

Modernising Europass

A new start for Europass

On the 4th October 2017 the European Commission adopted a proposal to revise the Europass Decision. This follows the recognition that changing trends in the labour market and the rapid changes in technology have impacted on the Europass framework.

The decision acknowledges that Europass must change to maintain relevance for all end users in a modern context.

In the European Commission's press release announcing the revision of the Europass Decision they stated:

"With this revision, the {European} Commission aims to simplify and modernise (Europass) for the digital age and to add a new feature using big data to map and anticipate labour market trends and skills needs."

Where are we now?

Although the New Europass has not been finalised, work has already started. The Europass Advisory Group (EAG) is a committee of representatives of EU member states and beyond. It includes representatives from the National Europass Centres and partners who work with other European initiatives. Quality and Qualifications Ireland and the National Centre for Guidance in Education are jointly representing Ireland at meetings of this working group.

During the EAG's first meeting in September 2018, it mapped out the plan of action for the New Europass with the idea to launch in 2020. The EAG will meet over the next two years to plan the improvements and run expert workshops to develop the tools further.



What is the New Europass going to include?

The Europass Advisory Group set out a plan for the next two years emphasizing that Europass needs to evolve in line with the demands of end users.

A new Europass web platform or portal will be created, moving away from paper documents which will enable allow users to create their own Personal Environment/account. This has been labelled the e-Portfolio for the time being.

This e-Portfolio will contain a personal profile about the user's skills, qualifications, work experience and record the individual's lifelong learning.

The e-Portfolio should form a base which allows for importing and exporting of digital information in whatever form future labour and education market needs dictate, utilising technologies of the future.

Importantly the data contained in the online environments could also (with compliance to data protection) provide big data for the purposes of informing policy on education and labour market needs.



The Commission along with Europass Advisory Group propose to include the following technologies within the New Europass:

> **Digital Diplomas** –

replacing the traditional paper diploma, these take various forms. They offer solutions to some of the inherent issues that exist with paper documentation, including sharing of information, fraud and recognition.

> **Digital Badges** –

a validated digital indicator of accomplishment, or skill earned and issued in various learning environments and easily shared. They are an increasingly popular way of recording nonformal and informal learning. Their proliferation is facilitated by the gamification of learning.

> **Blockchain Credentialing** –

similar to bitcoin and cryptocurrencies, Blockchain credentials allow education providers to issue official certificates that the recipient can hold and share themselves, and supply proof of completion, thereby tackling the issue of educational fraud.



Guidance Provision

The new Europass will also provide available information or links to available information on

- a) learning opportunities;
- b) qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems;
- c) opportunities for validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- d) recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including third countries;
- e) services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management;
- f) skills intelligence as produced by relevant Union-level activities and agencies within their domains of competence.

Euroguidance Services across the EU provide information on learning opportunities and provide information and training on mobility for guidance practitioners. The Europass Advisory Group will also consider the implications for the role of Euroguidance as part of the new Europass.

Updates will be provided and the QFI and NCGE representatives welcome feedback on this development. More information on the new Europass is available at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1266&langId=en>

If you have specific feedback please contact us at info@europass.ie or euroguidance@ncge.ie