budget, and helping young people to take full advantage of the European single market.

# Southern Europe: youth unemployment, educational systems and migration: What Europass can do

The current dramatic macro-economic statistics in Southern Europe are well-known. In Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal, economies are in recession, GDP per capita fall under the EU average, public debt explode in spite of radical budgetary cuts, inequalities are growing. In Greece, Spain and Portugal, the worst data are without doubt the unemployment rates, which reached respectively 27%, 26.8% and 17.8% in April 2013 and rise to 62.5%, 56.4% and 42.5% amongst youth. In Italy, youth unemployment is not much better: 40.2% (12% for the whole active population).

*„Despite the Southern European efforts to increase the educational levels of the population, the unemployment rates for educated young people remain high ...“*



These Southern European cases challenge the whole Europe 2020 strategy, based on the principle that a knowledge economy must be the pillar of sustainable and inclusive growth. Does the situation in Southern European countries mean that the EU policy is failing?

In fact, the current crisis is giving us a major lesson: countries which have maintained an innovative industry, like Germany, are more crisis-resistant than those based on low-added value services and construction, like Spain, Portugal or Greece. Low added-value economies suffer more the effects of the crisis than high added-value ones.

Very often, political discourses focus on the weaknesses of education and training systems to explain unemployment and innovation issues. This vision is too partial. Spain, Portugal, Greece and, to a lesser extent, Italy, show an almost complete mismatch between the evolution of the education and training system and the trends followed by the national economy. According to UNESCO, the gross enrolment rates in higher education (ISCED 5 and 6) in those countries have grown by more than 50% since 1998 – except in Italy, with an increase of „just“ 38%. In Spain, the increase is even more impressive: 88% (from 54% in 1998 to 83% in 2011)! Amongst these higher education students, Eurostat shows that those enrolled in „science, mathematics, computing, engineering, manufacturing and construction“ represented percentages above the EU average, being in Greece even higher than the German figure (32.6% versus 32.1%).

But, despite the Southern European efforts to increase the educational levels of the population, the unemployment rates for highly educated young people (15 - 29 years old) remain as high as 35.6% in Greece, 26.2% in Spain, and 18% and 17.2% in Portugal and Italy in 2011. For scientific and engineering graduates, the situation was sometimes even worse: 36.4% in Greece and 29.1% in Spain.

These data show that the issue in Greece and Spain, and to a lesser extent in Portugal and Italy, is not at the level of the education and training systems, which have clearly moved towards increasing the human capital needed in a knowledge-based economy. The real problem has been the economic structures of the countries, unable to adapt to the new needs of a competitive economy.



## (continued) Southern Europe: youth unemployment, educational systems and migration: What Europass can do



*„Europe is particularly well equipped to exploit the potential of internal migration and produce a win-win-win situation. The European Union has developed recognition, transparency and validation tools to facilitate mobility. One of them is Europass.“*

The long-term consequences of this mismatch can be dramatic. Not providing an opportunity to young graduates, especially in scientific fields, means that the quality of the knowledge base will quickly become obsolete. This will be an enormous loss for the society and public finances, where investments on education and training will not produce returns.

Unsurprisingly, migration appears as one of the solutions for the young generation. In Spain, for instance, according to a recent survey of the Real Instituto Elcano, 80% of young university graduates are ready to migrate, especially to other European countries. Indeed, 63.1% of them said that they had learnt foreign languages to anticipate such possibility. The number of new migrants is already estimated at more than 300,000.

The experience with developing and transition countries shows that migration is more efficient if it creates a win-win-win situation. Migration should be positive for the migrant, who can develop his/her skills and competences and increase his/her well-being. It should be positive for the receiving country, because it can fight its skills shortages and mismatches. It should be also positive for the sending country, thanks to remittances and the return of certain number of skilled and experienced migrants. In reality, however, this rarely happens, and migration is often characterised by „brain waste“ rather than by „brain drain“.

Nevertheless, Europe is particularly well equipped to exploit the potential of internal migration and produce a win-win-win situation. The European Union has developed recognition, transparency and validation tools to facilitate mobility. One of them is Europass, a simple and user-friendly instrument that allows a clear statement of qualifications, competences and skills. Europass combines a standardised format with a flexible content to allow users to adapt to the needs of their potential employers, including putting emphasis on the increasingly relevant transversal skills such as communication, entrepreneurship or digital competences. Future developments of Europass will need to take into account the trends of migration within Europe and the related skills that the labour market request more and more.

*Europass Coordination Team*



# Paul, his motorcycles and his toolbox

An example of how Europass can help a young European in the first years of his career

**Paul is a born mechanic. A motorcycle mechanic.**

At the age of eight, he tried to fit the engine from the family lawn mower into the framework of his little yellow bike. The transplant was a failure but the worm was in the fruit. Paul's father bought a new lawn mower and changed the lock of the garden shed to prevent his son from having another try. But nothing could change Paul's mind.



As a teenager, he had to think about his future. Once, a career guidance event was organised by his school. Paul had a brief – but decisive – interview with a counsellor, who praised the merits of different trades, such as cook, airline pilot or naval officer. The boy replied that he could not think of any job but motorcycle mechanic. The counsellor encouraged him to follow his aspirations. Paul then returned to tinker with the recalcitrant ignition of the old motorcycle inherited from his grandfather.

Naturally, Paul joined a vocational school to obtain a mechanic certificate. During the three years of training, he regularly puzzled trainers by asking questions about, say, a particular type of downdraft carburettor used in Czech pre-war motorcycles, or about the advantages of featherbed frames.

Once he obtained his Certificate in Motorcycle Repair, Paul started to look for a job. A friend advised him to have a look at the Europass website. With a straightforward interface and online tutorials, he found it very easy to create his **Europass CV** to which he annexed the **Certificate Supplement** for his qualification, detailing the skills gained during his training. He also attached some pictures of the three bikes he had patiently refurbished during the holidays.

The first interview was successful, and the owner of the motorcycle repair shop that hired him congratulated him for the clarity of his CV, as well as for the quality of the restorations. Paul put on immediately, not without pride, the red overalls with the name of his favourite Italian bike brand embroidered on the back.



(continued) Paul, his motorcycles and his toolbox. An example of how Europass can help a young European in the first years of his career



The following year, Paul drafted **an Italian version of his CV**, using the online tips and examples, and applied for an internship at the headquarters of the Italian brand. He spent one year in Italy, but after six months the company's bikes had no secrets for him anymore. During this time, Paul also fell in love with Gabriella, the assistant of the spare parts department. They took off for their honeymoon in a Red sidecar, of course.



At the end of the internship, Paul received a **Europass Mobility** document, signed by the foreman who supervised his training. It detailed the knowledge and skills acquired in Italy and subsequently, back to France, the **Europass Mobility** proved a strong asset when his employer asked him to take over the duties of the workshop's foreman who had just retired.

The charming Gabriella learned French very quickly. When she applied for a post-graduate course at the University of Toulouse, she attached to her CV a **European Skills Passport** containing a **Language Passport** demonstrating her good command of French acquired as an assistant in a small business, and a **Diploma Supplement** issued by the University of Bologna, where she graduated.

A couple of years later, Paul opened his own motorcycle repair shop, and decided to hire a mechanic. He received over fifty CVs, of which, those in **Europass** format turned out to be the easiest to scan through, enabling him to quickly compare the expertise of the respective candidates.

Measuring the progress he made since the day when he completed his first **Europass CV**, Paul realised that the **Europass „toolbox“** had been just as crucial in his career path as his motorcycle repair kit.

*The story of Paul and Gabriella was recorded by Cedefop - Europass team*

# National Europass Centres supporting youth employment

## Getting ready to apply for your first job with Europass!



The Austrian NEC has been offering workshops on how to get ready to apply for your first job for 15 – 18-year-olds at schools and youth centres for the last two years. The workshops consist of an introduction to the Europass documents focusing on the Europass CV and how best to document your skills and qualifications, effectively and clearly. For learners in vocational schools, the Certificate Supplement is also presented as a valuable tool to make sure that future employers are aware of the specific skills and competencies of the young school leavers. This is followed by getting the young people actively involved in a role play simulating realistically different job interview situations. In selected sessions, this part of the workshop is held in English featuring a native speaker of English – thus combining valuable information on what to be aware of in job interviews with language training at the same time.

The trainings have been such a big success with the students, teachers and counsellors involved that NEC Austria is planning to produce short video clips in 2014 featuring best parts of the training, and make them available to be used by teachers and trainers throughout the country.

Alexandra Enzi | NEC Austria

## Know more, be better!

### Europass and the week of real-life learning in Romania

The National Europass Centre Romania has participated in an exciting action called “Know more, be better”, a programme dedicated to non-formal learning.

The main concept of the programme consists in organising a week when school pupils and students do not participate in their regular classes but instead are engaged, alongside their teachers, in different kinds of practical learning experiences such as visiting TV broadcasting sites and experiencing a few hours with real-life reporters; exploring fire departments and getting to know what it really means to work as a firefighter; visiting theater back-stages and learning what it is like to be an actor, etc.

In 2013, the week dedicated to non-formal learning took place between 1st and 5th April. It was a very good opportunity for the Europass promoters to organize information events and acquaint with the Europass instruments an interesting mix of participants including students in their senior years of high-school as well as teaching staff. During their week of practical learning, the participants were given a chance to learn how to fill their own Europass CV and Europass Language Passport (ELP) using the dedicated online tools. Approximately 260 participants filled their Europass



CVs with the support of experts who helped the future graduates discover some of their key competences to be communicated when looking for a first job after school.

Generally, the participants found the Europass CV very useful for their purposes. The high-school graduates-to-be intended to use it for applying for further studies abroad as well as for getting a job. The teachers decided to use the tool more in their class activities. The ELP was also appreciated as a useful tool, especially due to the support it provides in assessing one's language competences by using the Self Assessment Grid.

Angelica Radu | NEC Romania

## Europass went back to school!

Lifelong learning – a well known term for most readers of the Europass Magazine. But how does it actually reflect in our everyday working routine? In Estonia, there is an initiative that encourages adults to go back to school to give lessons. “Just one lesson may inspire exciting ideas for all the involved parties – students, teachers and guest teachers themselves”- the project team say.

Since 2007 when Back to School was started, it aims to strengthen the cooperation between Estonian schools and the rest of the society. In order to facilitate the communication between stakeholders, an information system gathers the data from teachers and guest teachers about their lesson preferences. Everyone can give a lesson on the subject they feel most comfortable with: e.g. planning a career, online marketing, volunteer experience, how to construct a robot or how to become a president. Yes, this is true: the Estonian president gave lessons too!

So I went back to school as well, and introduced Europass as a tool for young people about to look for a job. With students I discussed how to apply for a job, how to act in a job interview, and how to describe their work experience and skills in a CV. We found that there are common mistakes that people tend to make when composing a CV. I also learned a lot myself. I could have a

glimpse to school life of nowadays, got the idea what student expect from life and what their future plans are, and I could improve my presentation skills, too. I learned it is not the same to give a presentation to an adult job seeker as to a teenager. Young people need different approach indeed. And it was so surprising how fast 45 minutes passed when giving a lesson. In my student days that period seemed a lifetime! Now it makes me admire the teachers who can pass a complex message in such a short time.

After my lesson, hopefully these young people will create good CVs to help them get good jobs when it's their time. I believe that on the basis of this experience I can prepare better for my upcoming presentations in schools. It was also great to see that many schools already use the Europass CV as a teaching material.

For Europass in general going back to schools is necessary. We need a direct contact with our future. It is not only a lesson for students: I believe all participating guest teachers had a great experience and learned something new themselves. The National Europass Centre Estonia will continue participating in this project that brought guest teachers from every field of society and economy to more than 8500 students in spring 2013.

*Margit Paakspuu | NEC Estonia*

## Minister of Education encourages learning mobility

Mrs Marie-Dominique Simonet, the Minister of Education for the French speaking community in Belgium, opened the door of her office in Brussels this April to meet and congratulate 70 pupils and their teachers involved in the Comenius action. Ms Katerina Kapounova, the EU Programme Manager, also attended the conference.

Since 2010, 1470 pupils from 29 European countries had the opportunity to spend 3 to 10 months in a host school and a host family abroad. In Belgium (French speaking community), the number of beneficiaries has been rising every year. They were 13 in 2011, and are 33 now prepared to take part in this adventure.

Teachers as well as parents underline the advantages of international learning mobility for their teenagers.

A participant's father declared: “When my son left he was a little boy. He came back a young man!” In addition to improving language competences, a mobility experience broadens learners' understanding of the diversity of European cultures. It also helps them acquire key skills in their personal development such as self-confidence and maturity, among others.

To confirm the outcomes of their international learning experience, all participants received the “Europass Mobility” from the Minister at the end of the conference.



*Patrick Meuwissen | NEC Belgium (FR)*

# Jobgate: Paving the way to a job

JobGate - a project of the International Placement Services (ZAV) of the German Federal Employment Agency - started in 2004 within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. Against a background of unemployment of (young) people, the aim of JobGate was the integration of workless people into the German labour market after a learning and working experience abroad. Participants could go to France, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain and the Netherlands for a language course and an internship. "The basic idea of JobGate was to interlink vocational education and training with the needs of the labour market" says Andrea Barg, Coordinator of European Programmes in the ZAV. People registered as unemployed could participate in the project that ended in May 2013 – provided they had finished their traineeships or studies or had at least two years of previous working experience.



## Mobility as a chance

JobGate used mobility as a means of enhancing skills and competences of the participants and thus improving their chances on the labour market. The evaluation of the results of JobGate confirms the concept: it shows that participants improved their language and intercultural competences as well as professional ones. Upon returning home, about 80% of the 1188 participants found a job. In order to get more information on the effects of the project, six to twelve months after the mobilities the ZAV will check whether the participants had succeeded in integrating themselves into the labour market.

## Europass helps getting a foot in the door

The participants applied for JobGate using the Europass CV. Their learning outcomes and soft skills were documented with the Europass Mobility. Carolin Kleinow was one of the participants who went with JobGate to Wrexham, Wales, for six weeks. She returned with a lot of new impressions, improved language, personal and professional skills – and her Europass document that gives a clear picture of the outcomes. "I found it very helpful to receive a document that explains what I have learnt. I like to present my Europass Mobility because it contains official confirmation of my skills that is recognized all over Europe. This, in my opinion, is an important point where Europass Mobility differs from a simple letter of reference." Carolin Kleinow used Europass Mobility for her applications after the internship in Wales – and was invited to several interviews in which she was always asked about her internship abroad recorded through Europass. Now she works as a graphic designer – and feels like going abroad again!

Isabel Götte | NEC Germany

## Further reading on youth (un)employment in Europe and beyond:

- » Council of the European Union, 2013: Council Recommendation on establishing a youth guarantee. Official Journal of the EU 2013/C 120/01.
- » European Commission, 2013a: Working together for Europe's young people. A call to action on youth unemployment. COM(2013) 447 final.
- » European Commission, 2013b: Factsheet - EU measures to tackle youth unemployment
- » International Labour Office, 2012: The youth employment crisis. A call for action. Geneva: ILO
- » OECD, 2013: OECD Observer: Policies for youth. No time to waste. No 294, Q1 2013.
- » The Economist, 2013: Generation Jobless. Apr 27 2013

## Dobrodošli, Hrvatska! (Welcome Croatia!)



The EU Initiatives and Euraxess departments at the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes in Zagreb, which has also been designated as the National Europass Centre Croatia, celebrated on their premises the Croatian accession to the European Union on 1st July 2013. It was a great occasion to treat themselves to a slice of delicious cake, thus marking this important day in the country's as well as European history: the day Croatia officially joined the EU family.

### Croatia and EU Relations

Croatia – situated in the Western Balkans on the Adriatic Sea – has been an independent country since 1991. It applied to join the European Union in 2003.

Over the last decade, Croatia has succeeded in making all the reforms needed to bring it into line with EU laws and standards and enable it to join the EU in 2013.

„Croatia has demonstrated its ability to fulfil all ... commitments in good time before accession. EU membership offers many and substantial opportunities for Croatia and the EU. These opportunities now need to be used, so that Croatia's participation in the EU will be a success – to the benefit of Croatia itself, of the Western Balkans region, and of the EU as a whole.“

*European Commission Monitoring Report, March 2013*

To become an EU member, the country has taken decisive steps to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities. The judiciary is now more independent, accountable and professional. It has a functioning market economy, which will offer new opportunities for European business and industry as part of a single EU market, with easier mobility for all.

» [www.croatia-in-the-eu.eu](http://www.croatia-in-the-eu.eu)



Also discussed in the meeting were the following topics:

- » cooperation between NECs in the region (success stories, joint promotional activities);
- » methods of determining the satisfaction of citizens with the Europass services;
- » cooperation of NECs with private sector employers (good practice examples);
- » complementary activities between Europass and ECVET and LLP;
- » efficient promotion and use of Europass among volunteers.

### Central European Cluster meeting in Zagreb

The National Europass Centres of Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, which make up the Central European Regional Cluster together with the Czech Republic and Italy, held their annual meeting in Zagreb on 13 - 14 June this year. The event provided an opportunity for the member NECs to discuss in great detail the topics relevant for the Europass implementation and promotion both at national and trans-regional levels.

The focus within the cluster has been on the cooperation between Europass and other European networks in the areas of education, training and employment support. Following these lines, in the introductory part of the meeting the participants got an insight into the services of the European Union Information Centre that provided the meeting venue (and following Croatia's accession to the European Union on 1 July, closed its doors on 30 June being succeeded by the European Commission Representation which opened its offices in Zagreb on 1 July).

Next on the agenda were presentations on the Croatian Qualifications Framework and the activities of the National Euroguidance Centre Croatia, given by Daria Arlavi, Head of the Department of the Croatian QF (Ministry of Science, Education and Sports) and Josipa Češnovar, Euroguidance Project Administrator (Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes) respectively.

The discussions held during the two-day meeting inspired all of the participants to work together on producing a joint publication to present the Europass success stories from the respective countries (highlighting one of the Europass documents per country), which would be published in 2014 in the national languages. Other proposals focused on enhancing the visibility of Europass among employers (e.g. by approaching them at job days and relevant fairs; identifying those among them who ask for the Europass CV in order to target the right sectors, etc.), and on intensifying regional cooperation in Central Europe.

Vlasta Jelašić Kerec | NEC Croatia

# Europass plenary meeting took place in Groningen, NL

The Europass network holds its plenary meetings twice a year. The first bi-annual plenary meeting of 2013 took place in Groningen, The Netherlands, on 6th and 7th May. The event brought together delegates of 30 National Europass Centres from all over Europe, representatives of the European Commission, Cedefop, and the host organisations – DUO and the University of Groningen.

The first day of the meeting was held at the inspiring premises of the venerable University of Groningen. Building on the tradition of four

centuries of thought-provoking academic endeavour, the University also belongs among the most progressive and successful higher education and research institutions of today not just in The Netherlands but at the European level. In his keynote speech on the internationalisation of higher education, Professor Robert Wagenaar, Director of the Faculty of Arts and Chair of the Dutch team for the



Bologna process, emphasised the significance of „the shift to competence that is characteristic with transferring attention from the university-staff-centred perspective to a student-centered one.“ Along with the focus on learning outcomes and the employability of graduates, transnational learning mobility is another trend in current educational policies. In the words of Mr Rob Kerstens, the Director General of DUO, „in the times of Dutch commercial expeditions in the 17th century being geographically mobile had still been a daring enterprise, whereas in our days it has become a standard socio-economic phenomenon.“



European Commission, DG Education and Culture, presented on the first day of the meeting the latest developments in the European policy of education and training, based on the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. DG

EAC introduced a series of data on various socio-economic indicators such as the development of the need for different levels of qualifications and the mismatch between educational supply and the demand for skills on the labour market. To address the challenging areas, the European Commission prepared a comprehensive set of new initiatives introduced in the communication Rethinking Education. Among new European initiatives is also the concept of a European Area of Skills and Qualifications unifying the efforts of the European reference and transparency tools and networks, including Europass.

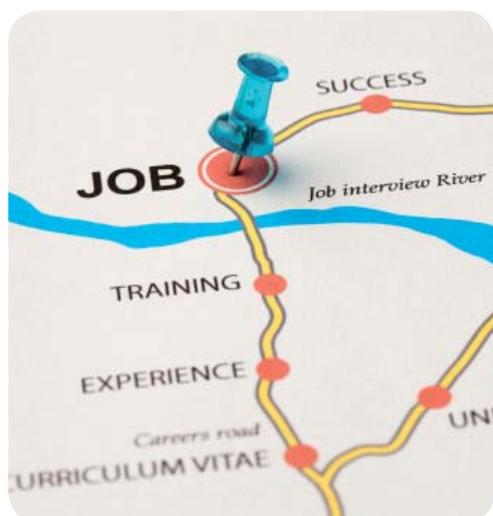
On the second day of the meeting, the Europass network discussed in closer detail the following topics:

- » results of the 2012 Europass external evaluation (see also the previous issue of the Europass Newsletter);
- » ways towards practical implementation of the visions brought about by the communication Rethinking Education;
- » sustainability and improvement of the Europass network's internal functioning, especially with regard to the transnational Work Groups and Regional Clusters;
- » Cedefop's activities related to Europass in 2013, in particular finalising the transformation of the Europass portfolio and the launch of the new Language Passport;
- » promotion of Europass through social media and new strategies for communication with different target groups.

The next plenary meeting of the Europass network will be held in Brussels in November 2013 as a joint event with the Euroguidance network.



## NEC Germany supports pupils and teachers



Young people with no or little work experience can particularly benefit from using the Europass documents as a way to write meaningful job applications that represent their actual skills and competences. How to bring this message to more young people?

School teachers have been identified as very important target group as regards the promotion of Europass. NEC Germany, therefore, has organised a series of workshops for teachers and developed a CD-ROM with teaching materials. The CD-ROM "Der Europass macht Schule" contains information on learning mobility as well as job applications, and is meant as a practice-oriented tool for teachers. It explains the Europass portfolio and offers a detailed list of links, proposals for teaching modules and exercises. The CD-ROM is rounded off by interactive features such as a film explaining how to write a good CV, a "Language Game" to test one's language skills, and an interactive "Mobility Map" with best practice stories from young people who went abroad for learning and working. This teaching support is also available online at [www.europass-info.de/index.php?id=41](http://www.europass-info.de/index.php?id=41).

Another important part of the strategy to reach teachers is the concept of workshops that have been held all over Germany. The workshops provide information on the above tools and show how to utilise them in class. The key new skill that teachers learn in the workshops is to create and edit online a Europass CV and Europass Mobility. Based on positive feedback the workshops will continue in 2014.

Isabel Götte | NEC Germany

### Dear readers

with this edition, the Europass Newsletter changes its title to Europass Magazine. We believe that the term magazine, referring to a collection or storage of information, depicts more accurately the ambition of this publication which is to deliver to its readers more than a simple register of news. It is becoming a tradition that each edition of this Europass periodical is dedicated to a key European policy topic where Europass can relevantly contribute but where wider social and economic perspectives are implied.

The present issue has collected contributions by the Europass network on the topic of youth (un)employment in Europe. Even though this phenomenon poses a serious challenge for the present and the future of the continent's social and economic stability, it also opens up opportunities as it calls for even better cooperation between the Member States, European institutions and, importantly, individual citizens.

Take a look at the previous editions, too!

- » Europass Newsletter Nr. 4, April 2013  
(Main story: External evaluation of Europass + Work Groups and Regional Clusters)
- » Europass Newsletter Nr. 3, December 2012  
(Main story: Europass 2012 – 2014: What is going to change?)
- » Europass Newsletter Nr. 2, September 2012  
(Main story: European tools and principles for skills and qualifications)
- » Europass Newsletter Nr. 1, May 2012  
(Main story: Europass at the interface of education and labour market)

The next edition of the Europass Magazine will come out in November 2013.



Education and Culture

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