



Europass platform usability study

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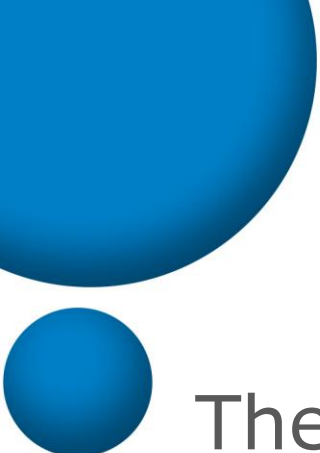
EUROPEAN UNION



State Education
Development Agency
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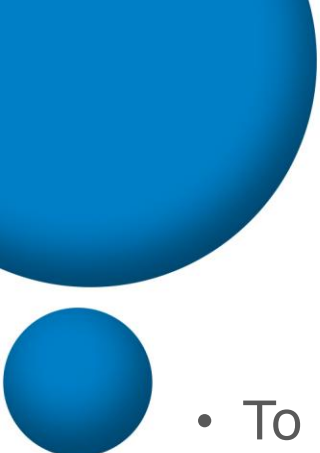
Enriching lives, opening minds



Study Goal

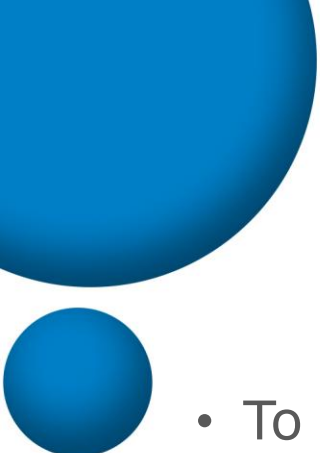
The Study was concluded at the end of 2023 by Academic Information Centre and the goal of this study was to find out how convenient it is to use the online Europass platform (europass.eu) created by the EC and to find the necessary information in it, as well as to develop recommendations at the Latvian level for possible improvements so that this platform can be successfully further developed in terms of content and functionality, ensuring convenient usability for all its visitors.

This Study Report was prepared upon request by the Academic Information Centre, acting as the National Europass Centre, within the framework of the European Commission Project No 101051168 "EQF National Coordination Point and National Europass Centre – Latvia".



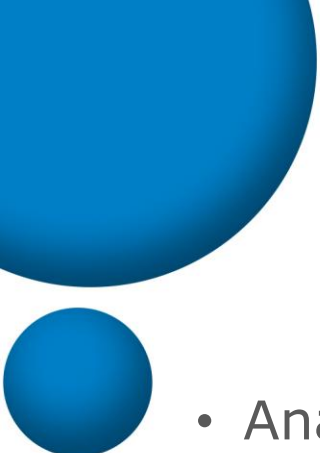
Main tasks of the study

- To research and analyze the usability and functionality of the Europass platform in accordance with the EU regulatory framework for Europass, in order to evaluate the platform's content and functions, as well as the availability of necessary information.
- To develop practical tasks regarding the Europass platform to analyze its functionality and how easy it is to find certain information in it.
- To survey platform users who have completed the mentioned tasks to find out their opinion on the platform's functionality.
- To conduct semi-structured, in-depth interviews with Europass platform users about its functionality, to study in detail the respondents' opinions on the improvements to be made to the platform.



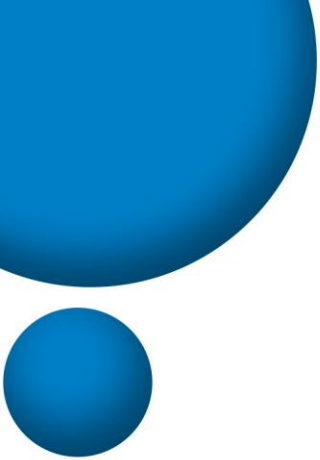
Main tasks of the study

- To conduct a survey of public representatives about the most widely used Europass document, the CV, to find out respondents' awareness of Europass CV possibilities.
- To organize focus group discussions with representatives of EU network contact points and the education sector on the functionality and usability of the Europass platform.
- To develop recommendations for improving the functions and content of the Europass platform, considering the study results and conclusions, to promote the platform's development in accordance with the needs of Latvian residents.



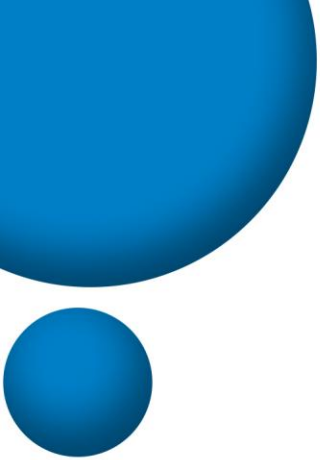
Data collection methods

- Analysis of the Europass online platform and EU documentation.
- Platform user questionnaire.
- Semi-structured platform user interviews.
- Discussions.
- Public representative survey questionnaire.



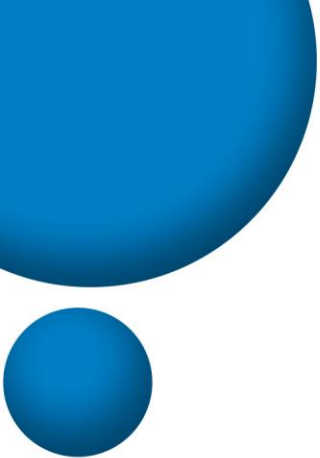
Platform user experience in completing tasks

The most successful task for platform users was finding the page with a video tutorial and tips for creating a CV and motivation letter.



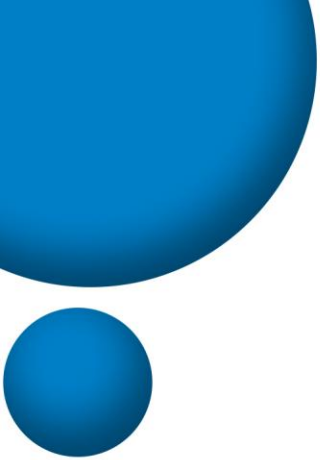
Platform user experience in completing tasks

The most difficult task for platform users was the one related to searching for education opportunities, where they had to find any course obtainable in Germany that corresponds to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 4.



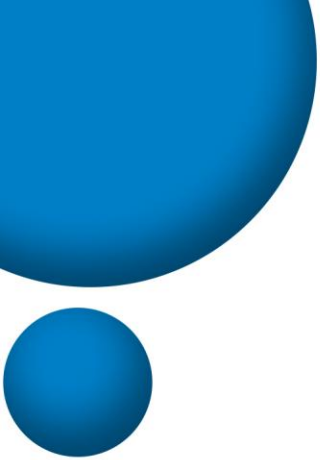
Conclusions

- Lack of precise and understandable information presentation. The study report repeatedly concludes that the same "Europass tools" are often reflected with different or changed names, which unequivocally confuses users.
- Even when users have successfully managed to understand, for example, the information about the meaning of EQF and NQF, this data is difficult to apply further using the platform's tools. For example, when finding information about EQF and NQF levels, there is a lack of clear explanations for the user to confirm that the found information is indeed what was originally searched for.
- Even when users have successfully managed to understand, for example, the information about the meaning of EQF and NQF, this data is difficult to apply further using the platform's tools. For example, when finding information about EQF and NQF levels, there is a lack of clear explanations for the user to confirm that the found information is indeed what was originally searched for.



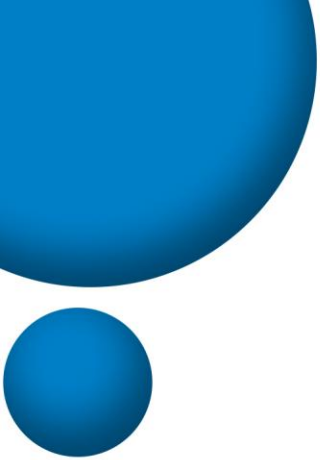
Conclusions

- The search capabilities and usability of the information included in the Europass portal are difficult. As the information on the Europass portal is often incorrectly reflected, users must search for the necessary information in other ways, as the possible indications can be misleading.
- The platform lacks support tools that would help to understand more precisely what they are looking for, as the practical task results analyzed in the study show that users can achieve an accurate end result only by initially defining the information or function to be searched for specifically and terminologically correctly.
- Europass platform users have different prior knowledge and professional work experience, which is why it is essential to create information search tools that are intuitive and easily adaptable to different target groups.



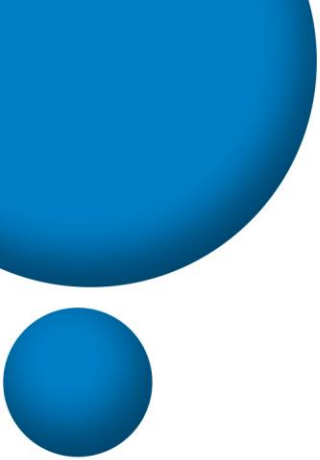
Conclusions

- Technical imperfections of the Europass portal. Additional problems are caused by technical errors in the Europass portal, where, for example, opened content sections do not work completely or the offered links are not openable.
- Certain Europass platform search engines in beta or test mode affect their quality use in the long term, and it would be necessary to inform users when the basic version, and not the test version, could be offered.
- Data is not synchronized with the databases of responsible institutions in EU countries. This is a significant problem in the operation of the Europass portal, as there is no consistency between the information reflected by EU countries, for example, education offers - from some EU countries data has been fully imported, but from other EU countries there is practically no data import.



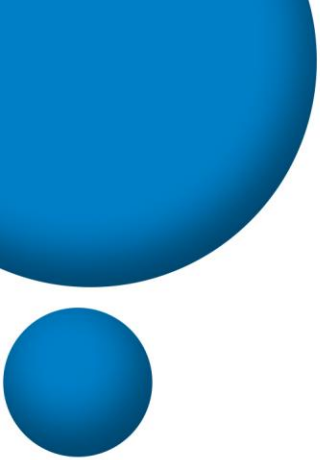
Conclusions

- It should be added that even if the issue of importing relevant data from all EU countries is resolved in the future, the next challenge is the accurate reflection of the imported data, considering that the data is collected from institutions of different countries, different systems, and in different languages.
- Within the framework of this study, it can be concluded that the search for job advertisements in other countries is difficult for users due to the absence of translation or appropriate filters, which again leads to the user likely not wanting to continue using the Europass platform, and also does not instill confidence in users regarding the convenient usability and functionality of the Europass platform in the future.



Conclusions

- Ensuring correct translations on the Europass platform. Analyzing the results of surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, the problem of ensuring correct translations, which affects the user's first reaction, was mentioned in practically every target audience.
- Often, in the very first search step, a specific Europass section or page is provided to the user only in English without the possibility to change it to the desired language.
- The results of the platform function analysis show that often the necessary Europass sections open with a translation in two languages (both English and Latvian), which can create confusion about the page content and also makes it difficult to perceive the information.



Conclusions

- Consequently, the user's first reaction, even before the information search is completed, is negative, which can significantly reduce their interest in continuing to search for the necessary data.



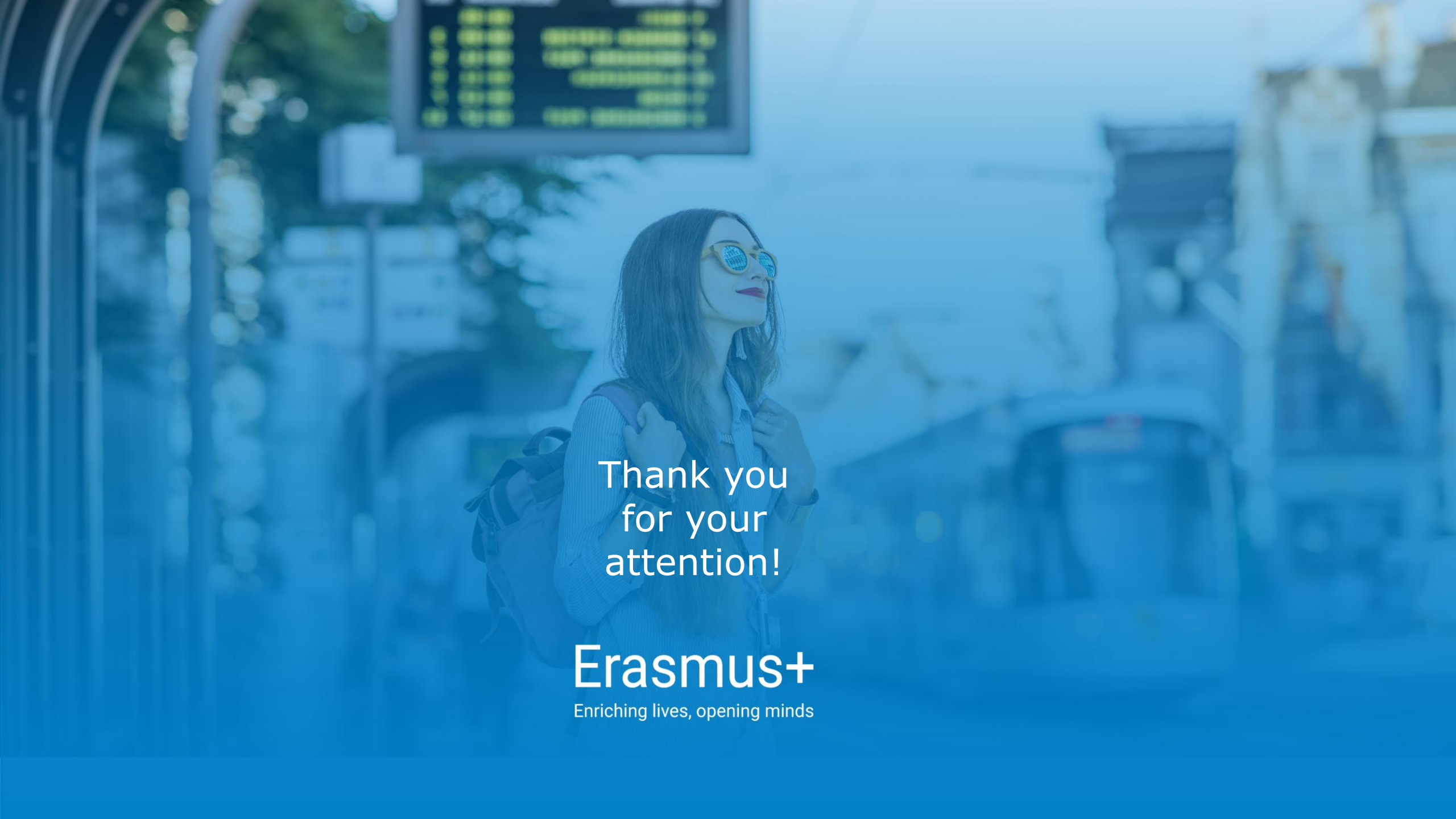
Recommendations for improving the usability and functional enhancement of the Europass platform

- The format of information presentation on the Europass portal must be improved.
- The quality of translation in all sections of the Europass portal must be improved.
- Sections that are not translated or are only partially translated into Latvian must be translated.
- The situation where Europass portal users are redirected to other websites using links, but ultimately the information is no longer available in the selected language, must be prevented.



Recommendations for improving the usability and functional enhancement of the Europass platform

- Data synchronization problems between national databases and the Europass portal must be resolved.
- Search capabilities on the Europass portal need to be improved.
- Information display in the education opportunities search engine must be improved.
- Final versions must be developed for search engines operating in beta test mode.
- Situations where the language changes when users navigate to other pages of the platform must be prevented.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing yellow-rimmed sunglasses and a backpack, is looking upwards and to the right. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient. In the background, there is a blurred city street scene with a tram and buildings.

Thank you
for your
attention!

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