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Leonardo da Vinci program - European Commission



Portfolio for Valuing Education and Experience of Local Councillors



in 6 countries      

Portfolio – Final version (October 2009)

My name :

DATE :

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Methodology proposed

The main aim of the present portfolio is to be used by the local councillors elected in small and medium towns/cities. They are the main public of the Va2el project – Valuing Education and Experience of Local Councillors.

Two guides are also proposed : a first guide for local councillors to explain the way they must use the portfolio and a second guide for the coaches. In addition to these pedagogical guides, a third one will be developed together with the digital development portfolio, insisting on the different functionalities of the e-portfolio.

A portfolio is a personal document to be filled in order to enhance the competences on the labour market. Local councillors could also use it in social or professional networks such as Facebook or Linkdl.

In the process of the portfolio, we will address directly the local councillors in order to make things more vivid and interactive.

Preliminary questions

To properly complete the e-portfolio, you will need to be able to describe your characteristics. It is important, therefore, that you study the following questions beforehand:

- *Why do I fill this portfolio ?*
- *For which purpose ?*
- *Shall I apply for a job employment ?*
- *Do I want to change/improve my professional career ?*
- *Could I use it as a pathway for a future career/employment?*
- *Could I use it as a learning pathway ?*

Let's precise what a portfolio is...

My Va2el portfolio – a concept

A **portfolio of competences** is based upon an anglo-saxon approach. It might take the form of a « file of personal and professional experiences realised with the aim to save the proof of acquired training and experiences to produce them in any circumstance of life where these evidence may be expected and considered as a way for a better professional, social or personal recognition ».

A portfolio fulfils five main functions:

- an « active memory »,
- an « evolutive tool for identifying and knowing competences »,
- a « collective and conservative » tool,
- a « self-evaluation »,
- a «personal data base »,
- a «value given to informal competences »

It may include written documents, photos, any element proving a specific competence or justifying a specific experience.

Please keep in mind that :

The tasks you fulfil as a local councillor are quite numerous, diverse and sometimes difficult.

The competences they require are also quite various.

This is the main aim of a portfolio to help you identify them to take advantage of these competences on the labour market..

My Va2el portfolio – main aim

The aim of such a tool is :

- To offer you a **self-evaluation** for your experience as a local councillor : by doing a statement of the experience during your elective mandate, by expressing them in terms of acquired and developed competences, in reminding you the training followed during your local mandate ;
- To provide you with a **common basis of analysis** you could share with other local councillors whatever the local authority you are working for : so that you will be able to use the portfolio on the labour market ;
- To propose a **document of reference** for public authorities and professionals in the field of human resources ; so it might provide you with some form of “common” recognition

Thanks to the methodology proposed in the Va2el project :

- some competences might be assessed/valued/recognised directly : a level of competences or qualifications acquired, for instance in a training programme you were proposed as a local councillor (sometimes a certificate might have been delivered) ;
- other competences require an improvement: to be taken into account, you should have to follow a training in an official/habilitated organisation.

Please keep in mind that there are three ways to gain apprenticeship:

- theoretical apprenticeship : *the knowledge you have acquired through training, self training, initial or continuous training ;*

- practical apprenticeship : *the experience you have acquired on the ground, by action, by encounter with others ;*
- combination of both : *most of the time you have gained both a theoretical and practical apprenticeship.*

My Va2el portfolio - process

A portfolio is a process, both a tool and method, to identify and gather experiences, and help to reveal the competences acquired by a local councillor.

This is a form of “diary” taking into account a pathway to think of one’s own activities and experience ; in the case of the local councillors the benefits from their local mandate.

A Portfolio is perceived as a process meant to enhance: the selection of activities/competences you fulfil as a local councillor ; the reflexivity of your experience ; a projection for planning your personal pathways.

The tool should be most useful for your experience as local councillors:

- whether you have been elected since a minimum of one year ;
- whether you have been elected in a small local authority (such as town/city or any other form of local structures).

Please keep in mind the following points:

- a portfolio is designed as a self-assessment tool with a personal use ; *you can’t use it as a legal or official document.*
- the information provided are confidential ; *it is your own property with the required confidentiality ;*
- A portfolio is an on-going process; *don’t forget to update it as regularly as possible.*

My Va2el portfolio - Objectives

The portfolio we are proposing to you has two main objectives:

- 1- Supporting you to identify, communicate and make use of the special competence acquired and/or developed through your elective mandate in order to :
 - acquire a higher self-confidence at work and especially after the fulfillment of their mandate ;
 - be able to improve their return onto the labor market ;
 - be able to share your experience during your mandate with other local councilors.

- 2- Improving your professional perspective thanks to :
 - a special tool : a portfolio and its digital development – an *e-portfolio* ;
 - a professional support to help you identify your competences.

Please keep in mind the following points:

- The data filled/provided in your portfolio should be used in a professional perspective ; **if you mean to write / to enrich your Curriculum vitae or to prepare yourself to a professional interview :**
- The portfolio might be the prior document for a future formal and official recognition of the competences ; **it might be the first step for prior learning as a local councilor ;**
- A portfolio allows a wide recognition: personal, social and professional recognition; **don't hesitate to use it in the most appropriate way.**

My motivations

Would you agree with the following motivations ?

- ***I have a concern for the public purpose (res publica)*** : you have dedicated a lot of time and energy, often for ages, to the local team and are also involved in associations or trade unions ;
- ***I feel somehow a social and political legitimacy towards my fellow citizens*** : you have the feeling of being useful to the Community, to serve the public interest, to transmit values, to apply the law, to enhance and support public policy ;
- ***I hope to have an open mind and to be reliable towards the general public*** : you address both the public with special demands such as the disabled and the disadvantaged population but also the average population ;
- ***I have the will to be involved locally and to implement the local policy*** : to achieve and respect their commitments towards their fellow citizens and so keep their support ;
- ***I would describe myself as being active and sociable and motivated by the possibility to influence decisions being made by the local authorities***: to contribute to improvement in life quality of their town and district.
- ***I am able to overcome the difficulties faced*** : to adapt permanently and to keep on proposing new projects that would answer the population's demands and would follow the ever more and more complex legislation and rules ;
- ***I like to working in a team*** : to enhance relations with other local councillors but also with professionals (paid staff of the city hall/town) : a secretary, people in charge of special missions, public relations (meeting, public speeches, media planning) and the council of professional on issues such as urban planning, childhood, elderly, environment, ..
- ***I like a form of solidarity among local councillors*** : especially among associations for local councillors or any network gathering local councillors (formal or informal) ;
- ***I have the will to transmit one's own experience***: to support other local councillors and to prepare the future to enhance the renewal of the local team taking into account equality of chances , men/women, juniors/seniors ;
- ***I have found a source of personal development and challenge*** : a form of recognition outside professional life ;
- ***I answer a family tradition*** ; my father/mother ; grand-father/grand-mother were already local councillors ;
- ***I wanted to raise/strengthen one's social status (the individual or family's clout in the social structure of the community)***; it answered a form of personal and social ambition

- *I meant to be part of some kind of “elite”* – especially important for people with egalitarian backgrounds;
- *I wanted to gain power, to make connections*, to build social networks
- *I have a passion for politics*, the desire to have one’s own values and ideas put into practice.
- *I wanted to improve people’s living condition* : the feeling to work for the sake of the local community and for my country.
- *I disagreed with the current governors’ behaviour* , especially the use of public resources.
- **I was the only one for the job** , there was no other candidate
- **I wanted to promote the idea of choice** , my profile was different from the other local councillors ;

Would you have any other motivations?

Please keep in mind the following points :

- Identifying your motivations might have an impact on the competences you would have developed or you would like to develop more
- Thinking of even hidden motivations might be most useful to speak about your elective mandate in a neutral way

My experience

The portfolio is meant to identify the situations you have been through that allow you to acquire an experience that allowed you to acquire/develop competences. Think about the most challenging situations you have been faced to when being a local councilor.

You could, for instance, put, on the following proposed time line, the significant events and solutions you found

Beginning Time
Of your mandate you are filling the portfolio

You could also answer the following questions :

1. *When and how have you been first elected?*
2. *Why have you being interested in a local mandate?*
3. *Has your local mandate been an asset for you: in a personal and/or professional perspective?*
4. *What are the situations you have been the most happy when being a local councilor?*
5. *Which tasks have been found difficult/easy to fulfill?*

Be now focused on the professional perspective: **how far could your experience as a local councilor be useful for your professional career?** It would also meaningful to take into account the elements of your curriculum vitae together with elements on your local authority

- Personal information : gender ; age ; studies ; use of a computer and Internet (to have access to the e-portfolio) ;
- Any other social involvement : trade unions, associations ;
- Information on your local authority: size; number of inhabitants; geographical position.

Please fill the following table with personal examples

Main points to be described	Explanation	Example :
Status/function	What is your official name ?	<i>I am the mayor of Krems</i>
Fields of responsibility/activity	Could you provide any general description, guideline, legal references concerning your elective mandate ?	<i>I am conducting the local policy agreed upon by the programme for which I have been elected for</i>
Main elements of the tasks I have fulfilled	what are you doing concretely in your daily life of local councillor ?	<i>I am responsible for the budget (public finances) I am trying to develop a policy in the field of environment I try to attract firms in order to create jobs for youngsters I have</i>
Ways and means to exercise my mandate	What type of support are you benefiting for fulfilling your mandate such as secretary, material means, time dedicated ;	<i>I am working in a city of 30 000 inhabitants, by the river Danube, at 1h from Vienna There are more than 2000 employees working for the city</i>
The training have been followed	Title and duration of the training	<i>My political party offered me a training course of 5 days to prepare me to the function I would have to fulfil</i>

Identifying my competences

Competences may be developed in a number of ways including formal learning (school, further education, higher education, courses, training you might have attended as part of a job or volunteer role), non-formal and informal learning (such as an involvement in an association, trade-union..) .

In the first column of the table below, we have tried to gather competences according to five main topics : communication ; administration, budget and accountancy ; management and organisation ; management and implementation of projects ; analysis of the public needs. The taxonomy proposed is indicative. There might be other different categorizations such as : collecting, analysing and organising information ; communicating ideas and information ; planning and organising activities ; working with others and in teams ; solving problems and using technology.

In the second column of the table below, we have proposed a list of selected competences you might have developed through a local mandate as a local councillor. These are the competences acquired or developed. They could be competences already acquired in former experiences. You might also range, in your mind, the competences in accordance to an increasing complexity ranging from simple/functional competences in familiar context.

In the third column of the table, please justify your relevant experience by giving all the details concerning the context in which you have acquired/developed the competence. Please provide very concrete examples for each of the competence relevant for you.

In the last column, there is a scale proposing scores from 0 to 4 where. According to the level of achievement, please rank your competences in accordance to the extent of autonomy ranging from level 1 to level 3 ; 0 corresponding to no level at all.

- level 1 “Collaborative competencies” – *“I am able in addition to help other people to do it”*
- level 2 “Autonomous competencies” - *“I am able to do it by myself with no assistance”*
- level 3 “Assisted competence” – *“I am able to do it with help”*
- level 0 “no competence at all” - *“I am not concerned”*

Topic	Competences	Environment in which the competence has been developed Examples applied to the competence	Level
A. Communication	<p>1. being able to communicate with others <i>I can communicate ideas and information and I am able to work with people with different profiles</i></p> <p>2. Being able to negotiate/manage diversity: <i>I am able to recognise cultural identities (e.g. socioeconomic, local, religious, gender, minorities cultures) and to use them as a resource of community coherence-renewal</i></p> <p>3. Enhancing social/humanistic values: <i>I am able to develop trust, tolerance and sense of respect and responsibility</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have organised meetings with youngsters</i></p> <p>Example : <i>I have organised working groups with female migrants to propose alphabetisation activities</i></p> <p>Example : <i>I have supported an exhibition preventing youngsters against homophobia</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0

	<p>4. Being able to communicate with external partners <i>I have managed public relations ; I have defended the interests of my city/town (local authority) ; I have promoted my town/city through exhibitions, professional events</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have presented the products of my towns in a professional exhibition meant to enhance regional labels</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
	<p>3. being to communicate in a written way <i>I am able to write an information (report, article, minutes of a meeting) ; I have participated to the local newspaper</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I write, once a month, an article for the City Newspaper dispatched among my fellow citizens</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
	<p>4. being able to organise events <i>I have organised and entertained events such as symposiums, conferences, exhibitions, competitions, etc.</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have organised a sport competition of volley-ball for the European Junior championship</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
	<p>5. being able to use foreign languages in a professional context <i>I understand and speak a foreign language ; I am able to use it in a professional context</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have attended a European conference in Oslo on local development where I have met European colleagues</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0

<p>B. Administration, Budget and accountancy</p>	<p>1. being able to administrate and organise <i>I know how to type documents, organise meetings, purchase supplies, I am able to select the most relevant prospect for purchases (cost/quality approach)</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have organised professional breakfast with the employers of my town to enhance the recruitment of youngsters</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0</p>
	<p>2. having a high legal literacy. <i>I am able to make proper and apropos decisions, being ready to react properly to political and economical changes and to help people integrating volatile laws.</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I know the legal background (rules and legislation) concerning the implantation of a chemistry plant</i></p>	
	<p>3. being able to use Information and Communication technologies (ICT) <i>I can use software such as Word, Excel, Power Point, Access; using Internet and e-mails ; I can develop a web log and update the local news (using any support provided by the local authority)</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I am answering each day on my blog the messages sent by my fellow citizens</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0</p>
	<p>4. being able to make the accountancy <i>I have prepared financial documents relevant for public accountancy ; I know how to list revenues/expenses, I am able to prepare a budget</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have organised a sport competition of volley-ball for the European Junior championship</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0t</p>
	<p>5. being able to prepare and implement a budget <i>I can prepare a budget and implement it ; I can build and explain the budgetary choices to prepare the vote</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I prepare each year with the public accountant the budget to be voted by the board</i></p>	

<p>C. Management and organisation</p>	<p>1. being able to manage human resources <i>I have recruited, trained, supervised and dispatched the responsibilities and the roles among the members of the local team ; I have Informed upon, encouraged and attended training proposed to local councillor</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have attended a special course proposed by the National Centre for regional civil servants on public accountancy</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0</p>
	<p>2. Being able to manage conflicts <i>I can manage conflicts, I have faced difficult human situations, I have tried to find the most equal and balanced solution, I know how to manage stress ; I can accept different opinions to enhance a good atmosphere and a fruitful and efficient team spirit</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I am used to situations of conflict as the political opposition is quite vivid in my town</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0</p>
	<p>3 being able to provide an active listening <i>I am open to others, I show empathy and share the time with others in a discussion, I answer any demand for support, I can listen without judging</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I am conducting a permanence, each week with my fellow citizens who would have a special request to make</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 ,</p>
	<p>4. being able to negotiate/ proposing a mediation <i>I can enhance a constructive debate ; I can find appropriate solutions to conflicts and differences in order to satisfy the majority taking into account the rights of the minority (democratic principle)</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have experiences critical situations with activists in the environment area</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 ,</p>
	<p>5. being able to manage stress <i>I can manage an emergency and find the most appropriate solution in the short term</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have been faced to a pandemic flue in my city and could find relevant solutions (medical support)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 , pas du tout</p>

	<p>6. being able to motivate <i>I know how to encourage others to participate with enthusiasm and to be motivated</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I regularly organise events with the leaders of associations to thank them for their action together with the municipal team</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 ,
D. Management and implementation of projects	<p>1. being able to raise funds/ to organise the marketing/ <i>I have answered calls for proposals/bids ; I have developed sponsoring ; I have found advertisement resources ;I have prepared a business plan</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have prepared the business plan for a European project (European Regional fund)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 ,
	<p>2. being able to manage a project <i>I have planned and implemented projects, defined an action plan, achieved objectives, collected results, evaluated the resources and organised the evaluation (milestones)</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have been a leader of a European project meant to enhance relationship between local councillors</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
	<p>3. being able to be the leader of a project, leadership <i>I know how to Identify and organise the possible options and take my own responsibilities. I have taken strategic decisions to go further, to defend the interest of my local authority outside ; I have guided a team and lead it to a success</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have lead my town to be selected to welcome the staff of a national football championship</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
	<p>4. being able to work with a team <i>I like to contribute with a collaborative spirit ;I want to cooperate to achieve common goals, accepting other points of view and other way of thinking and working</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have worked with the political opposition to enhance equality of chances for the disabled</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0

	<p>5. being able to create and develop a network <i>I have created and developed partnerships with individuals and organisations ; I have regularly updated my contacts</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have integrated my town in a network of European local authorities meant to enhance local development</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
E. Analysis of the public needs	<p>1. being able to provide councils <i>I know how to find a suitable information to answer the needs expressed by one's fellow citizens ; sharing one's experience and proposing a support for decision</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have prepared a statement on the measures taken to prevent the population to the H1NI flue</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 ,
	<p>2. being able to manage information <i>I know how to select and organise useful and appropriate information to better understand the situations and identify the needs and resources</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have organised a campaign to warn the population against the abuse of cellular phone with children</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0
	<p>3. being able to analyse the data <i>I can find relevant information and appropriate data, using quantitative and qualitative approach ; I can present the results of the research among various publics</i></p>	<p>Example : <i>I have published a leaflet to present the results achieved by my town in matters of road safety.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 ,

Further steps – from my elective mandate to the labour market

- **What is it?** This part of the portfolio will help you to make the link between your local mandate and your professional career
- **How to use it for?** The development of competences is an ongoing process, and you might set some personal targets to help you develop additional competences that might be directly relevant for the sort of jobs you are applying for or to increase your confidence in special activities you are already fulfilling
- **How to be completed?** The key issue is to set realistic, achievable goals for which you could put a time limit on. Please identify the key goals you want to achieve through your elective mandate and then list them on the action plan below. Try to find the relevant time by which you would like to have achieved the goal. You could also decide to take further action.

You could answer the following questions:

1. Have you ever heard of a portfolio before?
2. Did you think you could have developed competences thanks to your local mandate?
3. What did you find difficult in selecting competences and why?
4. Do you think your local mandate will benefit your professional career etc.? How far ?
5. Do you think your local mandate will benefit to find a new employment etc.? How far ?

- **How to prepare your professional pathway?** By filling the portfolio, you have learnt and identified the competences you have developed through your elective mandate. Looking back over the competences table, what competences would you like to be developed in a professional perspective?

1. first competence : _____
2. second competence : _____
3. third competence : _____

Professional perspective

Goal Competences I would like to develop in a professional perspective	Action to take Activities I would find relevant to develop the competences such as courses to take, training to attend etc.	Time How long will it take me to achieve the goal	Result to be achieved what kind of results should I achieve such as a diploma, a certification of training, a practical result
Example : Answering a European bid	Following a training course proposed by the national Center for Local Development	4 months	answering next European call for proposals for the European regional Fund such as URBACT II programme (2007-2013) for the exchange of experience on urban development issues
competence 1			
competence 2			
competence 3			