



AVE in Austria

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Austrian Volksbildungswerke

The Austrian Volksbildungswerke is a national umbrella organization for voluntary work in the field of adult education. The Volksbildungswerke is one of the first voluntary organizations in Austria which dealt deal with the question of informal learning in volunteering, the assessment of these experiences and possible consequences of paid work in a systematic way.

Austrian Volksbildungswerke: Previous projects

- **Identifying and Evaluating Informal Learning (EU-Socrates-Project 1997 -2000)**
 - **Competence Portfolio for Volunteers in Lower Austria (since 2002)**
 - **Competence Development in Voluntary Work (European Social Fund - Project 2003-2005)**
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European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

- **The European Centre is an international research institute in the area of social policy. The programme area „Ageing, Care Policies and Social Services“ has been carrying out national and European projects on volunteering for many years. One of the focusses of this research has been the competencies acquired during volunteering and how to raise awareness for these.**
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European Centre: Previous projects

- **Action Plan for Volunteering in Lower Austria (Lower Austrian Provincial Government 1998-2000)**
 - **Assessing Voluntary Experience for Job Applications in Civil Service (Austrian Social Ministry: 1998-2000)**
 - **Volunteering into Participation (Austrian partner of EU-Project: 2000-2001)**
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The Portfolio of the Volksbildungswerke: Characteristics and Process

- **Self-evaluation with the support of a portfolio-coach/facilitator**
 - **Biographical/narrative competence-interview (about 2 hours)**
 - **Accompanied self-assessment**
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The Portfolio of Volksbildungswerke: Main parts

- **Short portrait of the volunteer's work: motives, key-events, expectations, problems, plans etc. (1 page max.)**
 - **Personal competence-profile**
 - **Action plan for voluntary work and employment with strategies and time-plan**
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Pros and Cons of the Portfolio of the Volksbildungswerke

- **Investigating informal learning processes using narrative, biographical interviews is in itself a learning process**
 - **The volunteers interviewed experienced the process as a very productive and enjoyable one**
 - **Most of the volunteers use their portfolio for reflecting voluntary experiences not so much for job applications**
 - **The coaching-process is too expensive for the volunteers**
 - **Coaches contribute too much, volunteers too little to portfolio-process**
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How will we present AVE-tool in Austria?

- **Design in line with other work in the framework of portfolio projects in Austria**
 - **Download in internet as one module of several that can be used**
 - **Print out, colour copy and give them to contact persons (30-40)**
 - **Present at regional and national conferences**
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How will AVE-tool be linked with past and future projects?

- **Development of an E-Portfolio/digital Portfolio for students of the University of Graz with a coaching-option (started at the beginning of 2006)**
 - **Development of a special portfolio for young people (will start in summer 2006)**
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Further Issues

- **More focus on the field specific competencies (content learning)**
 - **Portfolio to assess competencies in general and not only those linked to volunteering**
 - **Less coaching – less costs**
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