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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

**Evaluation of Decision (EU) 2018/646 of the European Parliament and of the Council of
18 April 2018**

**on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and
qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC**

Accompanying the document

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
THE COUNCIL**

**on the implementation and impact of Decision (EU) 2018/646 of the European
Parliament and of the Council of 18 April 2018**

**on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications
(Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC**

(submitted pursuant to Art. 9 of the Decision (EU) 2018/646)

Table of contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Purpose and scope of the evaluation	1
1.2	Overview of the methodology	2
2.	WHAT WAS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF EUROPASS?	4
2.1	Description of Europass and its objectives.....	4
2.1.1	Policy context and evolution	4
2.1.2	Intervention logic	5
2.2	Points of comparison	8
3.	HOW HAS THE SITUATION EVOLVED OVER THE EVALUATION PERIOD?	11
3.1.	Delivery of Europass tools and services.....	11
3.2.	Implementation of the Europass Decision by the Commission and Member States	14
4.	EVALUATION FINDINGS (ANALYTICAL PART)	19
4.1.	To what extent was the intervention successful and why?	19
4.1.1	Effectiveness	19
4.1.2	Efficiency	30
4.1.3	Coherence	34
4.2.	How did the EU intervention make a difference and to whom (EU added value and impact)?	38
4.3.	Is the intervention still relevant?	39
4.3.1	Need for information and guidance on job and learning opportunities and skills required by the labour market.....	40
4.3.2	Need for improved transparency and comparability of qualifications and skills	44
4.3.3	Need to reduce the fragmentation between different skills, qualifications and labour mobility tools	45
4.3.4	Need for a shared understanding of skills and qualifications and an EU infrastructure for digital credentials (EDC).....	47
5.	WHAT ARE THE CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED?	49
5.1.	Conclusions	49
5.1.1	Effectiveness	49
5.1.2	Efficiency	52
5.1.3	Coherence	53
5.1.4	EU added value and impact.....	54
5.1.5	Relevance	54
5.2.	Lessons learned	56
	ANNEX I: PROCEDURAL INFORMATION	60

ANNEX II. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL MODELS USED	61
ANNEX III. EVALUATION MATRIX	76
ANNEX IV. OVERVIEW OF BENEFITS AND COSTS AND TABLE ON SIMPLIFICATION AND BURDEN REDUCTION	89
Table 6 - Overview of benefits and costs identified in the evaluation	89
Table 7 - Simplification and burden reduction.....	92
ANNEX V. STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION - SYNOPSIS REPORT	94
Consultation strategy	94
Public consultation	97
Surveys	103
Interviews	109
Qualitative observations	112
ANNEX VI. MAIN CHANGES TO EUROPASS AND EVOLUTION OVER THE EVALUATION PERIOD	116
ANNEX VII. UPTAKE OF EUROPASS TOOLS AND SERVICES	128
ANNEX VIII. USER AND STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION OF EUROPASS	134

Table of figures

- Figure 1 - EU tools and initiatives that the Europass policy framework interacts with, integrates and supports
- Figure 2 - Intervention logic - Needs
- Figure 3 - Intervention logic - Objectives
- Figure 4 - Intervention logic – Inputs (EU level and Member States Level)
- Figure 5 - Intervention logic – EU level activities and outputs
- Figure 6 - Intervention logic – National level activities and outputs
- Figure 7 - Annual number of new profiles created on the new Europass platform
- Figure 8 - Number of unique visitors per month (August 2020 to January 2023)
- Figure 9 - Number of Europass mentions by month (2020-2022)
- Figure 10 – Intervention logic of Europass
- Figure 11 - Respondents to the public consultation
- Figure 12 - Country distribution of respondents to the public consultation
- Figure 13 - Familiarity with the Europass tools and services
- Figure 14 - Usefulness of the Europass tools and services
- Figure 15 - Awareness and uptake of the Europass tools and services
- Figure 16 - Levels of satisfaction with Europass tools
- Figure 17 - Number of page visits on Europass (2005-2019)
- Figure 18 - Number of documents generated online (2005-2019)
- Figure 19 - Uptake of Europass web-based tools and services
- Figure 20 - Use of the Europass platform for retrieving information
- Figure 21 - Overview of the number of EDCs stored in Europass wallets by months and over time
- Figure 22 - Share of Europass profiles across Member States over their total population
- Figure 23 - Main advantages of Europass

Figure 24 - Importance given to the information and services provided by Europass

Figure 25 - Share of end-users perceiving Europass tools and services as accessible and user-friendly

Table of tables

Table 1 - Assessment of the tasks carried out by the European Commission for the implementation of the Europass Decision.

Table 2 – Evaluation questions

Table 3 - Surveys implemented in the context of the evaluation of Europass

Table 4 - Geographic coverage by category of interviewed stakeholders

Table 5 - Evaluation matrix

Table 6 - Overview of benefits and costs and table on simplification and burden reduction

Table 7 - Simplification and burden reduction

Table 8 - Types of stakeholders consulted

Table 9 - Stakeholders' participation in consultation activities

Table 10 - Evolution of Europass, its components and governance

Table 11 - State of play of implementation of features in the 2020 online platform

Glossary

<i>Term or acronym</i>	<i>Meaning or definition</i>
2FA	Two Factor Authentication
AI	Artificial intelligence
CV	Curriculum vitae
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EDC	European Digital Credentials for Learning
EEA	European Economic Area
ELA	European Labour Authority
ELM	European Learning Model
ENIC-NARIC	European Network of Information Centres in the European Region - National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESCO	Classification of European Skills/Competences, Qualifications and Occupations
ETF	European Training Foundation
EURES	European cooperation network of Employment Services
EURODESK	European youth information network
Euroguidance	European network of national resource and information centres for guidance
EYS	European Year of Skills
HR	Human resources
HR XML	Human resources extensible markup language
LOQ	Learning Opportunities and Qualifications Portal

NECs	National Europass Centres
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PES	Public Employment Services
QDR	Qualifications Dataset Register
VET	Vocational education and training

1. INTRODUCTION

The first version of the Europass framework was established by Decision 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 December 2004¹. From the outset, Europass has provided a set of instruments to support the mobility of people in Europe for education and employment purposes and the transparency of qualifications, skills and competences.

The Europass Decision 2018/646 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications was adopted in April 2018². The Decision aims to strengthen and develop Europass into a service-based platform that takes into account changes since 2004 in technology, the labour market, education and training systems and society at large.

Europass is one of the 12 actions of the 2020 European Skills Agenda³, which aims to help individuals and businesses develop more and better skills to support upskilling and reskilling. This will contribute to the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and achieve socially fair green and digital transitions.

The new Europass provides tools and information through an online platform⁴. The European Commission launched it in July 2020 to support people in their lifelong learning and career management. The tools and services can be used by learners, workers, jobseekers and volunteers to communicate and present their skills, qualifications and experience clearly and consistently across Europe.

¹ Decision No 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2004.390.01.0006.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2004%3A390%3ATOC.

² Referred to in this document as the Europass Decision. See [Decision \(EU\) 2018/ 646 OF the European Parliament and of the Council - of 18 April 2018 - on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications \(Europass\) and repealing Decision No 2241 / 2004/ EC](#).

³ [EUR-Lex - 52020DC0274 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#). Other recent Commission and Council initiatives that refer to Europass include the [2021-2027 action plan on integration and inclusion](#), the [Council Recommendation on individual learning accounts](#), the [Council Recommendation on micro credentials for lifelong learning and employability](#), the [Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond \(2021-2030\)](#) and the [Council Recommendation on vocational education and training \(VET\) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience](#).

⁴ [Home | Europass](#).

1.1 Purpose and scope of the evaluation

This staff working document presents the findings of the Commission's evaluation of the Europass Decision. Under Article 9, an evaluation of the impact and implementation of the Decision is required in 2023 and every 5 years after that. The evaluation is supported by a study carried out by an external contractor.

In line with the Better Regulation guidelines⁵, the evaluation assesses the extent to which Europass is effective, efficient and coherent, provides EU added value and remains relevant to tackle current needs⁶. Moreover, the evaluation reviews the take-up of Europass and its wider impact on the European labour market and on skills and lifelong learning policies. This includes:

- better transparency and comparability of qualifications⁷, skills and competences;
- less fragmentation between different skills and qualification tools;
- access to information and guidance on job and learning opportunities and skills required in the labour market.

For this evaluation, Member States were consulted regularly through the Europass Advisory Group⁸.

The evaluation covers the period from 2018, when the Europass Decision was adopted, until 2022. It focuses on 2020 when the new platform was launched and beyond. The geographical scope of the evaluation covers the 27 EU Member States, the European Economic Area (EEA) as well as candidate and potential candidate countries under their agreements concluded with the EU (Article 10 of the Europass Decision).

The outcome of the evaluation will contribute to further developing and improving Europass tools and services. Moreover, the results of this evaluation should be seen in combination with the those of the 2023 evaluation of the European Qualifications Framework⁹, as both exercises provide comprehensive insights into the role of EU transparency tools and services for skills and qualifications.

⁵ [Better regulation: guidelines and toolbox](#).

⁶ See Annex III, including the evaluation matrix comprising the full list of evaluation questions.

⁷ 'Qualification' refers to a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent authority determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

⁸ The Europass Advisory Group is an EU-level consultative body comprised of stakeholders. The Commission set it up to support implementing the Europass Decision.

⁹ See Evaluation of the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2017 on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (SWD(2024) 141).

1.2 Overview of the methodology

The evaluation of Europass was supported by a study¹⁰ carried out by an external contractor. The methodology is based on a mixed-method approach, combining primary and secondary data and covering different user profiles. More precisely, the mixed-method approach¹¹ comprised

- a desk review of relevant official documents and literature
- data analysis (Europass platform user data, cost data provided by the Commission, Google search and social media analysis)
- quantitative primary data (three targeted surveys to Europass users and non-users¹², employers, and education and training providers)
- qualitative insights from in-depth stakeholder interviews, targeted qualitative observations of non-users, discovering the Europass platform and functionalities for the first time.
- a public consultation and a call for evidence¹³.

An intervention logic¹⁴ was developed in the context of this evaluation as well as an evaluation matrix. The matrix linked the evaluation criteria to the intervention logic and used the key elements to draw up research questions.

One of the evaluation's challenges is that the scope of the previous pre-2018 Europass framework was significantly narrower than the new one. Consequently, comparing the two frameworks is more difficult. Another challenge was related to the availability of data to prepare the supporting study, e.g. monitoring data on the uptake and use of specific Europass tools and monitoring data on National Europass Centres (NECs)¹⁵ since 2020 when the centres submitted their last final activity reports. Mitigation measures included using data collected through the survey targeted at users and non-users to map the use of specific tools, a social media analysis on communication activities carried out as well the

¹⁰ See 'Study supporting the Europass ex-post evaluation', Verian Group (former Kantar Public) (<https://op.europa.eu/en/web/general-publications>).

¹¹ Respondent numbers and percentages included in this staff working document are not representative for the EU as a whole. Figures quoted are from the different data collection tools deployed in the context of this evaluation. Further details on the stakeholder groups covered and the number of respondents for each data collection tool can be found in Annex V "Synopsis report" in table "Table 9 - Stakeholders' participation in consultation activities".

¹² Users and non-users (in total 7647 respondents) were reached with two different samples: the general population sample (which included both users and non-users from 10 countries, 4040 respondents) and the Europass users sample which was reached via an open link on the Europass platform and a mailing to Europass users (3607 respondents).

¹³ See the public consultation results on the Commission's Have your Say website: [Lifelong learning and career management - evaluation of Europass since 2018](#). The results of all stakeholder consultation activities are summarised in the Synopsis Report (see Annex V to this document).

¹⁴ See Figure 10 in Annex II (Intervention logic for Europass).

¹⁵ National Europass Centres (NECs) have been set up in each Europass country to provide user support and promote skills and qualifications documentation.

use of data from a survey of NECs carried out by the Commission in 2022. Moreover, specific questions were included in stakeholder interviews.

Further details on the methodology are available in Annex II to this report (Methodology and analytical models used).

2. WHAT WAS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF EUROPASS?

2.1 Description of Europass and its objectives

The new Europass provides tools and information through an online platform to support people in their lifelong learning and career management. As set out in Article 1 of the Europass Decision, the platform can be used by individuals, such as learners, workers, jobseekers and volunteers, to communicate and present their skills, qualifications and experience clearly and consistently across Europe. Other stakeholders include education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations, volunteer organisations and policymakers.

Since its launch in July 2020, Europass has evolved from providing downloadable templates into a service-based platform that provides individuals with better access to information on opportunities for working and learning in Europe, on how to assess their digital skills and how to present information about their skills and qualifications.

2.1.1 Policy context and evolution

Europass and its development are related to two of the six priorities set out by the von der Leyen Commission when taking office¹⁶. These are *A Europe fit for the digital age* and *An economy that works for the people*. Europass can contribute to these strategic priorities by improving the transparency of skills and qualifications of individuals applying for jobs. This supports better matching candidates to jobs regardless of the language or technology used to advertise such jobs, the countries where the jobs and the candidates are located or where candidates acquired their skills and qualifications.

As part of the European Pillar of Social Rights¹⁷, the main policy frameworks related to Europass are the European Skills Agenda, the European Education Area and Europe's Digital Decade. These policies are linked to different EU tools and initiatives that Europass serves in different ways and more specifically to different services and tools provided by Europass. Figure 1 presents the EU tools and initiatives that Europass interacts with, integrates or supports.

Figure 1: EU tools and initiatives that the Europass policy framework interacts with, integrates and supports

¹⁶ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024_en

¹⁷ [The European Pillar of Social Rights in 20 principles - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://commission.europa.eu/european-pillar-social-rights/20-principles_en).

The European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning	Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning	A European approach to micro-credentials	Lifelong Guidance
Council Recommendation on vocational education and training	Upskilling pathways	Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs)	Labour and Learning Mobility

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2.1.2 Intervention logic

For the evaluation exercise, an intervention logic was developed¹⁸ as described below.

2.1.2.1 Needs

Europass aims to address the needs of individuals and other stakeholders in the areas of learning, working or volunteering to access information and guidance on what opportunities are available, how to assess skills and how to present information about skills and qualifications.

Figure 2: Intervention logic – Needs



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Differences in definitions related to skills and qualifications, document formats, languages, assessments and validation methods can represent considerable challenges for individuals, employers and education and training providers, especially when moving between countries. These differences also affect people moving within a country, between employment sectors or across different sectors of education and training. To address these challenges, it is important to have clear, transparent and fully accessible information and a common understanding of skills and qualifications.

Furthermore, skills, experience and learning achievements are acknowledged in different ways. The use of digital technologies is changing the way individuals present information on acquired skills and qualifications. Traditionally, individuals have presented information in a CV and supporting documents, such as certificates or diplomas. Now, new tools are available that can facilitate the presentation of skills and qualifications by using different online and digital formats. Examples of such digital formats are the European Digital Credentials for Learning, which make it possible to issue and seal learning credentials in a digital format.

¹⁸ For the complete intervention logic, see Annex II, Figure 10 Intervention logic of Europass.

2.1.2.2 Objectives

Recital 34 of the Europass Decision clearly states the **general objective of Europass**, which is to create a comprehensive and interoperable framework of tools and information, in particular for transnational employment and learning mobility purposes.

Figure 3: Intervention logic – Objectives



Source: External supporting study by Kantar ("SO" stands for Specific Objectives)

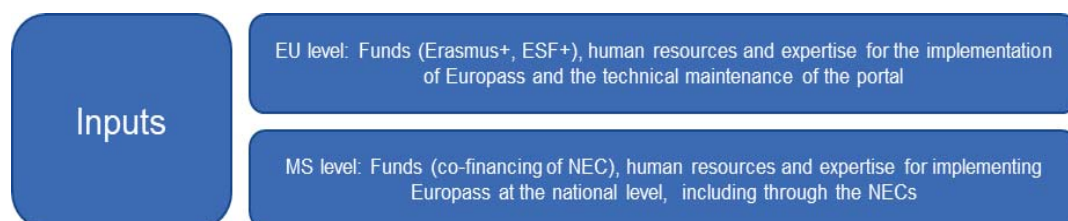
This general objective can be broken down into three specific objectives:

- supporting the mobility of individuals for work and education opportunities in the EU;
- better integrating services for learners, jobseekers, workers, volunteers, employers and education and training providers to communicate skills and competences, with a focus on disadvantaged groups;
- fostering a common framework for the transparency and recognition of qualifications/validation of skills among Member States.

2.1.2.3 Inputs

In terms of **inputs**¹⁹, Erasmus+ and European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) financial instruments and programmes contribute to supporting Europass activities at EU level. NECs are also co-funded by the countries that contribute financially to these activities.

Figure 4: Intervention logic – Inputs (EU level and Member States Level)



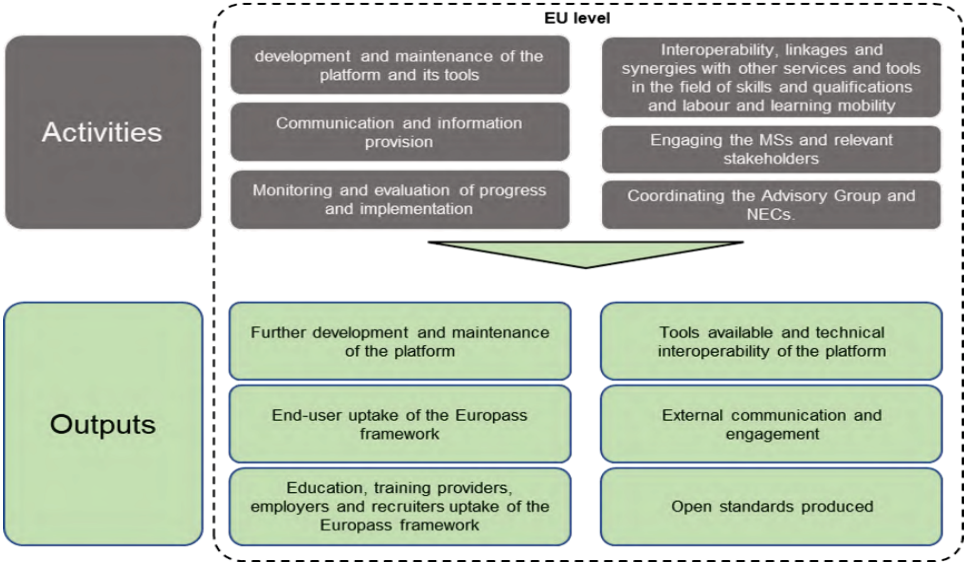
Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2.1.2.4 EU and national activities and outputs

¹⁹ For further details on the EU funding dedicated to Europass, please see section 4.1.2 "Efficiency".

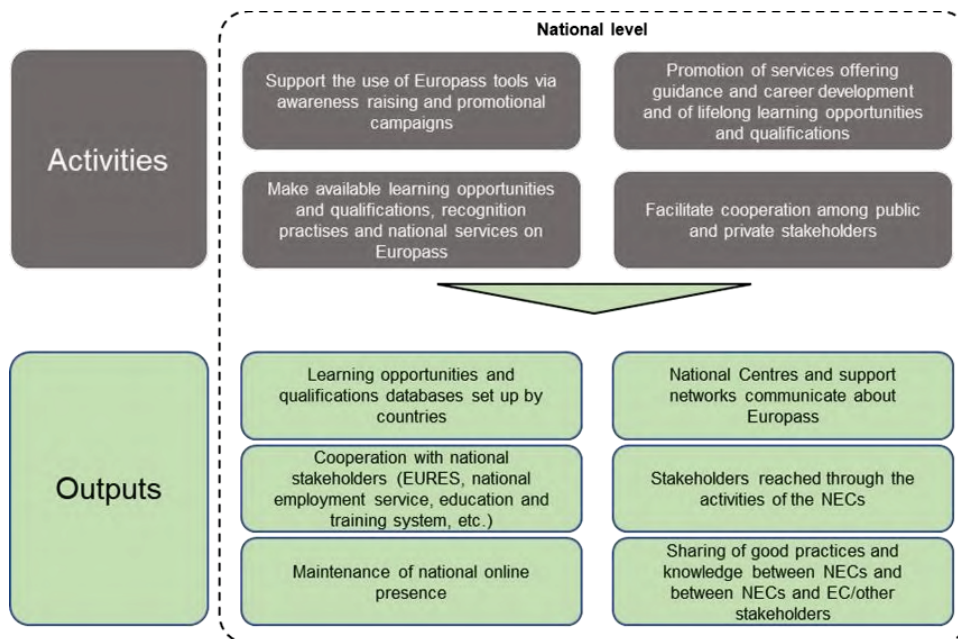
With the support of the input described above, Europass **activities** can be grouped into activities at EU and national level as presented below.

Figure 5: Intervention logic – EU-level activities and outputs



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Figure 6: Intervention logic – National-level activities and outputs



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2.1.2.5 Results

As a **result** of the activities above, Europass is expected to address the needs described in Section 2.1.2.1 and, more generally, increase the visibility of its tools and services to end users and EU and national stakeholders, thus facilitating access to opportunities for working and learning. A better understanding of skills and qualifications is also expected to lead to a better integration of the labour market. The identification of skills, access to information on learning opportunities and possibly access to skills intelligence tools and guidance, validation and recognition of skills are expected to support the increase of upskilling and reskilling, in line with the Porto targets set for 2030²⁰.

2.1.2.6 Impacts

The overall **impact** is that individuals have help in moving across Europe by using Europass to document and present their experience and skills transparently. Furthermore, Europass supports achieving the common objectives of the EU's education policy and is a tool for enrolling in education and training and accessing the labour market.

²⁰ Porto Social Summit: all partners commit to 2030 social targets, retrieved 8 August 2022 <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=89&furtherNews=yes&langId=en&newsId=10004>.

2.2 Points of comparison

The points of comparison in this exercise are the previous Europass platform and the different levels of uptake of the different tools available on the new Europass platform.

According to the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) European skills forecast²¹, the work environment of the upcoming decade will be marked by transitions and certain trends: the growing importance of the service sector and high-skilled jobs and increasing automation/digitalisation. These trends are accompanied by a growing demand for high-level skills that need to be acquired by an ageing population.

The European Skills Agenda²², beyond setting skills targets for 2025, acknowledges how the EU population's current participation in training still falls short of the objectives:

- in 2016, 38% of adults aged 25-64 participated in learning during the last 12 months;
- in 2016, 18% of low-qualified adults aged 25-64 participated in learning during the last 12 months;
- in 2019, 11% of unemployed adults aged 25-64 had a recent learning experience;
- in 2022, 54% of adults aged 16-74 had at least basic digital skills²³.

The human capital chapter of the 2022 Digital Economy and Society Index²⁴ shows that 54% of Europeans have at least basic digital skills. This is 26% below the target set in the Digital Compass, with notable differences between countries. Some Member States, such as the Netherlands and Finland, are close to the target with 79% of people having at least basic digital skills in 2021. In eight Member States, the share of individuals with at least basic digital skills is lower than 50%. The countries that rank the lowest are Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and Italy.

Around 8.9 million ICT specialists were in employment in 2021, which is 4.5% of the total number of people in employment. Even the frontrunners are far from the Digital Decade target, with Sweden at 8% and Finland at 7.4%. At the current rate, the EU will fall short of the target of 20 million ICT specialists for 2030.

²¹ Cedefop, Digital, greener and more resilient insights from Cedefop's European skills forecast, 2021, retrieved on 9 February 2023 at www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications.

²² European Commission, European Skills Agenda, retrieved on 9 February 2023 at <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>.

²³ The 2030 Digital Compass updates the European Skills Agenda target for basic digital skills to 80% by 2030. Retrieved on 20 March 2023 at https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/europes-digital-decade-digital-targets-2030_en.

²⁴ European Commission, Human Capital and Digital Skills in the Digital Economy and Society Index, 2022, retrieved on 9 February 2023 at <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi-human-capital>.

Moreover, 40% of employers cannot find people with the right skills to fill their vacancies, and not enough people have the skill sets and support to consider setting up their own business as a realistic career path²⁵.

As regards student mobility, 1.46 million students from abroad were in tertiary education across the EU in 2020²⁶. Students from abroad studying in Germany represented 25% (368 700) of the EU total; the next largest shares were 17% in France and 9% in the Netherlands. More than two fifths (43%) of those students represented student mobility within Europe, while 26% of the students were from Asia and 16% from Africa.

In terms of labour mobility, in 2021 13.9 million EU and EFTA nationals lived in another EU country, including around 10.2 million of working age²⁷. Although the number slowed during the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a constant year-on-year increase. Additionally, there were 1.34 million EU movers²⁸ residing in EFTA countries, up by 1.8% from 2020. As a share of the EU working-age population, EU movers have increased steadily since 2017. On 1 January 2021, they represented 3.9% of the working-age population in the EU; the percentage has increased every year since 2017 when it was 3.5%.

In this context, it is crucial to put in place a comprehensive and interoperable European framework of tools and information to support the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications experience, in particular for transnational employment and learning purposes.

The Europass Decision does not make it mandatory to use the platform's services and tools or set any quantitative targets. Therefore, while the Decision's aim is to increase the number of users of the tools and services, no quantified objectives are set as regards the user base (end users²⁹ or stakeholders³⁰).

While no quantified objectives have been set, this evaluation relies on a baseline and the above-mentioned points of comparison to assess the performance of the 2018 Europass Decision and its implementation.

²⁵ European Commission, Skills and qualifications, retrieved on 9 February 2023 at <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1146>.

²⁶ Eurostat, learning mobility statistics, 2022, retrieved on 9 February 2023 at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Learning_mobility_statistics#:~:text=Highlights&text=1.46%20million%20students%20from%20abroad,across%20the%20EU%20in%202020.&text=In%202020%2C%20students%20from%20abroad,and%209%20%25%20in%20the%20Netherlands.

²⁷ Annual report on intra-EU labour mobility 2022 <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=10545&furtherNews=yes>.

²⁸ EU movers refer to individuals of EU nationality that reside in another EU or EFTA country.

²⁹ Learners, jobseekers, workers and volunteers.

³⁰ Education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policymakers.

3. HOW HAS THE SITUATION EVOLVED OVER THE EVALUATION PERIOD?

3.1. Delivery of Europass tools and services

Articles 3 and 4 of the Europass Decision list what should be included in the Europass platform in terms of web-based tools, information or links to information. These are described below.

- **Web-based tools for:**

- documenting and describing personal information in different formats, including curriculum vitae (CV) and cover letter templates;
- documenting and describing skills and qualifications acquired through working and learning experience, including through mobility and volunteering;
- supporting authentication services for any digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications;
- assessing skills and self-assessing skills;
- documenting the learning outcomes of qualifications, including the Europass supplement templates³¹.

- **Information or links to information on the following topics:**

- learning opportunities;
- qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems in line with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
- opportunities for validating non-formal and informal learning;
- recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including non-EU countries;
- services providing guidance on transnational learning mobility and career management;
- skills intelligence as produced as part of EU activities and by agencies within their areas of responsibility;
- information on skills and qualifications that could be relevant to the particular needs of non-EU nationals arriving or residing in the EU to support their integration.

³¹ The Diploma Supplement is a document which provides information that makes it easier for employers and education institutions to understand an individual's qualification, whereas the Europass Certificate Supplement is a document that provides information that makes it easier for employers and educational institutions to understand an individual's vocational qualification.

- **A user-friendly and secure interface** delivered in **all Europass languages** (languages of EU Member States and other Europass countries) and accessible to people with disabilities;
- **Open standards**³² available **free of charge** for reuse by Member States and other stakeholders on a voluntary basis;
- An **option for users to store personal data**, such as a personal profile, in compliance with EU data protection laws;
- Support and ensure **technical interoperability and synergies** with other relevant instruments and services offered at EU level and, where appropriate, national level.

In this context, since 2018 the Europass framework has evolved in the following ways.

- **Europass platform services and documents**

- The new platform offers a one-stop shop for developing CVs and cover letters as well helping users reflect on their skills and interests in the Europass e-Portfolio.
- The new platform allows users to search and apply for jobs as well as education and training opportunities using different documents of their choice that represent their achievements and experience, stored in their personal library.
- To support guidance provision, the new platform allows users to self-assess their digital skills.
- Europass document templates have been updated, and some have been digitised and streamlined. In this context, the European Digital Credential infrastructure has been introduced as an authentication service for digital documents.

- **Interoperability**

The improved connectivity of Europass with other EU tools is one of the major changes. For example, the European Classification of Occupations and Skills (ESCO) is used by the Europass platform for entering work experience and building a skills or interests profile. The Europass and EURES platforms have been linked together and can exchange information (job vacancies and applications). The Qualifications Dataset Register (QDR) has become a Europass component. Furthermore, information on the European Qualification Framework (EQF)³³ has been integrated into the platform.

³² An open standard is a standard that is openly accessible and usable by anyone.

³³ OJ C 189, 15.6.2017, p. 15, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32017H0615%2801%29>.

The EQF aims to make qualifications more transparent and comparable and therefore portable across borders, helping workers, learners and employers. The framework has eight levels based on learning outcomes and makes it possible to compare all types and levels of qualifications across institutions and national borders.

- **Management and governance**

- Member States were given additional responsibilities in the management of Europass. Under the 2018 Europass Decision, Member States are now required to:
 - coordinate activities related to the implementation of Europass web-based tools;
 - promote the use and strengthen awareness and the visibility of Europass;
 - promote and provide information on guidance services on transnational learning mobility and career management, including, where appropriate, individual guidance;
 - publish information on learning opportunities, qualifications and recognition practices on Europass, including through links to relevant national websites;
 - involve stakeholders from all relevant sectors and promote cooperation among public and private stakeholders in the activities under their responsibility.
- Based on decisions of certain countries, some of these activities are carried out by National Europass Centres (NECs), which provide user support and promote skills and qualifications documentation.
- An advisory group was created to oversee the implementation of the Decision. The Europass Advisory Group is an EU-level consultative body composed of stakeholders from EU Member States, including social partners and civil society representatives. The group's remit is to develop a strategic approach to the implementation of Europass and advise on the development of web-based tools, including through testing, and on information provided through the Europass online platform.

Many of the Europass tools, services and information have been made available on the Europass platform when it was launched in July 2020. Certain major tools have been added after the July 2020 launch, like the European Digital Credentials for Learning (released in October 2021), the Digital Skills Self-assessment tool (December 2021) and the Jobs & Skill Trends tool (June 2023). In parallel, the platform has been regularly updated to improve accessibility for users, the profile, CV and Cover Letter builders, the design and templates for CVs and Cover Letters, the Application manager functionality, the Recommender system for jobs and courses (learning opportunities), the search functionality for qualifications and learning opportunities and job opportunities, page navigation and information pages. Lastly, the Commission has been preparing the next

steps for Europass, which involve using more artificial intelligence and data analysis, to improve its services for end users. The goal is to better match profiles, skills, qualifications and interests to jobs, courses and other opportunities. This work aims primarily at improving the jobs and course recommendations using data science and focuses on user behaviour and other aspects, for example, links between qualifications and skills.

3.2. Implementation of the Europass Decision by the Commission and Member States

The tasks assigned to the Commission to implement the Europass Decision are set out in Article 6 of the Decision and described below.

Table 1 – Assessment of the tasks carried out by the European Commission for the implementation of the Europass Decision.

Tasks set out in the Europass Decision	Evidence on the degree of implementation
Manage the Europass online platform by:	
Ensuring the availability and high quality of EU-level information or links.	The Commission provides and regularly updates relevant information on the platform and ensures links with other portals and services. The overall level of user satisfaction with such information is high.
Developing, testing and, when necessary, updating the Europass online platform, including open standards, in line with user needs and technological advancements, as well as changes in labour markets and in the provision of education and training.	A Europass testing approach has been developed by the Commission. The Europass Advisory Group has been set up to advise on the development of Europass, which can include testing the different features of the platform.
Keeping up to date with and incorporate, where relevant, the latest technological developments that can improve the accessibility of Europass for older persons and persons with disabilities.	Accessibility tests have flagged accessibility issues across the platform. New solutions have been implemented to improve accessibility although the platform is still not fully accessible for persons with disabilities. An update to the platform with technical improvements (release nr 1.9) was implemented in January 2023. The new version is expected to improve accessibility levels.
Ensuring that any development or update to the Europass online platform, including open standards, supports consistency of information and demonstrates clear added value.	Information on the platform is consistent across the different web pages and tools. The platform is regularly updated to include new technical developments. The new platform has integrated a number of tools and services in one digital environment, representing a concrete solution for standardising information about skills, qualifications and competences at EU level.
Ensuring that any web-based tools, in particular tools for assessment and self-assessment, are fully tested and quality assured.	Testing is a standard part of IT development. Every release is tested at many levels (from factory and user acceptance to ‘sanity checks’) before its launch according to the relevant standards.
Ensuring the quality of the Europass online platform and monitoring its effectiveness, including ensuring that web-based tools are in line with user needs.	On monitoring effectiveness, no specific monitoring arrangements and indicators have been set up.

	<p>On user needs, since the launch of the new Europass, National Europass Centres (NECs) and the Europe Direct Contact Centres have been the main channels to interact with Europass end users. Feedback has been regularly monitored, and some suggestions have been implemented or are due to be implemented.</p>
Implement the Europass Decision by:	
Ensuring the active participation and involvement of Member States in strategic planning, including setting and steering strategic objectives, quality assurance and financing, taking due regard of their positions.	Europass Advisory Group meetings as well as different project groups among NECs are regularly organised by the Commission. The project groups are designed to address specific issues faced by the NECs to ensure the effective implementation of Europass. NECs are coordinated by the Commission within the Europass community in regular meetings, webinars and discussions. The Commission collects feedback and shares information with them (via surveys and during meetings) to improve the platform.
Ensuring the active participation and involvement of Member States in the development, testing, updating and evaluation of the Europass online platform, including open standards, taking due regard of their positions.	The Advisory Group and National Europass Centres participate in these tasks. The Advisory Group reviews and agrees on the concept, progress and implementation of Europass and ensures synergies. NECs test pilot new web-based tools and services.
Ensure that, at EU level, stakeholders are involved in the implementation and evaluation of the Europass Decision.	<p>EU-level stakeholders have been included in the implementation and evaluation of the Europass Decision. Those include EU-level NGOs, trade and business associations, trade unions and EU institutions and agencies, such as Cedefop, and EU initiatives such as EURES and ESCO.</p> <p>As part of the evaluation, EU-level stakeholders were consulted through scoping interviews during the inception phase as well as targeted stakeholder interviews.</p> <p>Stakeholders have been involved in the implementation of the Europass Decision through the work and discussions of the Europass Advisory Group and through cooperation with the NECs.</p>
Setting up learning activities and best practice exchanges between Member States and, where appropriate, facilitating peer counselling at the request of Member States.	The Advisory Group was set up for this purpose and to accelerate best practice exchanges. The Commission organises regular webinars for NECs to share best practices. In addition, different project groups have been set up by the Commission (e.g. Project Group on Learning Opportunities and the new Project Group on Europass Mobility, which started its work in January 2023)
Ensuring that effective and adequate promotion, guidance and information activities are carried out at EU level in order to reach relevant users and stakeholders, including persons with disabilities.	A communication strategy has been developed at EU level and covers two dimensions (EU and national levels). Following the launch of the 2020 Europass platform, specific targeted actions have been set for the three main categories of audience (users, education and training providers and employers).

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Under Article 7 of the Europass Decision, Member States are responsible for the following implementation tasks to be carried out by the relevant national services:

- coordinating activities related to the implementation of Europass web-based tools;
- promoting the use and raising awareness and the visibility of Europass;
- promoting and providing information on guidance services on transnational learning mobility and career management, including, where appropriate, individual guidance;
- making information on learning opportunities, qualifications and recognition practices available on the Europass online platform, including through links to relevant national websites;
- involving stakeholders from all relevant sectors and promoting cooperation among public and private stakeholders in the activities under their responsibility.

Member States implement the tasks set out in the Europass Decision mainly through the National Europass Centres (NECs), which already existed before the 2018 Europass Decision. NECs are designated at national level; they operate independently and are co-financed through grants. They support users and promote the documenting of skills and qualifications through Europass. Overall, NECs focus on the operational and promotional support of Europass, contributing to its national outreach and connecting it to individual users and their needs. Between 2018 and 2020, most Member States focused on coordinating the activities linked to the implementation of new tools and reaching out to stakeholders. NECs also put significant effort into raising the awareness of Europass and providing guidance on mobility and careers to end users. Work programmes for 2021-2023 show that NECs' focus was mainly on promoting Europass, providing guidance and involving stakeholders. An updated assessment of Member States' implementation from 2021 to 2023 will be possible once the final activity reports for that period are produced.

As regards the implementation of the platform's tools, most Member States contributed to gathering user feedback to pass on to the Commission. A slightly smaller number of countries tested different tools and services (most tests involved the traditional tools: CV, Europass Diploma Supplement, Europass Certificate Supplement and Europass Mobility). Moreover, a third of NECs carried out pilot tests, which mainly concerned digitally signed credentials that were developed between March 2019 and October 2021, when EDCs were officially launched. In addition to the NECs, many organisations in the Member States and Europass countries participated in the European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDC) pilot.

All Member States contributed to the promotion of Europass. Although conferences and the distribution of promotional material (i.e. booklets, leaflets, merchandising) are still the most common communication methods used by all countries, the COVID-19 pandemic saw online events and social media used as additional promotional tools. Furthermore, seminars, fairs and mutual learning activities, such as peer exchanges, are common across countries. All countries are committed to promoting Europass, however target groups vary slightly across them. In general, most countries targeted students, jobseekers, employers and education and training providers, with young people being the biggest target group.

Older people were not directly targeted by any country. Moreover, six countries implemented activities targeting migrants and refugees to promote Europass tools and services, aiming to integrate this group into education or the labour market (Spain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Latvia and Sweden).

NECs delivered several services providing guidance mainly on career management, while guidance on transnational learning mobility was mentioned less in the NECs' activity reports. In most countries, the responsibility for guidance services under the Europass Decision lies with the Euroguidance centre³⁴ and, specifically for employment, the EURES network. These services included creating materials (manuals and guidelines) and organising events, such as career days, with HR professionals advising on CVs, cover letters and job applications. Some NECs managed to reach out to private organisations that provide career-related services.

NECs promoted cooperation among various public stakeholders at EU, national and regional levels. Most NEC teams also cooperate with the corresponding national Euroguidance, EQF National Contact Points and Erasmus+ teams to achieve better results in stakeholder reach and impact. At EU level, NECs have put in place a regular dialogue with Euroguidance, EQF, EQAVET, EURES and Eurodesk to integrate strategic objectives and exchange experience. Cooperation at national level included organising knowledge-sharing events with a wide variety of bodies (associations of guidance counsellors, universities, sector committees, education providers). Only 11 NECs mentioned cooperation with private national organisations.

On providing information on learning opportunities, qualifications and recognition practices, qualifications databases are often managed by EQF National Contact Points or qualifications agencies, and learning opportunity databases are managed by different national organisations. Euroguidance can be responsible for connecting learning opportunity databases with Europass. Not all countries provided information on learning opportunities and qualifications³⁵. By early 2023, 10 countries³⁶ had published data on learning opportunities, and three countries³⁷ were testing the Qualifications Data Register (QDR). As regards qualifications, 19 countries³⁸ had published data on the Europass platform, and one country (Croatia) is in the preparatory phase before connecting their database with Europass. For both learning opportunities and qualifications, there is a

³⁴ Euroguidance is the European network of national resource and information centres for guidance.

³⁵ To support Member States and Europass countries, a dedicated project group on the publication of learning opportunities on Europass was set up. It started running in October 2021. Training sessions on how to publish information in the QDR were organised in November and December 2021.

³⁶ Belgium (nl), France, Greece, Norway, Malta, Portugal, Iceland, Ireland, Serbia, Sweden.

³⁷ Croatia, Slovenia, Germany.

³⁸ Belgium (fr, nl), Austria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Iceland, Türkiye.

mapping tool (the Qualifications Dataset Register) to process information shared with the Europass platform. However, this is not the case for information on recognition practices – Europass links to the ENIC-NARIC³⁹ website.

³⁹The ENIC/NARIC network is a network of national centres set up to directly support institutions and citizens with the recognition of academic qualifications. [ENIC-NARIC - gateway to recognition of qualifications](#)

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS (ANALYTICAL PART)

4.1. To what extent was the intervention successful and why?

This chapter assesses to what extent Europass tools and services address the policy objectives in an effective, efficient and coherent way. The objectives are set out in the Decision and further detailed in the intervention logic (see Figure 10 in Annex II). Moreover, reasons for the success of Europass as well as possible limitations are identified.

4.1.1 Effectiveness

The general objective of Europass is to establish a comprehensive and interoperable European framework that supports the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications experience, in particular for transnational employment and learning mobility purposes⁴⁰. Three specific objectives contribute to this overall aim (please see section 2.1.2.2 Objectives).

This section reviews Europass achievements with respect to these objectives together with the impact of communication and promotion. It also looks at action to support the accessibility and user-friendliness of the platform, contributing to the effectiveness of Europass.

4.1.1.1 Better integrating services for learners, jobseekers, workers, volunteers, employers and education and training providers to communicate skills and competences, with a focus on disadvantaged groups

4.1.1.1.1 Europass evolved from a document-based website into a one-stop-shop

The new Europass platform is a service-based one-stop solution, which brings together relevant EU tools and services to help its users communicate skills and competences.

The Commission's decision to prioritise the development of existing tools to ensure the continuity of Europass services has had a positive impact on the effective implementation of the new platform. This is because some of the tools and services, such as the CV and Cover Letter editor, were already in place before the platform's launch. Stronger cooperation with other EU initiatives to ensure interoperability also helped implementation. Examples include interoperability with EURES for the provision of job opportunities on the platform and collaboration with Cedefop for making EQF and NQF comparison tools available on Europass. The Jobs & Skill Trends tool⁴¹, released in June 2023, is expected to further strengthen the integration process of the platform with other initiatives and data sources.

⁴⁰ See [Europass Decision](#) (recitals 9 and 34) and the Europass intervention logic (Figure 10 in Annex II).

⁴¹ The Jobs & Skill Trends tool was referred to as "Skills Intelligence tool" during the development phase.

However, some of the information on the Europass platform is not yet complete (information on qualifications and on learning opportunities). Learning opportunity databases do not exist in all Member States, and in most countries, several databases co-exist (different databases for higher education, PES training, initial VET, etc.). This creates complexity when linking the databases with Europass. In this context, the Europass platform is not yet fully connected in the area of education and training, and therefore it has not yet reached its full potential when it comes to providing as many opportunities as possible for learning in Europe. A dedicated project group was set up to clarify the scope of learning opportunities to share on Europass, and the work concluded in autumn 2022. This work should support countries in the publication process. Technical support is often needed and is currently provided by the Commission. The Commission also made it possible to delegate publishing learning opportunities to more than one organisation in a Member State since several organisations need to be involved. Some countries require funding to create a database and/or be interoperable with Europass.

Providing a one-stop-shop was mentioned in all stakeholder interviews carried out as part of the supporting study as one of the most positive outcomes of the new Europass. End users who were surveyed valued the possibility of accessing different tools and services on one platform.

4.1.1.1.2 Europass retains users and attracts new users

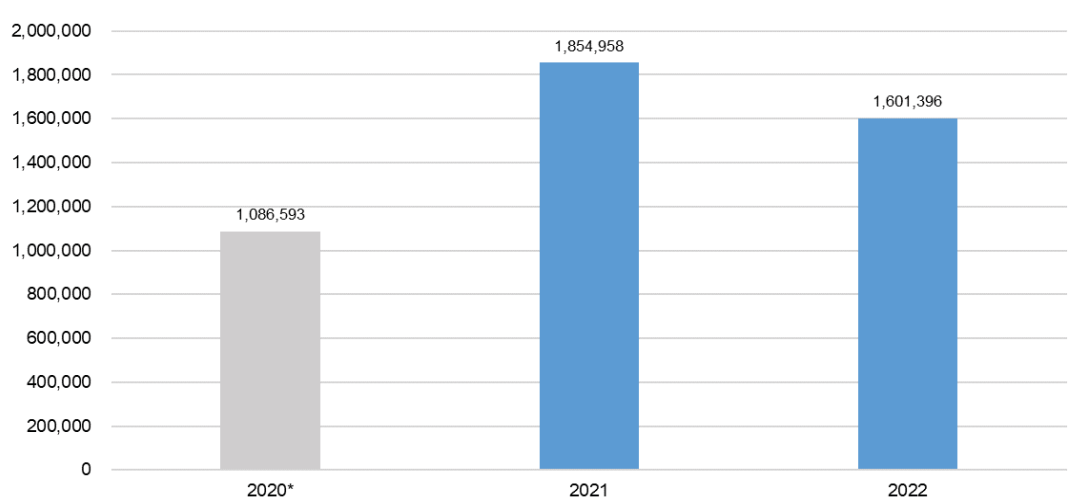
Several sources of evidence suggest that Europass users continue to use the platform and that new users are attracted to the platform.

According to the results of the user and non-user surveys conducted as part of the supporting study, it can be estimated that the majority (62%) of current registered Europass users, amounting to 4.5 million users at the time of the surveys, already used the platform before the launch of the new Europass on 1 July 2020.

The results of the surveys of education and training providers and employers also indicates that most respondents who were using Europass at the time were also doing so before 2020 (56% of education and training providers and 53% of employers).

Platform data shows a substantial increase in the number of registered users after the launch of the new platform (Figure 7). This suggests continuity and a retention of users as well as effectiveness in reaching new target audiences. An average of around 150 000 profiles were created every month between July 2020 and December 2022. There was a slight decline in the number of new Europass profiles (i.e. new registered users) in 2022. This could be linked to the fact that most users of the previous platform had already created their profiles in 2020 and 2021, therefore it could be assumed that the number of profiles created in 2022 were new users. Moreover, there was a recent decrease in the number of new profiles linked to the introduction of two-factor authentication in October 2022. However, the overall positive trend leads to the conclusion that the Europass platform is effective in attracting new users, which targeted communication and promotion activities certainly contributed to (see Section 4.1.1.4 Europass communication and outreach).

Figure 7 – Annual number of new profiles (new registered users) created on the new Europass platform

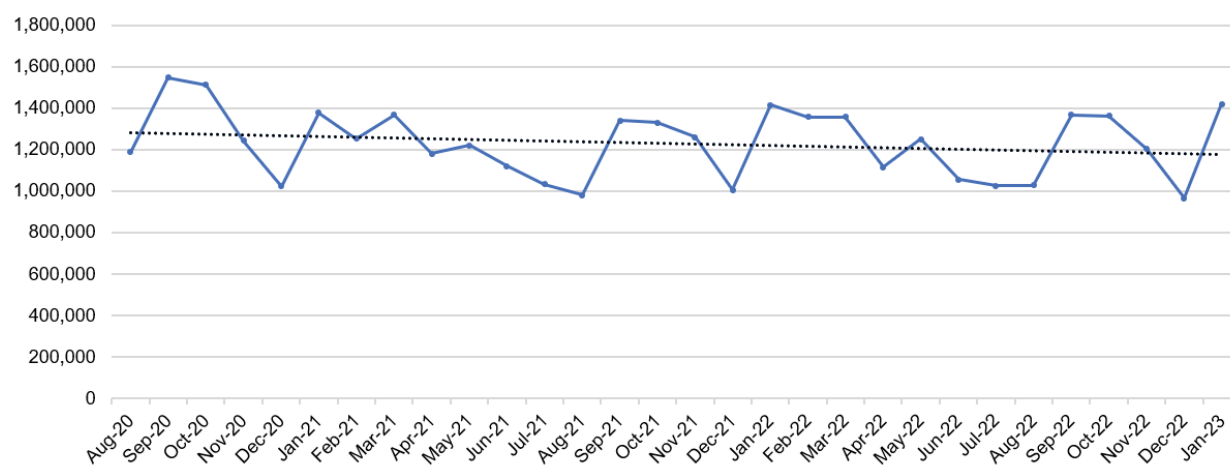


Source: External supporting study by Kantar – Europass user statistics. *For 2020, the grey colour indicates that only new profiles created after July are taken into account (when the new platform launched). Data for the full year is in blue for 2021 and 2022.

Since the launch of the new platform in 2020, the number of visits to the platform has also increased significantly. These are all visits to the platform, including registered users accessing e-Portfolios and profiles and non-registered users (who can also use certain Europass services). Between 1 July 2020 and 31 January 2023, the Europass platform received approximately 32.4 million unique visitors⁴² and more than 261 million page views across 58.8 million sessions. This is a sharp increase compared to the number of page visits on the previous platform. As demonstrated in Figure 17, the increase in the number of page visits of the previous platform had never exceeded 10 million visits over a period of 3 years between 2005 and 2019. The analysis of the platform data concludes that there has been a relatively stable trend in the number of monthly unique visitors since the launch of the new platform in 2020, with approximately 1.23 million average unique visitors per month (Figure 8).

⁴² A unique visitor is anyone that visits the platform from a specific IP address (not necessarily with a Europass profile). Unique visitors are only counted once, even if they visit the platform through different profiles (e.g. profiles in different languages).

Figure 8 – Number of unique visitors per month (August 2020 to January 2023)



Source: External support study by Kantar – based on Europa Web Analytics data

4.1.1.1.3 Differences in the uptake of Europass tools and services

The user and non-user survey show that there are differences in the uptake of Europass tools and services. The Europass CV and Cover Letter are the best known and most frequently used Europass tools as confirmed by all the research tools. Most Europass users (76%) use the CV and Cover Letter often (38%) or sometimes (38%).

Europass tools and services are generally perceived as useful. The majority of the public consultation respondents (at least 80%) find the tools and services useful or very useful, whereas they appreciate most the Europass CV (90%). They consider particularly useful the tools that they are most familiar with (see Figure 14, specifying the level of usefulness of the different Europass tools and services).

Tools and services that are used less frequently are the tracking of applications, Supplement templates, the Digital skills self-assessment tool and the European Digital Credentials for Learning (respectively 37%, 31%, 28% and 28% of Europass users used these tools often or sometimes, according to the user and non-user survey). The platform's tools are different in nature and have slightly different target groups, which may explain the differences in use.

However, respondents to the public consultation acknowledged that European Digital Credentials for Learning increase the visibility of skills as well as their comparability, which should boost an individual's employability. Employers and education and training providers benefit from receiving trustworthy credentials and a proof of candidates and learners' skills, qualifications and learning outcomes.

Furthermore, around a third of the surveyed users indicated that they use the platform to find information on qualifications frameworks (36% often or sometimes), job opportunities (33% often or sometimes) and guidance and lifelong learning (32% often or sometimes).

Among employers who responded to the survey, 66% are aware of Europass and 44% use it. For education and training providers, this is 66% and 40%, respectively. These

Among education and training providers who responded to the survey, 69% have used Europass within the last 3 years. Most of them provide diplomas and certificates (63%; 62 out of 98); however, Europass supplements and digital credentials are issued by their organisations more rarely (the supplements are issued by less than one third, and digital credentials are issued by 14%). So far, only 15% of those education and training providers surveyed indicated their intention to issue digital credentials in the future.

Public institutions have used Europass to improve the transparency of skills and qualifications and to document mobility outcomes under Erasmus+. The analysis of the Mobility Scoreboard⁴⁶ showed that Europass Mobility⁴⁷ is widely used at national level to recognise and validate learning mobility taking place as part of Erasmus+.

⁴³ France, Serbia, Kosovo*.

⁴⁴ The Commission's Mobility Scoreboard provides a framework for monitoring progress made by European countries in creating a positive environment supporting learner mobility. It contains scoreboard indicators in the area of higher education and initial vocational education and training. See [Mobility Scoreboard \(europa.eu\)](#).

⁴⁶ Mobility Scoreboard and respective country fiches from 2017 and 2021, retrieved in November 2022 at [Country fiches | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](#)::.

www.parlament.gv.at

on learning opportunities and qualifications is not fully complete as some Member States and Europass countries have not started sharing the relevant information.

The evaluation supporting study added that ‘interviews with EU-level policymakers⁴⁸ confirmed that the Europass framework is particularly important when being linked with the existing EU mobility programmes. Embedding the Europass tools and services in the existing programmes facilitates targeted uptake by stakeholders involved in these programmes – education and training providers, youth organisations, social partners and policymakers’.

4.1.1.2 Supporting the mobility of individuals for work and educational opportunities in the EU

The new Europass platform provides unique tools and services supporting individuals’ labour and learning mobility in the EU and facilitating cross-border standardisation. The web-based tools include the multilingual CV, supplement templates, Europass Mobility, a self-assessment tool for digital skills and the European Digital Credentials for Learning. These allow users to present personal information and document their skills, qualifications and learning outcomes in a standardised European format in up to 31 languages. Moreover, the platform provides information on job and learning opportunities, qualifications and qualifications frameworks (including a qualifications framework comparison tool) and country specific information, thereby facilitating mobility for career and educational purposes.

Replies to the user and non-user survey showed that individuals were more likely to use the Europass CV when they had participated in a mobility experience abroad, such as working, studying or a mobility exchange.

Interviews with EU and national stakeholders showed that they mostly perceive Europass as a platform that supports mobility for work and educational opportunities in the EU by providing access to tools and services. In this context, there needs to be more integration of such opportunities shared by Member States in Europass. This will help the platform to fully achieve its goals in the area of education and training as well as the transparency of skills and qualifications and to become more relevant to the public. EU level interviewees also found that Europass supports the implementation of other European policies and priorities (e.g. EU mobility programmes, such as Erasmus+).

The most used language in profiles is English (35% of profiles), which also points to active labour mobility across borders among Europass users. However, it could also suggest that international companies recruit local candidates using English as the recruiting language. Further information on language profiles can be found in Section 4.1.1.5.

⁴⁸ Representatives of the Commission and EU agencies.

The evidence above supports the conclusion that Europass is an effective tool supporting mobility across the EU and a solution for presenting knowledge, skills and competences in a standardised way.

4.1.1.3 Fostering a common framework for the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications among Member States.

One of the specific objectives of Europass is to foster a common framework for the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications among Member States. This means that skills and qualifications from other countries are easier to understand, compare and are more visible, which leads to improved recognition of these skills and qualifications.

In the Europass intervention logic (Figure 10 in Annex II), the expected results stemming from this specific objective are: (i) better transparency and comparability of qualifications, skills and competences; (ii) a greater understanding of skills and qualifications (in particular the learning outcomes and achievements of formal, non-formal and informal learning, including those acquired through mobility); and (iii) standardised digital certificates for skills and qualifications (in particular with the Europass document templates and the digitally signed credentials).

Europass fosters this common framework for the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications by hosting a set of European transparency tools: the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) tools and information, the databases of qualifications and learning opportunities, the Europass supplements and the European Digital Credentials for Learning.

The European Qualifications Framework referencing reports are presented on the Europass platform, and a specific European Qualifications Framework to National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) comparison tool was designed for Europass users. The EQF and NQF levels are all part of Europass documents, including the CV editor and Europass profiles. Furthermore, the supporting study states that ‘the analysis of the EQF referencing reports showed that national authorities are using the Europass tools to standardise the presentation of skills and qualifications at the national level’.

The visibility of skills and qualifications on the Europass platform facilitates comparability between countries, a feature mostly used by professionals.

Surveyed education and training providers who had used Europass to retrieve information on qualifications frameworks and the EQF were either very satisfied (18%) or somewhat satisfied (36%). Among individuals (respondents to the user and non-user survey) who had used Europass to retrieve information about qualifications frameworks and the EQF were either very satisfied (40%) or satisfied (37%) with the information.

The publication of learning opportunities and qualifications information also contributes to the transparency and common understanding of skills and qualifications in Europe. However, as mentioned in Section 3.2, the information is not complete as only some countries have provided it to Europass. According to the interviews at EU and national

levels with NECs, there is a lack of pertinent data on learning opportunities and qualifications. They consider that this missing and incomplete information affects people's perception of Europass, considering it to be limited and fragmented. More effort is required by Member States to make learning opportunities and qualifications available on Europass, which would help the platform reach its full potential.

The Europass Supplements set out a common structure and template for diploma supplements, certificate supplements, and Europass Mobility. The templates of each document used in Europass countries are all accessible on the Europass platform. The supplements make it easier for e.g. employers or education and training providers to understand qualifications and their learning outcomes. They are usually available in the original language of the qualification and other useful languages (in most cases at least English). Thanks to their standardised format in presenting learning outcomes and learning achievements (for the diploma supplement), they improve the transparency and comparability of qualifications in an international context.

As for the European Digital Credentials for Learning, users consider that the standards and tools improve the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications. The supporting evaluation study concludes that 'further uptake of the European Digital Credentials for Learning will strengthen Europass efforts in fostering a common framework' for the transparency of skills and qualifications (see Figure 21 with an overview of the number of EDCs issued). In the public consultation, 48% and 36% of the respondents considered the European Digital Credentials for Learning to be either very useful or useful, respectively.

4.1.1.4 Europass communication and outreach

4.1.1.4.1 Europass communication and collaboration with other EU initiatives

Since the launch of the new platform, communication activities are targeted at specific groups (end users, stakeholders and facilitators) as set out in the Europass communication strategy developed by the Commission. The Commission developed communication products (such as the Europass brand, a promotional toolkit, leaflets, infographics and factsheets, videos, social media products and press material) and put them at the disposal of the NECs. The Commission created synergies with other EU initiatives in the area of education and training, youth and labour mobility (e.g. Eurodesk, EURES and Erasmus+) in order to multiply messages and reach out to their respective target audiences. Other EU communication channels included the Europass platform and the Commission's website and social media channels.

At national level, NECs have used online events and social media campaigns as promotional tools since the launch of the new platform. They targeted students, jobseekers, employers and education and training providers, with young people at the centre of their communication efforts. Other communication activities included conferences, fairs, seminars, mutual learning activities and the distribution of promotional materials.

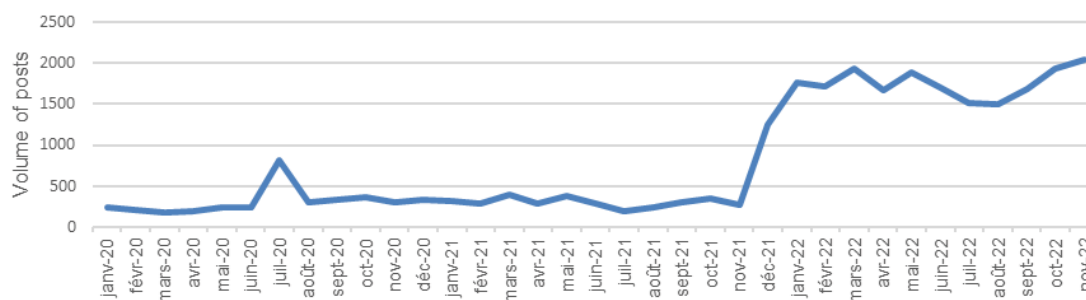
According to the supporting study, these activities resulted in end users and stakeholders successfully engaging with Europass. Communication activities have been mainly carried out on social media channels since the launch of the platform in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

End users' engagement on social media channels differed in terms of volume of Europass mentions, frequency and content shared. Social media analysis showed that three platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) accounted for 68% of the online conversation about Europass.

The supporting study states that 'according to Digimind⁴⁹, between January 2020 and November 2022, the topic of 'Europass' received a total of 27 726 mentions across all 12 sources screened⁵⁰. Social media posts about Europass were produced by both user and institutional accounts, reaching more than 2.4 million people and obtaining 257 414 interactions.'

Figure 9 shows the number of social media posts about Europass between January 2020 and November 2022. The conversations about Europass peaked around major events or updates to the Europass platform (e.g. in July 2020 when the new platform was launched). Moreover, the mentions sharply increased in January 2022, reaching 1 767 posts that month, shortly after the launch of the new Digital skills self-assessment tool in December 2021. Social media posts increased again after Europass became available in Ukrainian in May 2022 to support those fleeing the war in Ukraine. In addition, more structured collaboration amongst the NECs regarding social media presence started in September 2021, which also had an impact on the number of Europass mentions.

Figure 9 – Number of Europass mentions by month (2020-2022) (N= 27,726)



Source: External supporting study by Kantar – based on Digimind data. Social media data were collected using Digimind from 1 January 2020 to 30 November 2022 (35 months).

4.1.1.4.2 Awareness of Europass

⁴⁹ Online tool for tracking and analysing online conversations and trends.

⁵⁰ Facebook, Twitter, websites, Instagram, news, blogs, forums, videos, Tumblr, Weibo and reviews.

According to the results of the three surveys of users and non-users, education and training providers, and employers, there is a good level of awareness about Europass. This also suggests that communication activities have been overall effective (see previous section).

As shown in the general population survey⁵¹ results, the share of respondents who have heard about Europass is 53% (2 137 out of 4 040). According to the three surveys conducted, platform data and the public consultation, the Europass CV is the most well-known and widely used Europass tool.

Based on the general population survey, 49% of people who were aware of Europass (1 041 out of 2 137) associate the platform with the Europass CV template. 46% of them (978 out of 2 137) perceive Europass as a platform providing different tools and services that support the transparency of skills and qualifications.

Most employers who were surveyed (66% or 72 out of 109) were aware of Europass. 44% of those who were aware of Europass (32 out of 72) have used the platform at least once.

As regards education and training providers who were surveyed, most respondents (66% or 65 out of 98) were aware of Europass. 40% of those who were aware of Europass (26 respondents out of 64) have used the Europass platform or received documents generated using Europass.

There are differences in awareness of the platform among countries. Based on the user-and non-user survey to the general population carried out in 10 countries, Portugal, Romania, and Croatia are the countries where awareness of Europass is the highest: 88%, 79% and 77% of respondents to the general population survey, respectively, were aware of Europass. The two countries where Europass is known less according to the general population survey are France and Germany (24% and 19% respectively). The study report suggests that the different levels of awareness and usage of Europass could be due to different degrees of institutional commitment across countries as well as the availability and use of alternative national tools.

4.1.1.4.3 Geographic distribution of Europass users

According to the supporting study, based on platform data and 2022 Eurostat statistics on the EU population, most Europass users from EU Member States are in Italy, Portugal and Romania (in total numbers). These countries also host higher shares of users when compared to the total population. The percentage of Europass profiles per country (out of the total population) for Portugal, Romania and Italy is 4.5%, 1.9% and 1.8% respectively. The Europass CV is mandatory for certain types of job applications in these three countries (for example, public sector jobs). There are also relatively high percentages of users (out of the total population) in Malta, Croatia, Slovenia and Latvia. Countries with relatively

⁵¹ As part of the supporting study data collection, end users and non-users were contacted in two different ways: through a survey to 4 040 people recruited from the general population of 10 selected countries (Germany, Spain, Greece, France, Croatia, Italy, Portugal, Poland, Romania, Sweden) and, on the other hand, from the users of the Europass platform (3 607 additional respondents).

lower percentages of Europass profiles (out of the total population) include Denmark, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, France and Ireland. Please see Figure 22 “Share of Europass profiles across Member States over their total population” in Annex VII with further details for all Member States.

4.1.1.5 Europass usage and accessibility

4.1.1.5.1 Socio-demographic profile of Europass users

Most Europass users are relatively young (72% are under 35 years). Almost half (44%) are aged between 25 and 35 and more than a quarter (28%) are under 24 years. Europass could therefore be further promoted to people aged over 35 as the tools and services offered on the platform also target this age group.

There is a slight under-representation of women among Europass users. 44% of Europass users identify themselves as female, whereas 48% identify themselves as male, and 8% of users decided not to indicate their gender.

With respect to education and training, only 7% of Europass users indicate an EQF level on their profile⁵². Among those that did, 10% of them report levels between 1 and 3, whereas the remaining 90% indicate an EQF level of 4 or above. The most common EQF levels are 4 (22% of users), 6 (25%) and 7 (27%).

Most Europass users have some level of work experience. Although 16% of users do not indicate any previous work experience, 84% indicate having at least 1 year of work experience. Of those users with some working experience, 23% have up to 2 years of experience; 25% have between 2 and 5 years of work experience; 24% have between 6 and 10 years of work experience; and 28% have more than 10 years of experience.

In terms of Europass profile languages, the most-used language is English (35% of profiles), followed by Italian, Portuguese and Romanian with 22%, 12% and 6% respectively. The remaining languages are less represented (all below 6%). These findings are in line with the results of profiles per country, where Italy, Portugal and Romania have the highest shares of profiles (see section on Geographic distribution of Europass users).

4.1.1.5.2 Accessibility and user-friendliness of the platform

The Commission put an emphasis on the platform’s accessibility in the early stages of its development. It carried out an accessibility and usability test before the launch of the platform in 2020 to check compliance with the Europa Web Guide⁵³ and the Accessibility Directive 2016/2102. Several technical issues were identified that limited accessibility for

⁵² The EQF level is not a compulsory field in the Europass profile.

⁵³ The Europa Web Guide contains rules and guidelines that apply to European Commission websites, covering editorial, legal, technical, visual and contractual aspects
https://commission.europa.eu/resources-partners/europa-web-guide_en

people with motor, vision and cognitive disabilities. Some of them were addressed as part of different platform releases (such as keyboard and screen-reader accessibility issues).

While improvements to the platform's accessibility were achieved over time, the perceptions of end users and stakeholders draw a mixed picture.

Half the stakeholders contributing to the public consultation (51%) believe that all groups of users can easily access the tools and services on the Europass platform. Overall, stakeholders believe that the Europass platform can serve a diverse group of users (56%).

Looking closer at the different categories of people, some limitations have been observed for some stakeholder groups. A lack of digital skills is seen as the main barrier in relation to accessibility (32% of the public consultation participants stated that the platform is not accessible at all or not accessible for people with lower digital skills). One third (34%) considers that it is difficult for older people to use the platform; only 13% believe that this is the same for long-term unemployed people. As regards people with disabilities, only one third (30%) of stakeholders considered the platform to be inclusive. Some suggestions for improvement include the development of more features for people who are blind, accessibility for keyboard users and optimisation of descriptive text supporting assistive technologies.

Two thirds (65%) of the public consultation participants considered that the platform is easy to use, while only 6% of respondents expressed concerns in this respect. However, respondents also raised issues about the complexity of the platform, which according to them makes the platform less user-friendly and intuitive (see Section 4.1.2.2 Simplification of the platform).

When looking at the user and non-user survey results, the accessibility and user-friendliness of Europass tools are positively assessed by end users (see Figure 25). The Europass CV and Cover Letter appear to be the most accessible and user-friendly tools, followed by the Europass profile.

4.1.2 Efficiency

4.1.2.1 Evolution of the cost-effectiveness of Europass

Since the entry into force of the 2018 Decision, the Commission has allocated EUR 21.6 million to developing and implementing Europass. Starting with EUR 2.8 million in 2018, the yearly budget increased by nearly 50% in 2019 for the IT planning and development of the new platform. In 2020 the budget remained relatively stable (increasing by 2%), and in 2021 it almost doubled (by 91%) for the launch of the platform in July 2020 and the development of additional tools after the launch. Finally, in 2022 the Europass budget was reduced by almost 77% compared to 2021 as most tools had been developed. The European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure still requires some additional developments.

Since its launch in July 2020, the platform has seen a rapid increase in adoption by end users. Assuming that costs remain stable in the coming years (which is likely due to the platform's maturity and the completion of most tools), the significant growth in new users

should guarantee a reduced cost per Europass profile in the long term. This would lead to a long-term improvement in cost-effectiveness as digital platforms tend to have low marginal costs for additional users. Increased cost-effectiveness can be expected in the future as long as the number of new users continues to increase.

The average cost per additional user profile created has fluctuated since the platform's 2020 launch. The current cost per additional profile is the lowest it has been since the launch given that it increased from EUR 2.63 in 2020 to EUR 4.45 in 2021 before dropping to EUR 1.22 in 2022. As users of the old platform have already moved to the new platform, future growth will rely more on new users. In this regard, growth will most probably remain positive but may slow, which could increase the cost per additional profile.

The efficiency of Europass can also be viewed from the Commission's perspective in managing the platform. An important aspect is the need to make the platform more user-friendly in terms of simplicity (ease of use) and its technical performance (for example, making it easy to recover passwords or register as a new user). Stakeholders recognise that a lot of work has been put into improving the user-friendliness of Europass and that past technical issues have been addressed. This includes a significant reduction of bugs reported by end users in the second half of 2022 and first half of 2023. However, stakeholders believe that more focus should be put on fixing the platform's technical issues rather than further developing new tools. This would help make the platform more functional, visible and easy to use. Otherwise, there is a risk that the Europass platform could become too complex and difficult to use. In addition, some of its basic components (CV, Cover Letter, etc.) could be ignored or become unusable.

The role and activities of Member States also affect Europass. Many countries have assigned their Europass-related obligations set out in the 2018 Europass Decision to their respective National Europass Centres (NECs). The Decision significantly broadened the role of Member States. They have new tasks to reach out to the target audience and promote the new tools and services at national level. NECs' responsibilities and tasks were increased without a corresponding budget increase, which could be seen as an improvement in cost-effectiveness. On the other hand, the varying output of the different NECs creates a less clear picture. Overall, the Commission granted around EUR 6 million to NECs for both periods before and after the platform's launch in July 2020 (i.e. 2018-2020 and 2021-2023). As a result, financial resources remained the same after the launch. Stakeholders and NECs expressed the need for more resources. NECs are also co-funded by the participating Europass countries.⁵⁴

Furthermore, Member States' contribution to implementation has been mixed. Tools and services require input and contributions from Member States, such as the pilot of the European Digital Credentials for Learning. However, there have been differences in

⁵⁴ The EU funding rate for the NECs grants can reach up to 75% of the project budget, notwithstanding some countries co-funding a higher share.

participation by countries and the number of staff allocated, which could hamper those tools' efficiency in the future (other national stakeholders took part in the EDC pilot).

4.1.2.2 Simplification of the platform

Another aspect of efficiency is simplifying the delivery of the platform's services and tools. This means how easily and seamlessly users can access and navigate the tools and services without encountering major issues or difficulties. Europass has evolved from a web page providing downloadable templates into a service-based platform providing various tools and services under the Europass brand. Since July 2020, the Europass platform has been providing a number of web-based tools and information (see tables in Annex VI). While the Europass label is still very much associated with the Europass CV, the platform has reached a significant number of users in almost 3 years (close to 5 million in May 2023). These users, often directed to the platform by the Europass CV feature, can now discover the additional tools and services available. The increase in the number of users since the launch of the platform in July 2020 is expected to lead to economies of scale and efficiency gains over time. This is because digital platforms tend to have low marginal costs for additional users (as described in Section 4.1.2.1).

There is a strong consensus on the value of the new platform, since it is one single digital environment, which in turn leads to simplifying the delivery of services. The vast majority of users welcome the additional services available. The user experience of the platform could be considered positive and tools and services are easy to use: on average, only 19% of users have experienced difficulties using the different Europass tools and services. However, respondents also raised issues about the platform's complexity (see Section 4.1.1.5), and participants using the platform for the first time found the Europass CV and Cover Letter easier to use compared to other tools and services. The main difficulties encountered are due to:

- authentication issues, especially the mandatory two-factor authentication, which was necessary from October 2022 to April 2023 for registering and accessing the platform's e-Portfolio;
- technical problems in developing the CV or cover letter (downloading, formatting or saving), navigating through the platform, tracking applications, filling in the My Skills and My Interests sections;
- the lack of practical information on how to use the European Digital Credentials for Learning, supplement templates and the digital skills self-assessment tool.

The platform's more regular users have reported a positive experience given that they are more familiar with the features of Europass tools and services. This familiarity seems to be the main reason why regular Europass users do not tend to encounter difficulties when using the platform.

On information search, users seem satisfied with the platform in helping them find information on qualification frameworks and learning and job opportunities across Europe. Only a small share of users has issues finding information on qualification frameworks,

learning and job opportunities (12% on average, with no significant difference across the three main types of information).

Lastly, most of the platform's other stakeholders, mainly employers and education and training providers, are satisfied. Only 3% of employers have faced problems using the platform. The main difficulties encountered by education and training providers are navigating the platform to find information (22%) and a lack of practical information on using tools and services (19%).

Overall, the creation of a one-stop-shop platform delivering tools and services for skills recognition and transparency has resulted in a simplified user experience. It has helped users navigate the platform and discover, access and use its tools and services in a seamless and user-friendly way.

4.1.2.3 Governance

On the efficiency of the Europass governance model in steering Europass, additional responsibilities have been given to Member States under the 2018 Europass Decision. These are the coordination and promotion of Europass at the national level (see section 3.1).

Some of these activities are carried out by the NECs, which also provide user support and promote skills and qualifications documentation.

As a result, Europass governance now has a more solid multi-level structure where roles and responsibilities are not only split between the Commission and Member States but also across multiple organisations. At EU level, an Advisory Group was created to oversee the implementation of Europass, bringing together all the parties involved.

The Europass Advisory Group is an EU-level consultative body composed of stakeholders combining EU Member States, other Europass countries, EU social partners, civil society representatives and other public bodies at the EU and international level (Cedefop, Council of Europe, the European Training Foundation and UNESCO). Its remit is to develop a strategic approach to the implementation of Europass and to advise on the development of web-based tools, including through testing, and information provided through the platform.

The role of the Advisory Group is the following:

- improving the communication and coordination in the Europass community, boosting collaboration among participating countries;
- advising the best solutions on Europass developments (from a strategic point of view rather than technical) while considering implications at national level;
- exchanging experience, peer learning and best practices across countries;
- looking for synergies to create with other policy initiatives at a strategic level;
- fostering Europass policymaking at EU level and facilitating international cooperation to improve the visibility and use of Europass.

The Europass governance allows for a more efficient distribution of responsibilities: the Advisory Group reflects the views of all relevant parties and ensures a broad representation

while the NECs can more effectively engage with users in their respective countries and support national implementation more efficiently. This broadened role of the NECs, which is the structure closest to users, seems to reflect well the needs stemming from the new Europass in terms of assigning roles and responsibilities.

However, differences among countries (in terms of governance structures, administrative decentralisation and political commitments) are often a challenge to ensure efficiency. Complexity arises from the NECs' different governance structures as some of them operate within the Erasmus+ National Agencies, others refer to national ministries (of labour or education) and others are independent bodies, such as public agencies in the field of education and qualifications. NECs are aware of the importance of keeping national governance structures consistent with the EU structure. In addition, Member States are putting efforts into improving the governance structures that steer Europass in their countries.

Furthermore, this multi-level governance structure of Europass requires effective exchanges of information with stakeholders at both the level of the Europass Advisory Group and the NECs to support implementation of Europass, including at national level. This system is considered a structured part of the Europass governance. It is important for promoting better communication and exchanges of information and good practices. Suggestions made in the consultation with NECs as part of the Europass Evaluation include:

- hosting more regular meetings, training and events between NECs and the Commission on an agreed schedule and covering topics such as the European Digital Credentials for Learning and interoperability issues;
- more timely updates on upcoming improvements to the platform and new developments;
- more regular exchanges of information on statistics and analytics;
- more support to fix the platform's technical issues;
- more coordination with other networks (Eurodesk, Euroguidance, EQF-National Coordination Points).

The new Europass governance since 2018 seems to be more efficient than before. This is due to the more solid multi-level structure and the wider distribution of responsibilities and tasks from the Commission to the Member States and across multiple organisations at EU and national level.

4.1.3 Coherence

The coherence criterion investigates how well policy measures works, both internally and externally. External coherence focuses on consistency with other EU action in the field of education, skills, digitalisation and employment. As regards internal coherence, the evaluation looks mainly at how well the Europass activities and the tools and services complement each other.

Given its focus on employment and education and training, Europass mainly contributes to policies in employment, the digital transition, education and training, and skills and

qualifications. In this context, Europass and its activities directly support the European Skills Agenda, the European Education Area, Europe's Digital Decade and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

In particular, the 2016 European Skills Agenda formed the basis for the adoption of the Europass proposal, and the 2020 European Skills Agenda explicitly mentions Europass as a tool to support people in their lifelong learning pathways (Action 11). Europass also contributes to other objectives of the 2020 European Skills Agenda. It aims to strengthen skills intelligence (Action 2), promote vocational education and training through information provision (Action 4) and establish individual learning accounts (Action 9). For instance, since June 2023, Europass has made a Jobs & Skill Trends tool available. The publication of learning opportunities in Europass includes VET courses, thus contributing to Action 4 of the European Skills Agenda. Micro-credentials (Action 10 of the European Skills Agenda)⁵⁵ will also be published in Europass once they are included in national learning opportunity platforms connected to the QDR. If they are included in NQFs and in national registers for qualifications, they can also be mapped to Europass. The standards elements to describe a micro-credential as defined in the Council Recommendation⁵⁶ are included in the European Learning Model, and the European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure makes it possible to issue micro-credentials as digital credentials. Moreover, the Individual Learning Accounts Council Recommendation makes a clear reference to Europass and publishing training offers on the platform.

In addition, Europass contributes to the priorities of the European Education Area by offering a free user-centric platform to help identify, access and apply for learning opportunities and facilitate access to quality education.

Furthermore, Europass is directly aligned with Europe's Digital Decade, which aims to make digital transformation work for people and businesses and make use of digital opportunities in a human-centred, sustainable and more prosperous digital future. This is because Europass improves the transparency of individuals' skills when applying for jobs and training. This helps improve matching candidates with jobs. Europass has evolved from a portal with five document templates to a modern platform, providing a set of digital tools and services in the areas of career management and lifelong learning.

Lastly, Europass focuses on employment, education and training, and skills and qualifications, and provides people with tools and services to access job and training opportunities and acquire skills that can increase their employability. As a result, Europass contributes to the social targets set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights action plan.

⁵⁵ Currently, one country is piloting this possibility.

⁵⁶ Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability 2022/C 243/02 - OJ C 243, 27.6.2022, p. 10–25 - EUR-Lex - 32022H0627(02) - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu).

These targets are for at least 78% of people aged 20 to 64 to be in employment and at least 60% of all adults to participate in training every year by 2030.

The role of Europass to deliver on EU employment, skills, and education and training policies is to be strengthened by the Decision on a European Year of Skills (EYS)⁵⁷ adopted on 10 May 2023. In particular, Europass supports the objectives of the EYS to strengthen skills relevance and match people's aspirations, needs and skill sets with labour market needs and opportunities. This can be done by promoting learning opportunities and facilitating the recognition of qualifications. The recognition process is supported by the standardisation of documents (in particular Europass Supplements) and the European Digital Credentials for Learning (which are tamper-evident and are a rich source of data, for example on learning outcomes). The NECs contributed to the EYS by organising and participating in dedicated events⁵⁸ and promoting and reporting on the EYS via their social media channels.

Europass also makes it possible for other high-level EU policies and their tools and instruments to benefit end users directly. For example, although the EQF has its own legal basis and governance, EQF information and tools (comparison tool, interconnection of national qualifications registers) are integrated into the Europass platform and tools, and the different reports are published on the Europass platform. Europass also promotes the EQF terminology. The link between Europass and EQF further promotes the Europass policy objective of supporting the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications.

Europass is aligned with the priorities adopted by the von der Leyen Commission: 'A Europe fit for the digital age' and 'An economy that works for people'. Europass directly relates and contributes to these two priorities as a concrete policy instrument intended to harness and further digital capabilities and support a people-driven economy.

In particular, Europass directly addresses the aim of closing the digital skills gap as set out in the 'A Europe fit for the digital age' priority as it provides a concrete means of identifying and improving digital skills, such as the Digital skills self-assessment tool, which allows users to easily assess their digital skills.

Besides the broader policy context, there are strong synergies as well as technical interoperability between Europass and other EU initiatives, such as EQF, NQFs, EQAVET, EURES, ESCO and Erasmus+ and EQAR⁵⁹. This cooperation strengthens the

⁵⁷ Decision (EU) 2023/936 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 on a European Year of Skills, OJ L 125, 11.5.2023, [EUR-Lex - 32023D0936 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#).

⁵⁸ See the events section on the EYS website: [Events and Activities \(europa.eu\)](#).

⁵⁹ The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) is the official register of quality assurance agencies, listing those that work in line with an agreed common framework to ensure the quality of higher education institutions and study programmes.

impact of each framework and tool and helps achieve greater benefits for learners, jobseekers and labour mobility in general.

Several Europass tools and services have been connected to those initiatives. For example, the EURES network and Europass are linked together to promote a skilled and trained workforce and job mobility in Europe. In practice, Europass delivers tools for EURES members to support jobseekers (for instance, assistance with drawing up job applications and CVs). Furthermore, the 2018 Europass Decision set the objective of establishing a comprehensive and interoperable framework of tools and information, in particular for transnational employment and learning mobility purposes. The Decision also set out that synergies and cooperation between the Europass and EURES portals could strengthen their impact. As a result, to ensure compatibility, the Commission introduced the HR XML standard for the Europass profile and CV based on the same technical standard as the EURES data model. Improved synergies between EURES and the Europass platform include the following: 1) Europass users can publish their CV in a EURES candidates database, making it available for EURES job matching services; 2) Europass users can find EURES jobs on Europass and move to EURES to view the full job vacancy; and 3) EURES users can use the information in their online CV to create a Europass profile.

On labour and learning mobility, ESCO is used in the Europass system to support the delivery of career guidance (providing a taxonomy with detailed descriptions of the skills needed to apply for jobs) and learning development solutions. It is also used in the creation of CVs, skills and interests profiles as well as skill-assessment tools.

In addition, the Europass platform offers a tool that allows users compare national qualifications frameworks and their levels by using the EQF reference framework as a translation tool. Moreover, national qualifications registers are connected to the Europass platform, providing information on qualifications. Furthermore, the Europass Mobility document is used in the Erasmus+ programme and other mobility programmes by end users and stakeholders. Higher education institutions use the Diploma Supplement to describe skills and qualifications obtained by learners. Overall, stakeholders interviewed in the supporting study see these links as ensuring the external coherence of Europass.

Therefore, as indicated in the findings of the supporting study on the alignment of Europass with EU policies, Europass is consistent with broader EU initiatives and tools in the field of employment, education, training and guidance. The study also shows that further improvements can be achieved, aiming at increased and improved synergies with tools and services linked to job opportunities and guidance services. In this context, it could be effective to increase synergies and interoperability between Europass, the European Youth Portal and EURES to create a single support and guidance system, in particular to benefit the most vulnerable groups of young people. Synergies could be created with EU and national platforms that provide tools and services similar to those on Europass. Examples of such platforms are skills intelligence platforms, job search engines and services with information on career guidance, education and training and employment (including skills mismatch). Finally, synergies with data spaces initiatives, such as the Data Space for Skills, could be further explored.

In terms of internal coherence and as indicated in the supporting study, the new platform brings together tools that existed already and new ones in a coherent way. This benefits labour and learning mobility as well as the transparency of skills and qualifications. This allows individuals to access information previously considered as only relevant to policymakers. For example, information on qualification frameworks was only available to practitioners in the field, whereas now the Europass platform displays this information and helps individuals use it according to their needs.

In addition, as clearly stated in the 2018 Europass Decision, a clear objective of Europass is better coordination and integration of services supporting guidance and mobility within Europe. Achieving this objective is expected to improve not only external but also internal coherence.

4.2. How did the EU intervention make a difference and to whom (EU added value and impact)?

The main EU added value of Europass lies in making unique tools available that facilitate standardisation across countries and give access to information on job and learning opportunities and qualifications in the EU. This could not be achieved by Member States acting alone.

Standardised CVs based on a structured template ensure that candidates can present information on their skills and qualifications in a clear, consistent, comparable and transparent way. This allows employers and education and training institutions to easily understand and compare the educational and professional background of candidates, which facilitates recruitment processes and matching skills and job requirements.

By providing a set of portable standardised documents and tools, Europass can, on the one hand, support labour and learning mobility and facilitate the recognition of qualifications and validation of skills across borders. In terms of labour mobility, in 2021 13.9 million EU and EFTA nationals lived in another EU country, including around 10.2 million of working age⁶⁰. On the other hand, Europass can contribute to giving equal opportunities to job applicants.

These equal opportunities were confirmed by participants in the qualitative observations, who agreed that Europass contributes to a unified way for candidates to compete in the European labour market. According to participants, this is particularly true for young people transitioning from education and training to the labour market, who are reflecting on how to market their profiles, experience, skills and qualifications to potential employers.

Linked to standardisation, one of the main benefits of Europass is its support to cross-border mobility in Europe for work and learning purposes. According to stakeholders interviewed at national level, Europass allows individuals to be more mobile across the

⁶⁰ Annual report on intra-EU labour mobility 2022

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=10545&furtherNews=yes>.

EU, providing them with more learning and job opportunities. The user and non-user survey showed that individuals were more likely to use the Europass CV, when they had participated in a mobility exchange, studying or work experience in another country.

In some national contexts, e.g. in Italy or Spain, where labour market policies differ between regions, Europass also plays an essential role in standardising tools and services within the same country. This was confirmed by interviewed stakeholders, who mentioned that this standardisation was only possible through a common European framework, such as Europass.

In certain countries, Europass fills gaps in the market (e.g. Latvia), where according to stakeholder interviews, no equivalent public alternatives are available. Even where alternative national and international solutions comparable to Europass exist, the platform is the only European solution which is free of charge and multilingual. This has been recognised by stakeholders, who are aware of the advantages of Europass and consider that the EU should continue its efforts to support its implementation. Most public consultation respondents (77%) consider the main advantage of Europass to provide free services. This is followed by the standardised templates and multilingual features of the platform (66% and 65% of respondents respectively). Moreover, 76% of respondents to the public consultation stated that they have never used other platforms or tools for the reasons they used Europass. This illustrates users' trust in the Europass platform and in services provided by the Commission.

According to recommendations from public consultation respondents, the added value of Europass could be further improved through tailored information and tools based on national situations as well as specific sectors and industries. Other suggestions concerned the improvement of the interoperability of the platform with other EU initiatives and national portals. Moreover, public consultation respondents shared the need for access to matching and search tools to improve upskilling and employment.

According to survey results, more than half of the users consider Europass tools to be unique as they are not provided by other solutions (on average 57% of respondents). For these respondents, the unique tools in Europass are the Supplement templates (61% stated this tool is not provided by other solutions or to a lesser quality), the Digital skills self-assessment tool (59%), the European Digital Credentials for Learning (58%) and My Skills and My Interests (57%).

Further tools and services will be integrated into the Europass platform to provide more guidance to users, e.g. a tool recommending vacancies to jobseekers and education and learning opportunities to learners.

4.3. Is the intervention still relevant?

This section examines how well the objectives of Europass still address current and future needs and if any adjustments are necessary. The available evidence collected through the supporting study and the public consultation suggests that the broad needs identified at the time of the adoption of the Decision and outlined in the intervention logic (see Figure 10

in Annex II –Intervention logic of Europass) are highly relevant to stakeholders and likely to remain relevant in the future. The objectives and focus of Europass address the problems underpinning the intervention.

The digitalisation of the labour market is changing the way individuals present information on their acquired skills and qualifications. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated developments in digitalisation. The new Europass platform has evolved to respond to new needs in this context, offering users the possibility to present their skills and qualifications with the help of different online tools and services.

Europass is particularly relevant to younger people, who use the platform's tools and services during their transition from education to the labour market, given that they are often unsure how to structure their CVs and cover letters. For users who are already advanced in their career, Europass has more added value in a mobility context, when they are looking for a job or learning opportunities in another country.

Most public consultation respondents (80% of 1 920 respondents) expressed that Europass tools and services are either very important or important to them. It can therefore be concluded that these tools and services address their specific needs. This positive appreciation applies, in particular, to information and guidance on job opportunities and information on guidance and skills required by the labour market (respectively 83% and 85% of respondents found these aspects very important or important).

4.3.1 Need for information and guidance on job and learning opportunities and skills required by the labour market

4.3.1.1 Information and guidance on job opportunities

The Europass platform responds to the need for information and guidance on job opportunities by giving access to the EURES job search tool and a link to the EQF comparison tool of national qualifications frameworks. EURES supports jobseekers in finding jobs and employers to recruit them from all over Europe. Stakeholders who participated in the public consultation valued the synergies between Europass and EURES. Both platforms work towards supporting job applications and mobility, and providing EURES services through the Europass platform can be considered as very relevant. Stronger interoperability and alignment of information provision between Europass and EURES could therefore strengthen the impact of both platforms and benefit users. In addition, the Europass platform provides country specific pages and pages with different types of related content (e.g. language skills) as well as links to other EU initiatives and national services.

Users and stakeholders find the access to information and guidance on job opportunities very relevant: 83% of public consultation respondents believe that information and guidance on job opportunities is either very important or important. Stakeholders are interested in finding a job in another country, detecting career paths matching their skills and qualifications, and understanding labour market demand and trends. They also look for information on country specific qualification requirements and choosing an

education/career path aligned with a country's labour market demand or qualification requirements. This underlines the need for Member States to finish providing information on learning opportunities and qualifications so that Europass can reach its potential and fully support people in choosing the appropriate education/training paths.

End users' main needs relate to job searches, and they consider Europass particularly relevant in the context of mobility within the EU. Results from the qualitative observations carried out in the context of the supporting study showed that participants interested in seeking job opportunities across Europe found Europass relevant, as it offers access to job opportunities and country specific information on one platform. However, those participants wishing to stay in their countries or having a specific destination in mind would rather consult national-level platforms.

The qualitative observations also highlighted that the need for information and guidance on job opportunities is particularly relevant to recent graduates or people in the early stages of their career who need to access information and record their skills and experience and qualifications in a single platform. This was confirmed by the user and non-user survey, where specifically younger users as well as users from non-EU countries (EEA, candidate and potential candidate countries⁶¹) stressed the importance of information on job opportunities.

Employers surveyed for the supporting study appreciate particularly the information about job opportunities across Europe. 92% of them consider it helpful for the provision of guidance to candidates preparing applications. Information about how to present national qualifications in another European country is equally important for employers (87%) as they often encounter difficulties in understanding candidates' profiles.

For most of the education and training providers surveyed as part of the supporting study, information about job opportunities is either very important (43%) or somewhat important (38%). This stakeholder group stressed the importance of the learning opportunities database as a tool to help potential candidates find a relevant learning opportunity.

Interviewed social partners and public consultation respondents pointed out that the tools and services should be more specific to professions and industries in order to increase the attractiveness of Europass.

At EU level, Europass can be relevant to address skills and labour shortages through guidance on skills and occupations. The new Jobs & Skill Trends tool launched in June 2023 helps users identify the occupation groups most in demand in a certain EU country. It also provides users with information on EU countries where an occupation is most in demand as well as the most relevant skills associated with the respective occupation.

⁶¹ User and non-user survey respondents from Georgia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Ukraine.

The use of artificial intelligence and the analysis of data in Europass profiles could contribute to providing personalised recommendations on relevant job opportunities for users in line with their skills, learning and career history and preferences.

4.3.1.2 Information on lifelong learning and transnational mobility for learning opportunities

The need for access to information on lifelong learning and transnational mobility for learning purposes is perceived as very relevant by users and stakeholders. The platform provides country specific information and links as well as access to a database on learning opportunities and qualifications. However, Europass depends on Member States and Europass countries to provide information on qualifications and learning opportunities and populate this database; currently 19 countries⁶² have published their qualifications and 10 countries⁶³ their learning opportunities.

Most respondents of the user and non-user survey carried out in the context of the supporting study (81% of respondents) find it either very important (44%) or somewhat important (37%) to get information on lifelong learning and transnational mobility for learning purposes across Europe. Younger respondents and respondents from non-EU countries (EEA, candidate and potential candidate countries⁶⁴) tend to give higher importance to information on this topic. Education and training providers feel more strongly about information on learning opportunities compared to employers. 46% of education and training providers consider this information as very important, compared to 26% of employers. The public consultation results are in line with these findings. 80% of public consultation respondents believe that providing information on this topic is either important or very important. As explained earlier, this underlines the need for Member States to finish providing information on learning opportunities and qualifications.

Participants from the targeted qualitative observations carried out in the context of the supporting study highlighted a need for more information on terms and conditions to apply for learning opportunities all over the EU. They found the search tool for learning opportunities more effective for getting an overview of learning opportunities all over the EU than for searching within a specific country. For opportunities in a specific country, the participants would rather search national sources or education and training provider specific sources.

⁶² Belgium (fr, nl), Austria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Iceland, Türkiye

⁶³ Belgium (nl), France, Greece, Norway, Malta, Portugal, Iceland, Ireland, Serbia, Sweden

⁶⁴ User and non-user survey respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Ukraine.

At national level, in order for the qualifications and learning opportunities information to be relevant, all Member States and other Europass countries need to provide their related data to the Qualifications Dataset Register (QDR).

To support the recognition of qualifications at EU level, access to information on qualifications is particularly relevant as it helps create a shared understanding of learning outcomes.

4.3.1.3 Information and guidance on skills required by the labour market

Information and guidance⁶⁵ on skills required by the labour market are considered to be very relevant by users and stakeholders. 85% of public consultation respondents consider these services as very important or important.

The platform provides tools that allow users to reflect on their skills and interests. The ‘My Skills’ tool offers an overview of users’ skills based on information added to their profile, whereas in the ‘My Interests’ tool, users can describe their interests and goals. Moreover, the platform provides a section with information on how users can self-assess their language skills, based on the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR)⁶⁶.

To respond to guidance needs in the area of digital skills, the Commission launched the Digital skills self-assessment tool on the Europass platform in December 2021. Even though users and stakeholders consider this tool very important or important (78% of respondents to the public consultation), participants in the targeted qualitative observations pointed out a need for further guidance on the use of the self-assessment test results to support their career or learning outcomes, e.g. on how they could acquire the digital skills they lack. Moreover, they noted that the questions were based on knowledge and notions that could easily be searched online instead of testing the skills using a “problem-based” approach.

While national stakeholders interviewed see the tool as positive, at least one of them believes that it might compete with national alternatives.

The need for more customised guidance on skills has been addressed through the new Jobs & Skill Trends tool. Stakeholders interviewed and education and training providers responding to the public consultation suggested using artificial intelligence or data mining to further improve the tool’s relevance. The platform does not currently contain links to

⁶⁵ According to the Europass Decision, effective and adequate promotion, guidance and information activities must be carried out at EU level (Article 6 ‘Commission’s tasks’). Moreover, Member States must promote and provide information on services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management, including, where appropriate, individual guidance services (Article 7 ‘Member States’ Tasks’).

⁶⁶ For further information on the CEFR, see [Self-assessment grid - Table 2 \(CEFR 3.3\) : Common Reference levels - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\) \(coe.int\)](#).

relevant EU-generated information such as the Cedefop skills forecast⁶⁷ and the European Inventory for Lifelong Guidance.

4.3.2 Need for improved transparency and comparability of qualifications and skills

The need for greater transparency and comparability of qualifications, skills and competences is very much valued by end users and other stakeholders.

59% of surveyed employers and 61% of surveyed education and training providers found it sometimes difficult or often difficult to verify the authenticity of qualifications or experience provided by candidates. Comparing skills and qualifications acquired by a candidate in another country compared to other candidates proved often difficult or sometimes difficult to 54% of surveyed employers and to 59% of surveyed education and training providers. This shows that there is a need for specific transparency tools, such as the EQF, the common templates (Europass CV, Cover Letter, the Diploma and Certificate supplements, and the Europass Mobility) and digitally signed credentials to support stakeholders in these verification processes.

The transparency and comparability of qualifications relies on the EQF. While the EQF is a different policy instrument to Europass, information on the EQF, NQFs, the national qualifications databases and registers and the qualifications framework comparison tool are hosted on Europass, in line with Article 3(2)b of the Europass Decision.

83% of the public consultation respondents found it very important or important to have a shared understanding of skills and qualifications, and 81% found it very important or important to have a greater comparability of qualifications, skills and competences. Information on the EQF, the EQF comparison tool of national qualifications frameworks, the links to NQF websites, and links to the Cedefop platform (e.g. the NQF Inventory) is relevant in this context.

On EQF, 87% of surveyed education and training providers found it very helpful or helpful to have information in all European languages on how to compare national qualifications levels across Europe in a European platform. In addition, for most user and non-user survey respondents (79%), it was either very important (43%) or somewhat important (36%) to have information in any European language about their qualification level across Europe in a standardised way through the European Qualifications Framework on a European platform.

48% of the surveyed employers and 52% of surveyed education and training providers found it sometimes difficult or often difficult when hiring new recruits/selecting applicants to understand the skills and qualifications acquired by the candidate through working and learning experience, including through mobility and volunteering. Therefore, there is a strong need from stakeholders for increased transparency. The current platform provides relevant information (EQF, information on qualifications and learning opportunities)

⁶⁷ <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-forecast>

document formats (CV and Cover Letter), document templates (Europass Mobility, Diploma and Certificate Supplements) and tools (European Digital Credentials for Learning). All the documents included in the e-Portfolio (CV, cover letter), the Europass documents (Europass Mobility, Diploma and Certificate Supplements) as well as the references to the EQF are well-established services available on the Europass platform.

In the interviews, EU-level stakeholders (the Commission and EU agencies) emphasised the role of EQF in increasing the transparency of qualifications, in particular by focusing on the skills and contents of the qualifications. National organisations stated that the current Europass improves the comparison of qualifications across Member States. They also added that further transnational mobility can be promoted. Social partners added that international and intercultural skills are well recorded through Europass, which, in their view, facilitates mobility (both for learning and working).

4.3.3 Need to reduce the fragmentation between different skills, qualifications and labour mobility tools

Before the launch of the new platform in July 2020, Europass was a document-based website providing a set of downloadable document templates (CV, Cover Letter, Europass documents) hosted on the Cedefop website. Information on the EQF was hosted on the Learning Opportunities and Qualifications Portal (LOQ) of the Commission and ESCO terminology was not integrated in the platform.

Through the integration of several previously standalone skills and qualification tools as well as the introduction of new tools, the new Europass platform has contributed to reducing fragmentation in this area. In particular, the 2020 platform includes a link to the EURES job search, uses ESCO terminology in several sections of the e-Portfolio, and integrates information on the EQF, NQFs, learning opportunities and validation (see Section 4.1.2.2 Simplification of the platform). The development of the European Learning Model as data model to share information and data on qualifications, learning opportunities and accreditation and to issue, store, and verify European Digital Credentials for Learning aims to overcome this fragmentation by providing a single vocabulary in Europe. Moreover, a new Digital skills self-assessment tool was added in 2021.

When asked about the current level of integration of Europass with other EU instruments (a question only for stakeholders, not individuals), 44% of respondents of the public consultation indicated that Europass was very well or quite well integrated with the EQF. 35% of respondents shared this view on the integration with ESCO, and 36% of respondents believe that Europass is very well or quite well integrated with EURES.

On links with other EU instruments and initiatives, most public consultation respondents would like to see interoperability with the Digital Skills and Jobs Platform (74% of respondents), the European Education Area Portal (66% of respondents), the Regulated Professions Database (65% of respondents), Euraxess (62% of respondents) and the European Youth Portal (59%).

The need to bring different skills, qualification and labour mobility tools and services together under one European platform has been confirmed by around 80% of the respondents to all three surveys of the supporting study to users and non-users, employers, and education and training providers.

When users and non-users were asked for their opinion on bringing together different services through Europass, the vast majority found it very helpful or helpful to include additional tools and services.

- 84% of surveyed users and non-users found it either very helpful or helpful to include a digital skills self-assessment tool.
- 82% found it either very helpful or helpful to create a personal record in any European language of all a user's skills, qualifications and experience to reflect on their skills and to understand their needs and interests.
- 80% found it very helpful or helpful to provide authentic certification of skills and qualifications using digital credentials instead of relying on paper documents.
- Moreover, the vast majority found it helpful to include additional information, in particular on the EQF (82% found it either very helpful or helpful) and on lifelong learning, qualifications, and learning opportunities (83%).
- 82% found it very helpful or helpful to have information on job opportunities across Europe.

Therefore, there is a strong demand for an integrated platform. On the stakeholder side, the surveyed employers and surveyed education and training providers share the same views.

- 87% of surveyed employers found it very helpful or helpful to include a tool in a European platform to certify the authenticity of a candidate's skills and qualifications using digital credentials instead of relying on paper documents.
- 77% found it very helpful or helpful to provide a tool to document the learning outcomes of qualifications in any European language.
- 83% of surveyed education and training providers found it very helpful or helpful to include a tool in a European platform to certify the authenticity of a candidate's skills and qualifications using digital credentials instead of relying on paper documents.
- 86% of them found it very helpful or helpful to provide a tool to document the learning outcomes of qualifications in any European language.
- 80% of them also found it very helpful or helpful to provide a tool to create a personal record in any European language of an applicant's skills, qualifications and experience to reflect on their skills and to understand their needs and interests.
- In addition, most of the education and training providers surveyed found it very helpful or helpful to have a European platform providing information in all European languages that helps compare national qualifications levels across Europe (87%), information about lifelong learning, qualifications and learning

opportunities across Europe (85%), and information on job opportunities across Europe (84%).

Therefore, there is a strong desire from stakeholders to have an integrated platform and not to have fragmented tools in the field of skills, qualifications and labour and learning mobility.

From the evidence collected, it can be concluded that on the one hand, the integration of the different tools in one platform was perceived as positive by users and stakeholders. On the other hand, they also commented on the complexity of the platform (see Section 4.1.2 Efficiency). Therefore, a balance in this respect needs to be ensured so the platform is not overloaded with different initiatives. The information on the platform needs to be organised and presented in a way that makes all initiatives, services and tools visible. Moreover, separate sections and entry points to the platform could be created for different stakeholders (e.g. for users, employers, education and training providers) to better cater to their specific needs.

4.3.4 Need for a shared understanding of skills and qualifications and an EU infrastructure for digital credentials (EDC)

The integration of different tools in one platform (as discussed in Section 4.3.3) would contribute to addressing the need for a shared understanding of skills and qualifications. An infrastructure for digitally signed credentials in the field of skills and qualifications was developed as envisaged in the Europass Decision⁶⁸.

In the public consultation, 79% of the respondents considered an EU infrastructure for digital credentials for skills and qualifications as either very important or important.

In the user and non-user survey, half the respondents indicated that this service is not provided by other solutions/initiatives or is provided with less quality (26% of respondents fully agreed, 32% tended to agree and 21% did not know).

Most surveyed users and end users declared that it is either very helpful (43%) or somewhat helpful (37%) to have a European platform that certifies the authenticity of one's skills and qualifications using digital credentials instead of relying on paper documents. Younger respondents and respondents from non-EU countries tend more to find such a tool important.

In the employers' survey, their needs in the area of understanding skills and qualifications were found to be linked to the challenges in understanding the skills and qualifications acquired by candidates through work, learning and volunteering experience, including in the context of mobility (39% considered it sometimes difficult, 9% often difficult). Understanding candidates' profiles may have an impact on hiring decisions and, as a result, the organisation of work in companies. 46% of surveyed employers noticed a mismatch

⁶⁸ See Europass Decision, Article 4(6): Europass shall support authentication services for any digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications.

between a new recruit's expected skills (based on their work and learning experience) and the skills demonstrated in the workplace.

Moreover, employers face difficulties when verifying the authenticity of candidates' qualifications or experience (59% of them consider this process to be sometimes difficult or often difficult). Verifying the authenticity of a candidate's qualifications is very important for employers when it comes to hiring (71% of respondents consider it very important or somewhat important). Slightly more than half of them (54%) consider receiving digitally certified documents proving qualifications to be important.

Surveyed education and training providers encounter similar problems when selecting candidates, understanding their skills and qualifications acquired and verifying the authenticity of these qualifications and skills (considered sometimes difficult or often difficult by 52% and 61% respectively). Compared to employers, this stakeholder group noticed a greater mismatch between students' expected skills and the skills shown during education and training activities (52% declared some mismatch, 10% a great mismatch). Providing authentication of learning outcomes with digital credentials is considered very important for 68% of the survey respondents.

In consequence, employers and education and training providers appreciate initiatives to make verification processes to compare national qualification levels across Europe more efficient, such as the European Digital Credentials for Learning or the EQF.

According to some interviewed stakeholders at EU level, although at an early stage, EDC has a potential to become a relevant tool to a wide range of stakeholders. Some national stakeholders value common standards and really see EDC as a tool for the future, while others are hesitant to introduce new standards if their public organisation is not ready for such a step yet.

5. WHAT ARE THE CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED?

5.1. Conclusions

Most of the Europass tools, services and information, required under the 2018 Europass Decision, were implemented and made available on the platform when launched in July 2020. Since then, these tools and services have been regularly updated and further improved. Following the launch, the Commission prioritised the development of existing tools to ensure the continuity of Europass services. Other tools have been implemented more recently (the Digital skills self-assessment tool was launched in December 2021 and the Jobs & Skill Trends tool in June 2023). The information on learning opportunities and qualifications is not fully complete as some Member States and Europass countries still need to share that information. By the end of 2022, 10 Europass countries had completed this task for learning opportunities and 19 for qualifications. This underlines the need for Member States to finish providing information on learning opportunities and qualifications. This will enable Europass to fully achieve its goals for education and training as well as the transparency of skills and qualifications and become more relevant to the public.

Member States are implementing the tasks set out in the Europass Decision mostly through the National Europass Centres (NECs). From 2018 to 2020, they focused mainly on implementing new tools, involving stakeholders and strengthening the awareness of Europass and guidance on careers and mobility. From 2021 to 2023, NECs' attention was focused on promoting Europass, giving guidance and involving stakeholders.

Overall, Member States have effectively implemented the Europass Decision from 2018 to 2020. Most countries have adequately carried out most of the tasks. However, there is still ongoing work in areas, such as the sharing of information about learning opportunities and, to a lesser extent, qualifications. While NECs have promoted cooperation among various public stakeholders at EU, national and regional levels, there is scope for further cooperation and engagement with national players in the field of employment, vocational training and adult education. NECs could play a key role in reaching out to labour market stakeholders and intermediaries.

5.1.1 Effectiveness

Making the new Europass platform a one-stop shop bringing together skills, qualification and labour mobility tools has been appreciated by users and stakeholders. The Commission's decision to prioritise the development of existing tools (e.g. the CV and Cover Letter builder) to ensure the continuity of Europass services positively affected the effective implementation of the new platform. Some Europass features are not yet complete (information on qualifications and on learning opportunities). The Jobs & Skill Trends tool, released in June 2023, is expected to further personalise information available to the users.

The number of registered users substantially increased following the launch of the new platform, which points to continuity, a retention of users and effectively reaching new target audiences. The strong appeal of Europass to young people who are at the start of their careers is a particular strength that should be built on.

There are varying levels of uptake of the different Europass tools and services. The Europass CV and Cover Letter are the best known and most frequently used Europass tools as confirmed by all data collection tools in the supporting study. Other functionalities, such as the tracking of applications, Supplement templates, the Digital skills self-assessment tool and the European Digital Credentials for Learning, are used to a lesser extent. This suggests that the different usage rates should be examined more closely and any issues addressed. It also suggests that the different Europass tools need to be better integrated into an improved data analysis system. This will help optimise the platform for end users and institutional users. Such a data analysis system would exploit the data coming from users' interactions with the different Europass tools. Europass tools and services are generally perceived as useful. The majority of the public consultation respondents (at least 80%) find the tools and services useful or very useful, whereas they appreciate most the Europass CV (90%). They consider particularly useful the tools that they are most familiar with.

Public institutions have made extensive use of Europass, in particular when implementing the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Council Recommendation. For instance, most of the referencing reports contain references to Europass.

Integrating Europass in existing EU mobility programmes, including but not limited to Erasmus+, is particularly important to ensure a targeted uptake by those programmes' stakeholders (education and training providers, youth organisations, social partners and policymakers). Further integrating the use of Europass by all Erasmus+ beneficiaries is still essential to attract users and provide targeted mobility services.

Europass is an effective tool to support mobility and a solution to present knowledge, skills and competences in a standardised way. Individual were more likely to use the Europass CV, when they had participated in a mobility experience abroad, such as working, studying or a mobility exchange. The most used Europass profile language is English, which points to active labour mobility across the EU among Europass users or local recruitment by international companies.

Europass is effective for fostering a common framework for the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications among Member States. This relies on several elements: the link with EQF, the publication of information on qualifications and learning opportunities (although work in this area is still in progress), the common supplement templates, and the European Digital Credentials for Learning. Optimising the interaction with these tools for end users and institutional users will increase these tools' impact.

Although strongly anchored in a young user base, Europass aspires to be a tool supporting lifelong learning. This requires all Member States to share information about learning opportunities. It also requires information on validation and career guidance opportunities.

A process is in place for Member States to share information on learning opportunities, but this is not yet the case for validation and career guidance.

Communication with end users and stakeholders about Europass took place at EU and national levels by the National Europass Centres (NECs) and was successful in engaging with them. Communication activities took place mainly online between 2020 and 2022 during the pandemic. The Commission created synergies with other EU initiatives in the area of education and training, youth and labour mobility (e.g. Eurodesk, EURES and Erasmus+) in order to reach out to their respective target audiences. NECs' communication activities mainly targeted students, jobseekers, employers and education and training providers, with young people at the centre of their efforts. There were different levels of engagement with end users through social media channels in terms of the volume of Europass mentions, frequency and content shared. Three platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) accounted for 68% of the online conversation around Europass.

Awareness of Europass differs between countries. Based on a user and non-user survey to the general population of 10 selected countries ⁶⁹, Portugal, Romania, and Croatia are the countries where the awareness of Europass is the highest. Two countries where Europass is known less are France and Germany. Most Europass users are in Italy, Portugal and Romania (in total numbers). This is driven not only by high mobility intentions in these countries but also by making Europass a part of public sector recruitment processes. These countries also host higher shares of Europass profiles compared to the total population. Please see Figure 22 “Share of Europass profiles across Member States over their total population” in Annex VII, which displays further details for all Member States. The Commission and NECs could take more action to promote Europass in those countries where it is known and used less, focusing also on employers.

Most of the platform's users are relatively young (72% are under 35 years). There is a slight under-representation of women among Europass users. With respect to education and training, only 7% of Europass users indicate an EQF level on their profile⁷⁰. Among those users who do, most have an EQF level of 4 or above. Most Europass users have some level of work experience. In terms of profile languages, English is the most used language followed by Italian, Portuguese and Romanian.

Improvements to the platform's accessibility have been made since its launch. However, the views of end users and stakeholders are mixed, and there are some issues for different groups of people, including people with lower digital skills, older people and people with disabilities. A lack of digital skills is seen as the main accessibility barrier. Therefore, more analysis could be carried out to identify further accessibility improvements.

The Commission intends to intensify its efforts to connect Europass with the labour market and make it a tool for lifelong learning. An important part of this effort will be the further

⁶⁹ User and non-user survey to the general population of 10 selected countries: Germany, Spain, Greece, France, Croatia, Italy, Portugal, Poland, Romania, Sweden.

⁷⁰ This field is optional in the Europass profile.

use of data science, artificial intelligence and interoperability. Another aspect will be providing more services for those in the middle or the end of their careers. Achieving synergies with key labour market tools, such as EURES, is a way to increase the use of Europass by those involved in the labour market and intermediaries. This will provide the platform's users with a better understanding and management of their skills and more tailored opportunities for working and learning in Europe. It will help employers find candidates who are a better fit for their vacancies.

5.1.2 Efficiency

In terms of budget allocated to developing and implementing Europass, the significant increase in new users since the launch of the platform in July 2020 and the expected stability of costs in the coming years should guarantee a reduction in the cost per Europass profile in the long term. This would lead to a long-term improvement in cost-effectiveness as digital platforms tend to have low marginal costs for additional users – increased cost-effectiveness can be expected in the future as long as the number of new users continues to increase. Expanding the user base is therefore a key objective for improving cost-effectiveness.

As recognised by stakeholders, a lot of work has been put into improving the user-friendliness of Europass and addressing technical issues. This includes correcting various bugs that were encountered and reported by end users; the number of bugs was significantly reduced in the second half of 2022 and first half of 2023.

The overall aim is for Europass to be functional, visible and easy to use. There is a need to find a balance between integration with other initiatives and portals and ensuring that the platform and the navigation between the different tools and services does not become too complex or confusing for users. This could lead to some of the basic features (CV, Cover Letter, etc.) being ignored or becoming unusable. Therefore, focus should be put on fixing the platform's technical issues rather than developing new tools. A clearer guide to using the tools and services should also be prepared (e.g. the European Digital Credentials for Learning, Supplement templates and the Digital skills self-assessment tool).

The role of Member States has been significantly broadened with new tasks, including reaching the target audience and promoting the new Europass tools. Many Member States have made their NECs responsible for carrying out these new tasks. As a result, stakeholders and NECs expressed the need for more resources. This is because the new platform provides more tools and services than the previous one, and NECs lack certain skills, such as technical knowledge of more recent tools. Carrying out the additional tasks with a budget similar to the one before the launch of the platform in July 2020 should be seen as an improvement in cost-effectiveness. However, there were different levels in NECs' output and contribution to the platform's implementation, which could hamper the efficiency of Europass tools. To increase effectiveness, NECs need to reach out and engage with other national bodies in the use and promotion of Europass. This requires further

engagement and interoperability with national guidance providers, educational and training consortia, employment services and other labour market actors.

In relation to the above and with regards to the new Europass governance, it seems that since 2018, governance has become more efficient due to the more solid multi-level structure and the wider distribution of responsibilities and tasks both from the Commission to the Member States and across multiple organisations at EU and national level. This is despite differences among countries (in terms of governance structures, administrative decentralisation and political commitments), which are often a challenge to ensuring efficiency. Given its positive outcomes, this governance system should be maintained, and close cooperation and relations with Member States should continue to be a core element of Europass.

5.1.3 Coherence

The coherence of Europass with the broader policy context is strong. In particular, the Europass platform directly supports the European Skills Agenda, the European Education Area and Europe's Digital Decade. Many of the initiatives in the European Skills Agenda rely on Europass for their practical implementation at EU level, e.g. skills intelligence. In addition, Europass contributes to the priorities of the European Education Area, which are to improve quality, equity, inclusion and success in education and training for all and to make lifelong learning and mobility a reality for all. Lastly, the evolution of Europass from a platform that consisted of five document templates into a one-stop-shop digital solution is directly aligned with Europe's Digital Decade.

Europass also makes it possible for other high-level EU policies and their tools and instruments to directly benefit end users. Europass is strongly linked to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), given that EQF information and tools (comparison tool, interconnection of national qualifications registers) are integrated into Europass, which also promotes the EQF terminology.

Europass is aligned with the priorities adopted by the von der Leyen Commission: 'A Europe fit for the digital age' and 'An economy that works for people'. Europass directly contributes to these priorities as a concrete policy instrument intended to harness and further digital capabilities and support a people-driven economy.

There are also strong synergies and technical interoperability between Europass and other EU tools and initiatives in employment, education, training and guidance (such as EURES, ESCO and Erasmus+). For example, Europass delivers tools that help EURES members support jobseekers and has aligned its technical standards with the EURES data model. ESCO is used in Europass to support the delivery of career guidance and learning development solutions as well as creating CVs, skills and interests profiles and skill-assessment tools.

Additional synergies could be created between Europass and EU and national platforms that provide tools and services similar to those on Europass (for example, skills intelligence or forecasts, job search, career guidance information, education and training information

and labour market information). In this context, increased and improved synergies or integration with EURES could prove to be more effective: a single support and guidance system could provide more integrated services to jobseekers and help employers find candidates that are better informed about and more suitable for their vacancies. On top of creating synergies and economies of scale, such cases would eliminate the risk of duplication of efforts and services between EU and national initiatives offering similar tools and services.

5.1.4 EU added value and impact

Overall, the stakeholders consulted recognised the EU added value of Europass, which could not have been achieved by Member States alone. Europass provides unique, multilingual and standardised tools and services free of charge as well as access to information on job opportunities and learning opportunities and qualifications. The standardised tools enable employers and education and training providers to better understand and compare candidates' educational and professional backgrounds and match their skills with the requirements of the job.

As a result, Europass supports learning and the labour mobility of candidates and thereby helps address labour and skills shortages in the EU. In addition, the standardised tools and services of Europass contribute to giving equal opportunities to job applicants.

In some countries, Europass fills gaps in the market where no equivalent public alternatives exist.

Currently, Europass is used as a standard part of public sector applications in several European countries (e.g. Portugal, Romania and Italy). Standardisation leads to more consistency and comparability of skills across European countries. As a result, promoting the uptake of Europass could help it become an EU standard for employment, education and training profiles and for documenting career advancement. Further promoting its use by public administrations in other EU countries would be key to such efforts. Mainstreaming Europass use among beneficiaries of EU programmes (e.g. ESF+, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps) could be a key enabler in this context. This would further contribute to transparency and mobility for working and learning in Europe.

Moreover, Europass can play a role in the standardisation of tools and services within the same country where labour market policies differ between regions. It would also enable better information sharing between the education and training sectors and the employment sector.

5.1.5 Relevance

Europass and its online tools and services are perceived as very relevant by users and stakeholders. Europass is likely to remain relevant in the future due to the continued and even greater need to understand people's qualifications and skills in a European context and in view of developments in digitalisation and mobility across the EU. In this regard, it

would be important to further develop the data analysis system of Europass. This will make it possible to use user interaction data from the platform's different tools to improve tailoring suggestions for working and learning in Europe.

Information and guidance on job opportunities is highly relevant to users and stakeholders. Users can access job vacancies via the EURES job search tool as well as country specific information on both EURES and Europass. More synergies between EURES and Europass and more sector or industry specific information could further increase the attractiveness and relevance of Europass tools.

Information on lifelong learning and transnational mobility for learning purposes remains relevant to users and stakeholders. Europass depends on Member States and Europass countries who need to provide this information on qualifications and learning opportunities. This conveys a strong message that Member States need to provide related information or keep it up-to-date.

Information on job opportunities and learning opportunities are both perceived as particularly relevant by younger people who are beginning their careers as well as people from non-EU countries.

The Europass platform provides several tools that respond to the need for information and guidance on skills required by the labour market. These are considered to be very relevant by users and stakeholders. More customised guidance could further increase their relevance.

Europass can be relevant to address skills and labour shortages by providing guidance in the area of skills and occupations, e.g. through the recently launched Jobs & Skill Trends tool. EU agencies working in the fields of skills and labour shortages (Cedefop, Eurofound, ELA) are important partners for future developments and could contribute to improving Europass services through more efficient data sharing. Personalised recommendations on job opportunities could also help address skills and labour shortages. Lastly, more information on career guidance at national level could be provided to end users. For all the above, Member States need to make further efforts to provide country specific information. The Commission also needs to improve the platform's data analysis system.

Europass supports a broad range of policy areas (labour and learning mobility, employment, education and training, skills). It is an essential tool for individuals' career management and lifelong learning. In particular, Europass supports the validation and documentation of skills and recognition of qualifications in a single platform and gives access to information on learning offers and qualifications in Europe. Stakeholders can use the Europass platform, for instance, when providing guidance, in particular to access information. Lastly, recognition professionals can use the platform to find information on qualifications and learning opportunities to help them with their assessments. Therefore, Europass continues to be relevant to ensure transparency, a common understanding of skills and qualifications, and comparability.

With the integration of several previously standalone skills, qualification and labour mobility tools as well as the introduction of new tools (e.g. the Digital skills self-assessment tool), the new Europass platform has helped reduce fragmentation in this area. Stakeholders would like to see interoperability with other EU instruments and initiatives. Further efforts could be made to increase interoperability with new partners in the labour market and in the area of education and training, focusing on guidance and vocational education and training providers. This would allow people across the EU access the many opportunities for working and learning that exist around Europe based on Europass standards and tools.

While the integration of the different tools in one platform was perceived as positive by users and stakeholders, they also commented on the complexity of the platform (see Section 4.1.2 Efficiency). Therefore, a balance in this respect needs to be ensured so the platform is not overloaded with different initiatives. Information on tools and services needs to be organised and presented in a way so that all initiatives are visible.

The shared understanding of skills and qualifications and the need for an EU infrastructure for digital credentials is viewed as highly relevant by both stakeholders and end users. Employers and education and training providers face challenges related to understanding skills and qualifications acquired by candidates and verifying the authenticity of candidates' qualifications or experience. Digitally signed credentials in the field of learning are being used more and are quickly becoming more important. 79% of respondents to the public consultation considered an EU infrastructure for digital credentials for skills and qualifications to be either very important or important. EU standards ensure interoperability and avoid fragmentation in this area still in development.

5.2. Lessons learned

Europass supports the objectives of the **European Year of Skills** to strengthen **skills relevance** and match people's aspirations, needs and skill sets with labour market needs and opportunities. Information and guidance on skills required by the labour market are considered to be very important by users and stakeholders. Europass provides tools that help users reflect on their skills and interests, like the My Skills tool or the Digital skills self-assessment tool. The evaluation exercise revealed the need for more guidance on using the self-assessment test results to support careers or learning outcomes as well as more tailored guidance on skills. The latter need has been addressed by the new Jobs & Skill Trends tool, for which it was suggested to include artificial intelligence or data mining to further improve its relevance.

Europass already has links with several EU initiatives that can be further developed (EURES, ESCO, EQF, ELM, EQAR). In addition, the **interoperability** of Europass with other EU initiatives (e.g. the Digital Skills and Jobs Platform, the European Education Area Portal, the Regulated Professions Database, Euraxess or the European Youth Portal) and national portals could be further explored. This would let Europass users share their profiles and documentation on other portals, making them more visible to potential employers. Moreover, closer cooperation between Europass, the European Youth Portal

and EURES could be further analysed to improve support and guidance. This could be of particular benefit to the most vulnerable groups of young people. In addition, the need for more guidance on Europass could be addressed through interoperability with certain national guidance services, giving people access to such services based on Europass standards. Finally, synergies with data spaces initiatives, such as the Data Space for Skills, could be further explored.

Europass is relevant to **jobseeking** and responds to the need for information and guidance on job opportunities by giving access to the EURES job search tool, which helps people find jobs and employers to recruit from all over Europe. Both platforms work towards supporting job applications and mobility, so making EURES services available through the Europass platform can be considered to be very important. At the same time, end users' main needs relate to job searches, and they consider Europass particularly relevant in the context of **labour mobility**. Stronger synergies and interoperability between Europass and EURES could therefore strengthen the impact of both platforms and be beneficial for all users.

Member States and Europass countries need to make further efforts in developing **qualification and learning opportunity databases and registers**. These would link to the Europass platform via the Qualifications Dataset Register, so the information is available to Europass users.

Stakeholders' adoption of **Europass as a standard profile tool for learning and jobs in the EU** would contribute to more transparency and comparability of skills as well as more mobility across European countries. Moreover, it would ensure an increase in the use of Europass tools and services, thereby creating economies of scale. Such an increase would be particularly supported by further synergies with EURES, focusing on tools like a common profile and CV builder. This would further strengthen the relevance and impact of Europass, given that such an adoption by a large number of stakeholders contributes to a shared understanding as well as better awareness and recognition of the platform and its tools. Further uptake of Europass could be promoted in the context of related EU initiatives and mobility programmes, such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and the ALMA (Aim, Learn, Master, Achieve) initiative targeting young people not in any kind of employment, education or training. Moreover, in terms of geographical coverage Europass promotional activities could focus on countries where Europass is known and used less. While the attractiveness of Europass to young people is a particular strength to build on, promotion activities could also focus on people aged over 35.

A balance needs to be ensured between further integration of new EU initiatives into Europass (leading to more **complexity**) and the user-friendliness of the platform. The platform structure and main menu could be reviewed to give better visibility to all the available tools and services. The creation of specific sections with separate entry points for users and stakeholder groups (e.g. employers, education and training providers) could be considered to better cater to their needs.

For Europass to reach its full potential as a platform for career management and lifelong learning, information on **career guidance, validation opportunities and the recognition of qualifications** could be improved, given that the current information on the platform remains general. This would particularly require stronger links to national services and institutions. This information is becoming even more important in the context of the twin green and digital transitions.

The use of Europass is particularly effective in the context of **mobility for labour and learning purposes** across the EU, as a solution to present knowledge, skills and competences in a standardised way. This is because Europass provides tools, services and information particularly relevant to mobility.

There is a clear need to complete the **EDC infrastructure** and leverage the **European Digital Credentials for Learning standards** to support Member States in their digital transformation of credentials and ensure interoperability between national credential platforms at EU level. Some national stakeholders value common standards and really see EDC as a tool for the future, while others are hesitant to introduce new standards if their public organisation is not ready for such a step yet.

The use of **data analysis** and **artificial intelligence** in Europass could be further developed and play a role in addressing skills and labour shortages in Europe. Through the recently launched Jobs & Skill Trends tool (in June 2023), users can identify the occupation groups most in demand in a certain EU country as well as countries where a certain occupation is in most demand. Users can also see what are the most relevant skills associated with the respective occupation. Personalised recommendations on job opportunities in line with skills indicated in users' Europass profiles could further help address skills and labour shortages.

To improve the user-friendliness of the Europass platform, it is important to give priority to **fixing technical issues** over developing any new tools. This would make the platform more functional and visible and easier to use.

Future developments for Europass could be implemented through an '**accessibility by design**' approach. This means that tools and services are designed in a way that ensures they are accessible to as many people as possible, including those with lower levels of digital skills, older people, long-term unemployed people and people with disabilities (e.g. people with visual impairments). Accessibility should be considered during the initial design stages. This process could be supported by user testing with individuals from the above-mentioned groups to get their feedback and identify potential barriers to accessibility. By implementing these principles, Europass could contribute to promoting inclusiveness and equal opportunities.

To measure the impact and use of Europass, the development and implementation of a **data monitoring plan** to systematically collect information at the level of tools and services could be put in place. A deeper analysis of users' behaviour would help better understand how Europass could accompany them in their learning and career paths.

Moreover, regular **user satisfaction surveys** could give greater insights into the impact of Europass in supporting users find jobs and learning opportunities.

Organisation and timing

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) is the lead DG for the evaluation of the Decision (EU) 2018/646 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC.

The call for evidence and public consultation have been published on the European Commission's "Have your Say" portal⁷¹ on 06 December 2022. The evaluation has been carried out with the support of the Inter-Services Steering Group chaired by DG EMPL to which the following DGs were invited: SG, GROW, EAC and JRC.

The group met six times:

- 18 February 2022 - Evaluation timeline, consultation strategy and terms of reference for the external study
- 15 June 2022 - Kick-off meeting with the contractor in charge of preparing the external study
- 26 July 2022 - Inception meeting for the external study
- 30 November 2022 - Meeting on the draft interim report of the external study
- 06 March 2023 – Meeting on draft final report of the external study
- 27 June 2023 – Meeting on the draft Staff Working Document (SWD)

Exceptions to the Better Regulation Guidelines

The Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines⁷² were followed to carry out the evaluation without deviations.

⁷¹ Please see the call for evidence and the public consultation on the "Have your Say" portal: [Lifelong learning and career management - evaluation of Europass since 2018](#)

⁷² Please see [Better regulation: guidelines and toolbox \(europa.eu\)](#)

Use of evidence

The external study was carried out by Verian Group (former Kantar Public)⁷³. The study has been conducted in line with the request for services and the agreed inception report. It includes all agreed components and is based on relevant qualitative and quantitative data although less targeted stakeholder interviews were carried out than planned in the technical specifications (72 instead of 80). As agreed, these have been compensated with 16 targeted qualitative observations of non-users. The analysis and conclusions are sound while methodology and limitations are clearly outlined. The lessons learnt are relevant.

The study applied a mix of evaluation methods including desk research, data analysis (platform user data and social media analysis), a public consultation, targeted surveys, interviews with stakeholders and qualitative observations of non-users.

The Europass Advisory Group, gathering representatives from Member States, was regularly informed of and consulted on the study development and findings.

ANNEX II. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL MODELS USED

1. Intervention Logic

The Intervention Logic of Europass derives from the general objectives of Europass as set out in Decision (EU) 2018/646 (Europass Decision). These objectives refer to the provision of a new EU-wide online platform offering online tools and information to support people in their lifelong learning and career management. As stipulated in Article 1 of the Europass Decision, the platform can be used by individuals such as learners, workers, jobseekers and volunteers to communicate and present their skills, qualifications and experience clearly and consistently across Europe. In this context, Europass aims to address needs of citizens and other stakeholders in the areas of learning, working or volunteering, for accessing information and guidance on what opportunities are available, on how to assess skills, and on ways of presenting information about skills and qualifications. The Europass Decision, in its recital (34), clearly states the

⁷³ See 'Study supporting the Europass ex-post evaluation', Verian Group (former Kantar Public) (<https://op.europa.eu/en/web/general-publications>)

general objective of Europass: *Since the objective of this Decision, namely the establishment of a comprehensive and interoperable framework of tools and information, in particular for transnational employment and learning mobility purposes, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States but can rather, by reason of the effects of the action, be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality as set out in that Article, this Decision does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve that objective.* This broad objective can be further broken down into three objectives, namely:

- supporting the mobility of individuals for work and education opportunities in the EU;
- better integrating services for learners, job seekers, workers, volunteers, employers and education and training providers so as to communicate skills and competences with a focus on disadvantaged groups; and
- fostering a common framework for transparency and the recognition of skills and qualifications among Member States.

In terms of **inputs**, Erasmus+ and ESF+ financial instruments and programmes contribute to supporting Europass activities at EU level. NECs are co-funded also by the individual countries that contribute financially to these activities. With the support of the above-described inputs, the **activities** planned for Europass can be grouped into EU level activities and national level activities. EU level activities include:

- the development and maintenance of the platform and its tools;
- communication and information provision;
- links and synergies with other services and tools in the field of skills and qualifications and labour and learning mobility;
- engaging with Member States and relevant stakeholders;
- coordinating the Europass Advisory Group and NECs;
- monitoring and evaluating progress and implementation.

Activities at national level include:

- supporting the use of Europass tools via awareness raising and promotional campaigns;
- promoting services offering guidance, career development, lifelong learning opportunities and qualifications;
- disseminating learning opportunities and qualifications, recognition practices and national services on Europass through other national organisations (EQF NCP, Euroguidance, agencies at ministerial level, PES, etc.);
- facilitating cooperation between public and private stakeholders;

- supporting the Europass tools and services by issuing Europass Mobility and running a Europass Mobility Database;
- developing national inventories of Certificate Supplements.

Combined, these activities should lead to the following expected **outputs**:

At EU level:

- further development and maintenance of the platform;
- availability of tools and interoperability with other platforms;
- open standards;
- EU level external communication and engagement;
- end users, employers and education and training providers' uptake of Europass and its various tools and services.

At national level:

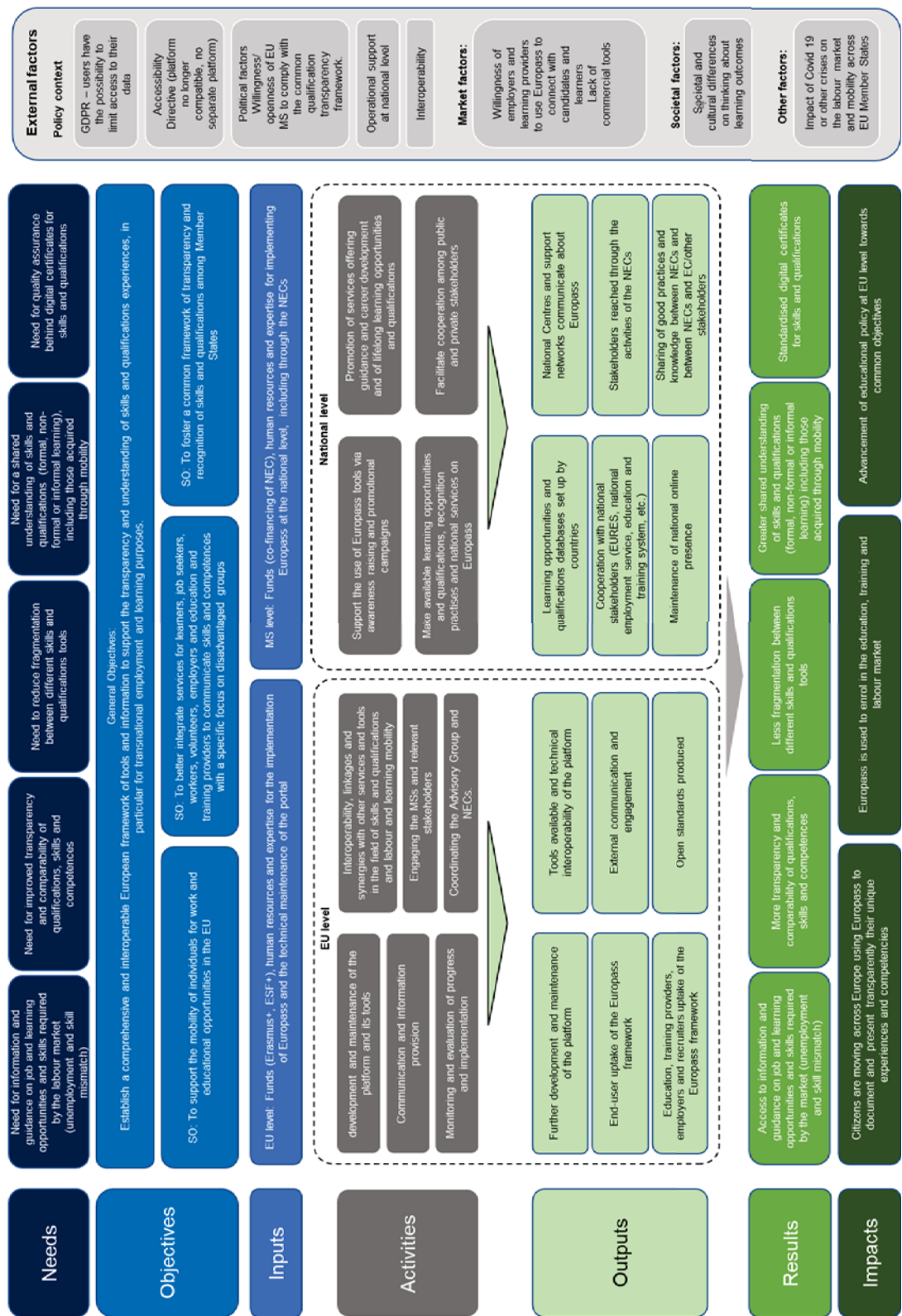
- national learning opportunities and qualifications shared on Europass;
- communication activities carried out by EU, national and support networks;
- cooperation with national stakeholders;
- stakeholders reach and uptake of Europass and its various tools and services;
- sharing of good practices across NECs.

As a **result**, Europass is expected to address the needs identified earlier and, more generally, to have the visibility of its tools and services to end users and stakeholders increased, both at EU and national levels, thus facilitating access to opportunities for working and learning. A better understanding of skills and qualifications is also expected to lead to better integration of the labour market. The identification of skills, the access to information on learning opportunities and possibly the access to skills intelligence tools and guidance, validation and recognition of skills are expected to support the increase of upskilling and reskilling, in line with the Porto targets set for 2030.

The overall **impacts** enable citizens to move across Europe by using Europass to document and present their experience and skills transparently. Furthermore, Europass supports the progress of education policy at EU level towards common objectives and represents a tool used for enrolment in the education, training and labour market.

The above elements of the Europass Intervention Logic are presented in the below Figure:

Figure 10 Intervention Logic of Europass



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2. Methodology

2.1 Evaluation Questions

The evaluation was based on evaluation questions covering the five criteria defined by the Better Regulation Guidelines (Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and EU added value). The questions and sub-questions are specified in the table below.

Table 2 - Evaluation questions

Evaluation Criterion	Evaluation questions (EQ)
1. How has the Europass Decision been implemented? – i.e. identification of the activities implemented	<p>1.1. As identified in the Europass Decision, to what extent the developed 2020 online platform provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - web-based tools for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o documenting and describing personal information in a variety of formats, including curriculum vitae (CV) and cover letter templates; o documenting and describing skills and qualifications acquired through working and learning experiences, including through mobility and volunteering; o supporting authentication services for any digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications; o the assessment of skills and self-assessment of skills; o documenting the learning outcomes of qualifications, including the Europass supplement templates - available information or links to available information on the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o learning opportunities; o qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems in line with the EQF; o opportunities for validation of non-formal and informal learning; o recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including third countries; o services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management; o skills intelligence as produced by relevant Union-level activities and agencies within their domains of competence; o information on skills and qualifications that could be relevant to the particular needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration. - A user-friendly and secure interface delivered in all Europass languages (languages of EU Member States and other Europass countries); - Open standards available free of charge, for reuse by Member States and other stakeholders on a voluntary basis; - An option for users to store personal data such as a personal profile in compliance with Union data protection law; - Support and ensure technical interoperability and synergies with other relevant instruments and services offered at Union and, where appropriate, national levels. - Europass shall support authentication services for any digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications. <p>Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the current status of the platform?</p> <p>1.2. As identified in the Europass Decision, to what extent the European Commission carried out the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manage the Europass online platform by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensuring the availability and high quality of Union-level information or links;

- o Developing, testing and, when necessary, updating the Europass online platform, including open standards, in line with user needs and technological advancements as well as changes in labour markets and in the provision of education and training;
 - o Keeping up to date with and incorporating, where relevant, the latest technological developments that can improve the accessibility of Europass for older persons and persons with disabilities;
 - o Ensuring that any development or updating of the Europass online platform, including open standards, supports consistency of information and demonstrates clear added value;
 - o Ensuring that any web-based tools, in particular tools for assessment and self-assessment, are fully tested and quality assured;
 - o Ensuring the quality and monitor the effectiveness of the Europass online platform including web-based tools in line with user needs.
- Implement the Europass Decision by:
- o Ensuring the active participation and involvement of Member States in strategic planning, including setting and steering strategic objectives, quality assurance and financing, and take due regard of their positions;
 - o Ensure the active participation and involvement of Member States in the development, testing, updating and evaluation of the Europass online platform, including open standards, and take due regard of their positions;
 - o Ensuring that, at Union level, relevant stakeholders are involved in the implementation and evaluation of the Europass Decision;
 - o Setting up learning activities and best practice exchanges between Member States and, where appropriate, facilitating peer counselling at the request of Member States; and
 - o Ensuring that effective and adequate promotion, guidance and information activities are carried out at Union level in order to reach relevant users and stakeholders, including persons with disabilities.

Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the tasks carried out by the European Commission?

1.3. To what extent Member States, through the relevant national services, implemented the Europass Decision by carrying out the following tasks:

- Coordinating the activities related to the implementation of Europass web-based tools;
- Promoting the use and strengthen the awareness and visibility of Europass;
- Promoting and providing information on services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management, including, where appropriate, individual guidance services;
- Making information on learning opportunities, qualifications and recognition practices available on the Europass online platform, including through links to relevant national websites; and
- Involving stakeholders from all relevant sectors, and promote cooperation among public and private stakeholders, in the activities under their responsibility.

Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the tasks carried out by the Member States?

2. Relevance: does Europass respond to actual and potential future needs? – i.e. is Europass relevant?

- 2.1. To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users' (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders' (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing information and guidance on job opportunities?
- 2.2. To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users' (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders' (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing information on lifelong learning and transnational mobility for learning purposes?
- 2.3. To what extent the Europass framework still respond to end users' (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders' (education and training

providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing information and guidance on the skills required by the labour market?

- 2.4. To what extent the Europass framework, with its supporting documents, still responds to end users' (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders' (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing greater transparency and comparability of qualifications, skills and competences (including in the context of a mobility)?
- 2.5. Is there a need for self-assessment tools for digital skills on the Europass platform? Is there a need to develop further self-assessment tools?
- 2.6. To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users' (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders' (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs for reducing the fragmentation between different skills and qualifications tools?
- 2.7. To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users' (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders' (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs for creating a shared understanding of skills and qualifications (formal, non-formal or informal learning) including those acquired through mobility?
- 2.8. Is there a need to provide an EU infrastructure for digital credentials for skills and qualifications? To what extent does the Europass framework respond to such need?
- 2.9. To what extent the Europass framework addresses the current and future needs of end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers)? Including the current and future needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration?
- 2.10. To what extent Europass is still relevant and likely to stay relevant for end-users (in terms of relevance for users' needs and flexibility or adaptation to change in the context of its implementation, notably regarding requirements and feedback by users)?
- 2.11. To what extent the Europass framework addresses the current and future needs of employers?
- 2.12. To what extent the Europass framework addresses the current and future needs of education and training providers?

3. Effectiveness - To what extent has the implementation of Europass Decision been effective?

- 3.1. How successful has the implementation of the 2018 Europass Decision been in establishing a European framework to support the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings, including through practical experiences, mobility and volunteering? How successful was the implementation in establishing the following objectives?
 - Supporting the mobility of individuals for work and educational opportunities in the EU;
 - Better integrating services for learners, job seekers, workers, volunteers, employers and education and training providers so as to communicate skills and competences including with a focus on disadvantaged groups;
 - Fostering a common framework for transparency and the recognition of skills and qualifications among Member States.

Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the reaching of the objectives?
- 3.2. Were end-users and stakeholders engaged with the previous Europass platform retained with the 2020 platform? How was the transition managed?
- 3.3. What has been the uptake of the 2020 Europass platform services and tools (see list in 1.1) by:
 - End users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and
 - Relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers)?

	<p>What is the sociodemographic of the end users in terms of education level, age, employment status?</p> <p>3.4. Were communication activities (at EU and National level) effective in reaching end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers)?</p> <p>3.5. To what extent are the services and tools offered by the Europass framework accessible to and used by disadvantaged groups (persons with lower level of education, lower digital skills, older persons, long-term unemployed persons and disabled persons)?</p> <p>To what extent the principles of gender equality, gender mainstreaming, the integration of gender perspective, and accessibility for persons with disabilities have been applied, as well as how anti-discrimination considerations based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation have been addressed (EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation - EaSI strand)?</p> <p>3.6. Are end users and relevant stakeholders satisfied with the quality of the offering? how useful do they find the different services and tools?</p> <p>3.7. To what extent are the Europass tools and services (see list in 1.1) sustainable? Which aspects are considered the most sustainable? What hinders the sustainability of the Europass services? Can any of the different tools and services be delivered in a more sustainable way?</p>
4. Efficiency - Can the implementation of Europass be considered as efficient?	<p>4.1. To what extent is the Europass framework implementation cost-effective?</p> <p>4.2. To what extent did the new Europass framework simplify the delivery of tools and services (see list in 1.1)?</p> <p>4.3. To what extent is the governance efficient in steering the Europass framework?</p> <p>4.4. How efficiently, the European Commission carried out its tasks and activities (see list in 1.2)?</p> <p>4.5. How efficiently, Member States, through the relevant national services, carried out their tasks and activities (see list in 1.3)?</p>
5. Coherence - Is Europass consistent with other relevant policy instruments at EU and at national level?	<p>5.1. To what extent are the Europass framework and its individual components aligned with current EU policy context (i.e., European Pillar of Social Rights, a Europe fit for the digital age, an economy that works for the people, the European Skills Agenda, the European Education Area)?</p> <p>5.2. To what extent does the Europass framework support and complement other initiatives at EU level (e.g., EQF, EURES, EURAXESS, VET, Erasmus+)? What is the extent of complementarity, synergies and duplication?</p> <p>5.3. To what extent has the integration of new or pre-existing tools and solutions into Europass (see list in 1.1) created a more coherent platform compared with stand-alone solutions?</p> <p>5.4. To what extent do the Europass services and tools offered (see list in 1.1) provide synergies or duplication with national initiatives? (e.g. mandatory use of Europass CV at national level; provision of learning opportunities databases, qualification frameworks or system, digital credentials standards and semantic interoperability, etc.)?</p>
6. EU added value - What is the EU added value of Europass?	<p>6.1. What is the additional value and benefit resulting from the new Europass framework, compared with what could be achieved by the Member States at national and/or regional levels in the absence of Europass?</p>
7. What impact does Europass have on job-search, lifelong learning/upskilling, and mobility for work or learning within Europe? How was this and is this impact affected by private providers offering similar services?	<p>7.1. What impact does Europass have on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job searching - Lifelong learning/upskilling - Mobility of work - Learning within Europe <p>7.2. Are there other Europass-equivalent tools or frameworks available to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers)? How does Europass compare to the other 'equivalent' services/tools?</p> <p>7.3. Are there other Europass-equivalent tools or frameworks available to employers?</p>

7.4. Are there other Europass-equivalent tools or frameworks available to education and training providers?

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2.2 Desk review

To produce a sound, thorough evaluation and systematically collect documents for the analysis, the external study team developed a categorisation of key document types for review:

- EU-level policy documents relating to the Europass Decision, including the legislative, communications and report documents, including the Europass Advisory group's documents and reports;
- EU-level documents relating to the context of Europass implementation, including legislative documents and communications on qualification and skills frameworks, employment, Skills Agenda, digitalisation and labour and learning mobility;
- National-level documents relating to Europass implementation of promotion activities, including the activity reports and work programmes of National Europass Centers (NECs), Euroguidance, and EQF National Coordination Points;
- Grey and research literature on Europass and skills and qualifications transparency - including EU reports, studies of international organisations.

The purpose of reviewing these documents was to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data regarding Europass and identify any data gaps which needed to be filled by other aspects of the methodology. Following the desk review, the primary data collection tools were revised to ensure a good coverage of the evaluation matrix.

2.3 Stakeholder consultation

The consultations have followed the consultation strategy designed by the external study team in collaboration with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion with the aim to cover all Europass stakeholders (please see also Annex V of the Staff Working Document "Stakeholders Consultation – Synopsis Report"). The consultation strategy included the following:

- A call for evidence and a public consultation
- Quantitative primary data about the experience and views of individuals (users and non-users) and stakeholders. The activity consisted of three surveys targeting:
 - individuals (users and non-users)
 - employers
 - education and training providers
- Qualitative insights from two primary sources complement the analysis:
 - in-depth interviews with key stakeholders
 - qualitative observations and feedback from non-users discovering the Europass platform and functionalities for the first time.

2.3.1 Public Consultation

A Public Consultation has been implemented to gather relevant information and opinions regarding the questions linked to the five evaluation criteria. The Public Consultation was open to all types of stakeholders, including individuals (e.g. learners, job seekers, workers and volunteers), as well as organisations (such as employers, civil society organisations, public employment services, social partners, education and training providers, youth organisations, youth work providers, national authorities and policy makers). The questionnaire has been refined during the inception and interim phase of the evaluation to account for the appropriate routing of the stakeholders, and questions were cross-checked against the Evaluation Matrix (see Annex III).

The Public Consultation was open from 06 December 2023 to 28 February 2023 on the “Have your Say” portal and received 1920 valid responses. Moreover, a Call for Evidence was published on “Have your Say” the same day and received 28 valid replies. For further details on the results of the Public Consultation and the Call for Evidence as well as statistics on Public Consultation respondents per country and per stakeholder group, please see the “Have your Say” portal⁷⁴ as well as Annex V of the Staff Working Document.

2.3.2 Surveys

Three online surveys were launched to individuals (users and non-users), employers and education and training providers. The three groups reflect the main stakeholders identified in the Europass Decision. The surveys contained closed and open questions. The sample size and country coverage per target group is summarised in the table below. For further details please see Annex V of the Staff Working Document “Stakeholders Consultation – Synopsis Report”.

⁷⁴ Please see the European Commission’s Have your Say portal: [Lifelong learning and career management - evaluation of Europass since 2018](#)

Table 3 – Surveys implemented in the context of the evaluation of Europass

Target	Sample size	Country coverage
Survey for users and non-users	<p>Sample (A) General population: 4040 (recruited via consumer access panels)</p> <p>Sample (B) Platform users: 3607 (recruited via open link published on the Europass platform and sent via e-mail to Europass users)</p> <p>7647</p>	<p>The sample (A) covered 10 EU countries (IT, PT, ES, DE, RO, FR, EL, HR, PL, SE)</p> <p>The sample (B) reached respondents from 40 different countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member States: all • Other Europass countries: BA, CH, IS, ME, MK, NO, RS, TR, UA • Other countries: AL, XK, MD, GE
Survey for employers	109	Companies located in 24 different countries (AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PO, PT, RO, SE, SI)
Survey for education and training providers	98	<p>Educational entities in the sectors of professional training and coaching, higher education, primary and secondary education, e-learning, research and education management.</p> <p>Country coverage: All the Member States plus 6 Europass countries (IS, ME, NO, MK, CH, TR)</p>

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2.3.4 Stakeholder interviews

The in-depth semi-structured interviews have been developed in line with the Terms of Reference and the Better Regulation Guidelines. During the interim phase, the external study team refined the list of relevant stakeholders and developed the questionnaire guide.

Relevant stakeholders were selected according to their involvement in Europass. These stakeholders were divided into EU-level decision-makers, national-level decision makers, and social partners and civil society stakeholders.

- EU-level decision-makers in charge of Europass or of EU initiatives related to Europass, such as EURES, ESCO, EQF, ECVET, ENIC NARIC, the Bologna process and the Erasmus+ programme;
- National-level decision-makers who are expected to take up the Europass services and use them to increase the transparency of national skills and qualifications frameworks. This group includes advisory group members, National Europass Centres (NECs), Erasmus+ National agencies, qualification bodies, national public authorities and ministries.
- Social partners and civil society stakeholders at the EU and national level who are key multipliers with respect to employers and education and training providers, both higher education institutions and VET providers and associations, in promoting and supporting the use and recognition of Europass.

Furthermore, a balanced geographical distribution of interviews across the Europass countries was ensured as summarised in the table below.

Table 4 - Geographic coverage by category of interviewed stakeholders

	EU	AT	BE	DK	EE	FI	FR	DE	EL	HU	IE	IT	LV	LT	LU	MT	NL	NO	PL	PT	RO	SK	SI	ES	SE	TR	Total
EU level (13)																											
EU institutions	13																										13
National-level public institutions (43)																											
EU initiatives present at national level		1	1	1	1	1			1	1	2		1	1		1	2	1			1	1	1		2	1	21
Institutions related to Europass implementation						2		1				1								1							5
Public employment agencies							1																		1		2
Education ministry and VET providers									2			1								1							4
Employment ministry					1	1					1				1						1				1		6
Qualification authorities													1														1
Public Institution							1								1				1						1		4
Key enablers from civil society social partners at EU and national level (16)																											
Private employment service	1																1										2
Business trade associations	2																										2
Organisations linked to education and mobility at EU, national or cross-border levels	1						1																			1	3
Trade associations	3																										3
Trade unions	1																										1
Universities admitting international profiles						3																			1	1	5
Total number of interviews	21	1	1	1	2	7	1	3	3	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	1		4	4	72

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

2.3.5 Targeted qualitative observations

Targeted qualitative consultations with 16 non-users from 4 countries were implemented to assess the extent to which Europass, its tools and services adopt a user-centric approach. The purpose of these observations was to understand users' journeys as they use the Europass platform for the first time, how they utilise the existing Europass services, and which tools they find easy or challenging to use. The results of these consultations were used to evaluate the effectiveness and relevance criterion, assessing how user-friendly the Europass tools and services are and how relevant non-users found them.

The external study team conducted the qualitative observations in 4 countries with varying levels of uptake of Europass (Croatia, Spain, Estonia, Norway), according to the data collected from the platform and in relation to the Eurostat data on country population. As qualitative observations aim to provide an in-depth understanding of the user-centricity of the Europass platforms, the key criterion for selecting participants was that they had no previous experience or interaction with Europass. This allowed the study team to observe non-users' first interaction with Europass.

ANNEX III. EVALUATION MATRIX

The evaluation matrix serves as the organising framework of the evaluation work and the factual answers to the questions for each of the evaluation criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value).

For the answers to each of the specific evaluation questions, please refer to the supporting study report, chapter 4, which is structured according to the five evaluation criteria. The figures listed in the column ‘Data collection tool’ of the below table refer to the questions of the respective data collection tools. The questionnaires of the data collection tools are included in the supporting study report (chapter 6 – Annexes)⁷⁵.

Table 5 - Evaluation matrix

#	Evaluation questions	Assessment criteria & Points of comparison	Indicators	Data collection tool
1.1	<p>As identified in the Europass Decision, to what extent the developed 2020 online platform provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - web-based tools for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o documenting and describing personal information in a variety of formats, including curriculum vitae (CV) and cover letter templates; o documenting and describing skills and qualifications acquired through working and learning experiences, including through mobility and volunteering; o supporting authentication services for any digital documents or 	<p>Status quo of the implementation of the different platform features as defined in the Europass Decision.</p> <p>Points of comparison: pre-2020 Europass platform; comparison across tools and services</p>	<p>Implementation of the following web-based tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - documenting and describing personal information in a variety of formats, including curriculum vitae (CV) and cover letter templates; - documenting and describing skills and qualifications acquired through working and learning experiences, including through mobility and volunteering; - supporting authentication services for any digital documents or representations 	<p>Desk research</p> <p>Public consultation (Q 2.3, 3.1, 3.2)</p> <p>Interviews – EU level (Q 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4);</p> <p>Interviews – National organisations (Q 1.2, 1.3);</p> <p>Qualitative observations</p> <p>Survey – User/non-user (Q 3.1, 3.2, 3.3);</p> <p>Survey – Employer (Q 4.1, 4.2, 4.3);</p> <p>Survey – Education and training provider (Q 4.1, 4.2, 4.3);</p>

⁷⁵ See ‘Study supporting the Europass ex-post evaluation’, Verian Group (former Kantar Public) (<https://op.europa.eu/en/web/general-publications>)

	<p>representations of information on skills and qualifications;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the assessment of skills and self-assessment of skills; o documenting the learning outcomes of qualifications, including the Europass supplement templates <p>- available information or links to available information on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o learning opportunities; o qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems in line with the EQF; o opportunities for validation of non-formal and informal learning; o recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including third countries; o services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management; o skills intelligence as produced by relevant Union-level activities and agencies within their domains of competence; o information on skills and qualifications that could be relevant to the particular needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration. <p>- A user-friendly and secure interface delivered in all Europass languages (languages of EU Member States and other Europass countries);</p> <p>- Open standards available free of charge, for reuse by Member States</p>		<p>of information on skills and qualifications;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the assessment of skills and self-assessment of skills; - documenting the learning outcomes of qualifications, including the Europass supplement templates <p>Implementation of the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning opportunities; - qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems in line with the EQF; - opportunities for validation of non-formal and informal learning; - recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including third countries; - services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management; - skills intelligence as produced by relevant Union-level activities and agencies within their domains of competence; - information on skills and qualifications that could be relevant to the particular needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration. <p>Level of user-friendliness of the interface Availability of open standards Availability of personal data storage</p>
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	<p>and other stakeholders on a voluntary basis;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An option for users to store personal data such as a personal profile in compliance with Union data protection law; - Support and ensure technical interoperability and synergies with other relevant instruments and services offered at Union and, where appropriate, national levels. - Europass shall support authentication services for any digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications. <p>Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the current status of the platform?</p>		<p>Technical interoperability with other tools</p> <p>Drivers/influencing factors</p>	
1.2	<p>As identified in the Europass Decision, to what extent the European Commission carried out the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manage the Europass online platform by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensuring the availability and high quality of Union-level information or links; o Developing, testing and, when necessary, updating the Europass online platform, including open standards, in line with user needs and technological advancements as well as changes in labour markets and in the provision of education and training; o Keeping up to date with and incorporating, where relevant, the latest technological developments that can improve the accessibility of 	<p>Level of implementation of the different activities as defined in the Europass Decision.</p> <p>Points of comparison: Comparison across activities</p>	<p>Availability of Union-level information and links</p> <p>Level of implementation and update of the platform</p> <p>Quality level of the platform</p> <p>Level of coordination activities</p> <p>Learning activities and best practice exchanges between Member States organised</p> <p>Drivers/influencing factors</p>	<p>Desk research</p> <p>Interviews – EU level (Q 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4);</p> <p>Interviews – National organisations (Q 1.2, 1.3);</p> <p>Survey – User/non-user (Q 3.1, 3.2, 3.3);</p> <p>Survey – Employer (Q 4.1, 4.2, 4.3);</p> <p>Survey – Education and training provider (Q 4.1, 4.2, 4.3);</p> <p>Qualitative observation</p>

	<p>Europass for older persons and persons with disabilities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensuring that any development or updating of the Europass online platform, including open standards, supports consistency of information and demonstrates clear added value; o Ensuring that any web-based tools, in particular tools for assessment and self-assessment, are fully tested and quality assured; o Ensuring the quality and monitor the effectiveness of the Europass online platform including web-based tools in line with user needs. <p>- Implement the Europass Decision by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ensuring the active participation and involvement of Member States in strategic planning, including setting and steering strategic objectives, quality assurance and financing, and take due regard of their positions; o Ensure the active participation and involvement of Member States in the development, testing, updating and evaluation of the Europass online platform, including open standards, and take due regard of their positions; o Ensuring that, at Union level, relevant stakeholders are involved in the implementation and evaluation of the Europass Decision; o Setting up learning activities and best practice exchanges between Member States and, where appropriate, facilitating peer counselling at the request of Member States; and o Ensuring that effective and adequate promotion, guidance and information activities are carried out at Union 		
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	level in order to reach relevant users and stakeholders, including persons with disabilities. Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the tasks carried out by the European Commission?			
1.3	<p>To what extent Member States, through the relevant national services, implemented the Europass Decision by carrying out the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating the activities related to the implementation of Europass web-based tools; - Promoting the use and strengthen the awareness and visibility of Europass; - Promoting and providing information on services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management, including, where appropriate, individual guidance services; - Making information on learning opportunities, qualifications and recognition practices available on the Europass online platform, including through links to relevant national websites; and - Involving stakeholders from all relevant sectors, and promote cooperation among public and private stakeholders, in the activities under their responsibility. <p>Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the tasks carried out by the Member States?</p>	<p>Level of implementation of the different activities as defined in the Europass Decision. Points of comparison: Comparison across activities</p>	<p>Level of coordination activities Level of promotion activities Provision of information on learning opportunities Provision of information on guidance services Provision of information on learning qualifications and recognition practices</p>	<p>Desk research Interviews – National organisations (Q 1.1, 1.2, 1.3);</p>
2.1	To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant	Quantity, quality and use of the information provided.	<p>Available information provided Use of the information provided</p>	<p>Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 2.1);</p>

	stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing information and guidance on job opportunities?	Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type		Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.2	To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing information on lifelong learning and transnational mobility for learning purposes?	Quantity, quality and use of the information provided. Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type	Available information provided. Use of the information provided	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 2.1); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.3	To what extent the Europass framework still respond to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing information and guidance on the skills required by the labour market?	Quantity, quality and use of the information provided. Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type	Available information provided. Use of the information provided	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 2.2); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.4	To what extent the Europass framework, with its supporting documents, still responds to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs in providing greater transparency and comparability of qualifications, skills and competences (including in the context of a mobility)?	Europass is supporting transparency as perceived by stakeholders Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type	Description of drivers of the transparency of skills and qualifications policy in the EU Share of stakeholders that confirm relevance	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 2.3); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);

2.5	Is there a need for self-assessment tools for digital skills on the Europass platform? Is there a need to develop further self-assessment tools?	Self-assessment tools are requested by end users Points of comparison: comparison across needs	Level of demand of self-assessment tools by users	Public consultation (Q 1.1); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4);
2.6	To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs for reducing the fragmentation between different skills and qualifications tools?	The common reference framework helps individuals and organisations to compare different qualification systems and the levels of qualifications under those systems. Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type	Use of the EQF information Relevance of the EQF information	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.7	To what extent the Europass framework still responds to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers) needs for creating a shared understanding of skills and qualifications (formal, non-formal or informal learning) including those acquired through mobility?	Europass documents provide for a shared understanding of skills and qualifications. Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type	Qualifications available on the platform Information on Europass Certificate inventories) Availability of diploma supplement template Qualifications database usage	Desk research; Platform data (number of visits to the credentials section); Public consultation (Q 1.1); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.8	Is there a need to provide an EU infrastructure for digital credentials for skills and qualifications. To what extent does the Europass framework respond to such need?	Digital credentials are requested by the different stakeholders Points of comparison: comparison across needs and stakeholder type	Level of users' demand for digital credentials Level of employers' demand for digital credentials Level of education providers' demand for digital credentials	Interviews – National organisations (Q 2.1); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.9	To what extent the Europass framework addresses the current and future needs of end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers)? Including the current and future needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration?	Individual users consider Europass tools as effectively addressing their needs There is a strong match between the needs identified by people who are searching for jobs/ learning opportunities and qualifications, and the features of Europass tools	Perceived relevance of all individual components of Europass Mapping of individual users' needs with the features of different Europass tools	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 2.1); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4);

		Points of comparison: comparison across needs		
2.10	To what extent the Europass is still relevant and likely to stay relevant for end-users? (in terms of relevance with users' needs and flexibility or adaptation to change in the context of its implementation, notably regarding requirements and feedback by users).	Users consider Europass tools and services as useful Users report that the current Europass framework meets their needs Points of comparison: comparison across needs	Users' opinions about the completeness of Europass Alignment between needs and current features of Europass tools	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 2.4); Survey – User/non-user (Q 1.2, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4);
2.11	To what extent the Europass framework addresses the current and future needs of employers?	Employers and recruiters consider Europass tools and services as useful Employers and recruiters report that the current Europass framework meets their needs for the transparency of education and training achievements, qualifications, skills and competences, and past experiences The extent to which employers and recruiters consider the functionalities for matching job opportunities and applicants on the Europass platform as relevant Points of comparison: comparison across needs	Stakeholders' opinions about the completeness of Europass Alignment between needs and current features of Europass tools	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 2.2); Survey – Employer (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);
2.12	To what extent the Europass framework addresses the current and future needs of education and training providers?	Education and training providers consider Europass tools and services as useful The Europass tools and services are considered complete by education and training providers Education and training stakeholders report that the current Europass tools and documents meet their needs for documentation and recognition of learning outcomes Education and training providers consider that the current Europass	Stakeholders' opinions about the completeness of Europass Alignment between needs and current features of Europass tools	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 2.4); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7);

	framework meets their needs for the transparency of education and training achievements, qualifications, skills and competences, and past experiences Points of comparison: comparison across needs	Level and quality of services and tools offered on the Europass platform Points of comparison: comparison across tools and services	Services and tools offered on the platform Perceived quality of services and tools offered	Desk research; Platform data (Qualitative analysis of the feedback received via the contact-us portal); Public consultation (Q 2.2) Interviews – EU level (Q 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4); Interviews – National organisations (Q 3.1); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 3.1, 3.2, 3.3);
3.1	How successful has the implementation of the 2018 Europass Decision been in establishing a European framework to support the transparency and understanding of skills and qualifications acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings, including through practical experiences, mobility and volunteering? How successful was the implementation in establishing the following objectives? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Supporting the mobility of individuals for work and educational opportunities in the EU;- Better integrating services for learners, job seekers, workers, volunteers, employers and education and training providers so as to communicate skills and competences including with a focus on disadvantaged groups;- Fostering a common framework for transparency and the recognition of skills and qualifications among Member States. Which drivers/influencing factors have affected the reaching of the objectives?			
3.2	Were end-users and stakeholders engaged with the previous Europass platform retained with the 2020 platform? How was the transition managed?	Stakeholders engaged and end users served by the previous Europass framework have transitioned to the new framework. Points of comparison: Data from pre-2020 Europass platform	Number of end users pre and post the introduction of the new platform Stakeholder mobilised pre and post the introduction of the new platform	Desk research; Platform data (number of visits in the legacy data and recorded in Europa web analytics); Interviews – EU level (Q 3.5);

3.3	<p>What has been the uptake of the 2020 Europass platform services and tools (see list in 1.1) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - End users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and - Relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers)? <p>What is the sociodemographic of the end users in terms of education level, age, employment status?</p>	<p>Uptake of the Europass services and tools by end users</p> <p>Points of comparison: Data from pre-2020 Europass platform:</p>	<p>End user numbers</p> <p>End user profiles</p> <p>End user tools used</p> <p>Number and socio-demographic profile of end users</p> <p>Awareness of Europass among target audiences</p>	<p>Desk research;</p> <p>Platform data (legacy statistics from the previous Europass framework; number of visits to the main page; number of e-Portfolios created; number of CVs created per end-user; number of CVs shared on EURES; number of DigSAT tests taken; number of Europass documents issued);</p> <p>Qualitative observation</p>
3.4	<p>Were communication activities effective in reaching end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers) and other relevant stakeholders (education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policy makers)?</p>	<p>Level of communication reach</p> <p>Points of comparison: comparison across social media channels and countries</p>	<p>Number of external communications (channels, posts, engagement)</p> <p>% of stakeholders aware of Europass</p>	<p>Desk research;</p> <p>Social media and search analysis;</p> <p>Interviews – Social Partner (Q 3.4, 3.5);</p>
3.5	<p>To what extent are the services and tools offered by the Europass framework accessible to and used by disadvantaged groups (persons with lower level of education, lower digital skills, older persons, long-term unemployed persons and disabled persons)?</p> <p>To what extent the principles of gender equality, gender mainstreaming, the integration of gender perspective, and accessibility for persons with disabilities have been applied, as well as how anti-discrimination considerations based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation have been addressed (EaSI strand)?</p>	<p>Accessibility of the Europass services and tools for people with disabilities, as well as persons with lower levels of education, older persons or long-term unemployed persons</p> <p>Points of comparison: comparison across tools and services offered on the platform</p>	<p>Accessibility of the Europass platform based on accessibility assessment</p> <p>Perception of accessibility by stakeholders</p>	<p>Desk research;</p> <p>Platform data (socio-demographics of the profiles created);</p> <p>Public consultation (Q 2.3, Q2.5, Q2.6)</p> <p>Interviews – EU level (Q 3.6);</p> <p>Qualitative observation</p>

3.6	Are end users and relevant stakeholders satisfied with the quality of the offering? how useful do they find the different services and tools?	Level of satisfaction of the different stakeholders Points of comparison: comparison across tools and services and stakeholder type	Users level of satisfaction Employers level of satisfaction Education and training providers level of satisfaction	Public consultation (Q 2.2) Interviews – Social Partner (Q 3.3); Survey – User/non-user (Q 3.1, 3.2, 3.3); Survey – Employer (Q 4.1, 4.2, 4.3); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 4.1, 4.2, 4.3);
3.7	To what extent are the Europass tools and services (see list in 1.1) sustainable? Which aspects are considered the most sustainable? What hinders the sustainability of the Europass services? Can any of the different tools and services be delivered in a more sustainable way?	Tools and linked services are designed to be sustainable Expected future relevance of Europass tools and services. Cost of supporting the Europass tools and services over time. Points of comparison: comparison across tools and services	Assessment of the sustainability of tools and services	Desk research; Cost data; Public consultation (Q 2.4) Interviews – EU level (Q 7.1, 7.2, 7.3); Interviews – National organisations (Q 7.1, 7.2); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 7.1, 7.2, 7.3);
4.1	To what extent is the Europass framework implementation cost-effective?	The combined costs of implementation of Europass are proportionate to the benefits achieved Points of comparison: comparison across years	Cost per unit for Europass users of the different tools (i.e. cost per user, cost per CV, etc.) Cost per unit for other previous/comparable services Benefits measured as part of effectiveness Expert judgement on the proportionality of costs per unit with the benefits achieved	Desk research; Cost data; Interviews – EU level (Q 7.1, 7.2, 7.3); Interviews – National organisations (Q 7.1, 7.2); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 7.1, 7.2, 7.3);
4.2	To what extent did the new Europass framework simplify the delivery of tools and services (see list in 1.1)?	Stakeholders agree that the management of Europass has been simplified since 2018 changes Points of comparison: NA	Stakeholder views on the evolution of the management and governance of Europass since 2018 Comparison of governance structures and management processes compared with the period prior to 2018	Desk research; Cost data; Interviews – EU level (Q 4.1);
4.3	To what extent is the governance efficient in steering the Europass framework?	There is agreement that the current governance model is fit for purpose among stakeholders interviewed Points of comparison: NA	Stakeholder perceptions of: - The decision-making mechanisms under current governance - The efficiency of Advisory Group meetings and communication	Desk research; Cost data; Interviews – EU level (Q 4.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 4.1);

				- Examples of inefficiencies in governance	
4.4	How efficiently, the European Commission carried out its tasks and activities (see list in 1.2)?	Efficiency in the implementation of the different activities Points of comparison: comparison across activities	Budget allocated to EC activities and their outputs FTE allocated to EC activities and their outputs	Desk research; Cost data; Interviews – EU level (Q 4.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 4.2);	
4.5	How efficiently, Member States, through the relevant national services, carried out their tasks and activities (see list in 1.3)?	Efficiency in the implementation of the different activities Points of comparison: comparison across activities	Budget allocated to MS activities and their output FTE allocated to MS activities and their output	Desk research; Cost data; Interviews – EU level (Q 4.2); Interviews – National organisations (Q 4.1);	
5.1	To what extent are the Europass framework and its individual components aligned with current EU policy context (i.e., European Pillar of Social Rights, a Europe fit for the digital age, an economy that works for the people, the European Skills Agenda, the European Education Area)?	Level of alignment of the Europass framework against the different relevant EU policies Points of comparison: pre-2018 Europass framework	Mapping of Europass framework against the different relevant EU policies Stakeholder perceptions of alignment	Desk research; Interviews – EU level (Q 5.1);	
5.2	To what extent does the Europass framework support and complement other initiatives at EU level (e.g., EQF, EURES, EURAXESS, VET, Erasmus+)? What is the extent of complementarity, synergies and duplication?	Coherence of the current Europass framework in integrating the different services and initiatives carried out at EU level. Points of comparison: pre-2018 Europass framework	Mapping of Europass framework against the different relevant EU initiatives	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 4.1, 5.7) Interviews – EU level (Q 5.2);	
5.3	To what extent has the integration of new or pre-existing tools and solutions into Europass (see list in 1.1) created a more coherent platform compared with stand-alone solutions?	Level of coherence of the new Europass framework Points of comparison: pre-2018 Europass framework	Stakeholder perceptions of coherence compared to stand-alone solution	Public consultation (Q 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6) Interviews – EU level (Q 5.3); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 5.1, 5.2);	
5.4	To what extent do the Europass services and tools offered (see list in 1.1) provide synergies or duplication with national initiatives? (e.g. mandatory use of Europass CV at national level; provision of learning opportunities databases, qualification frameworks or system, digital credentials standards and semantic interoperability, etc.)?	Level of synergy of the Europass framework with national initiatives Points of comparison: Mapped national Europass-equivalent platforms	Mapping of Europass framework against some national initiatives Stakeholder perceptions of synergies	Desk research; Public consultation (Q 4.1) Interviews – National organisations (Q 5.1, 5.2);	

6.1	What is the additional value and benefit resulting from the new Europass framework, compared with what could be achieved by the Member States at national and/or regional levels in the absence of Europass?	<p>Europass offers more services/documents not supplied by Member States</p> <p>Europass gathers more data than Member States' portals</p> <p>Europass allows standardisation that is not feasible through multiple national solutions</p> <p>Points of comparison: Mapped national Europass-equivalent platforms</p>	<p>Recognition of the Europass vs national services/ documents</p> <p>Offer of services compared with Member States</p>	<p>Desk research; Public consultation (Q 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6) Interviews – EU level (Q 6.1); Interviews – National organisations (Q 6.1); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 6.1);</p>
7.1	What impact does Europass have on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job searching - Lifelong learning/upskilling - Mobility of work - Learning within Europe 	<p>Impact of the Europass framework</p> <p>Points of comparison: comparison across impacts</p>	<p>Mapping relevant impacts in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job searching - Lifelong learning/upskilling - Mobility of work - Learning within Europe 	<p>Public consultation (Q 2.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6) Interviews – EU level (Q 7.1, 7.2, 7.3); Interviews – National organisations (Q 7.1, 7.2); Interviews – Social Partner (Q 7.1, 7.2, 7.3);</p>
7.2	Are there other Europass-equivalent tools or frameworks available to end users (learners, job seekers, workers, and volunteers)? How does Europass compare to the other 'equivalent' services/tools?	<p>Presence of other tools or frameworks available for end users and what would happen to them in the absence of the Europass framework</p> <p>Points of comparison: Mapped Europass-equivalent platforms</p>	<p>Presence of other frameworks and tools</p> <p>Stakeholder perceptions of the added value of the Europass framework vis-à-vis other options</p>	<p>Desk research; Public consultation (Q 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6) Interviews – Social Partner (Q 6.2);</p>
7.3	Are there other Europass-equivalent tools or frameworks available to employers?	<p>Presence of other tools or frameworks available for employers and recruiters and what would happen to them in the absence of the Europass framework</p> <p>Points of comparison: Mapped Europass-equivalent platforms</p>	<p>Presence of other frameworks and tools</p> <p>Stakeholder perceptions of the added value of the Europass framework vis-à-vis other options</p>	<p>Desk research; Public consultation (Q 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6) Interviews – Social Partner (Q 6.2); Survey – Employer (Q 3.6);</p>
7.4	Are there other Europass-equivalent tools or frameworks available to education and training providers?	<p>Presence of other tools or frameworks available for education and training providers and what would happen to them in the absence of the Europass framework</p> <p>Points of comparison: Mapped Europass-equivalent platforms</p>	<p>Presence of other frameworks and tools</p> <p>Stakeholder perceptions of the added value of the Europass framework vis-à-vis other options</p>	<p>Desk research; Public consultation (Q 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6) Interviews – Social Partner (Q 6.2); Survey – Education and training provider (Q 3.8);</p>

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

ANNEX IV. OVERVIEW OF BENEFITS AND COSTS AND TABLE ON SIMPLIFICATION AND BURDEN REDUCTION

Table 6 - Overview of benefits and costs identified in the evaluation

	Learners/job seekers/ workers/volunteers		Employers		Education and training providers		Administrations (NECs)	
	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative
Direct compliance cost: Transfer of new responsibilities to the national level	No costs in relation to the transfer of responsibilities to the national level were detected for learners/job seekers/workers/ volunteers	N/A	No costs in relation to the transfer of responsibilities to the national level were detected for employers	N/A	No costs in relation to the transfer of responsibilities to the national level were detected for education and training providers	N/A	The cost incurred in relation to the transfer of new responsibilities to the national level is linked to the fact that budget allocation for Member States remained unchanged. NECs had to bear adjustment costs (in terms of time) to test and pilot the new tools and services. NECs experience administrative burdens for carrying out specific tasks stemming from the new Europass Decision, particularly regarding the promotion of Europass. (adjustment costs).	Not possible to quantify
Direct compliance cost: Launch of a new platform with new access	The new platform has some accessibility issues (2FA, accessibility for people with low	Not possible to quantify	No costs in relation to the launch of a new platform with new access features / requirements were detected for employers	Not possible to quantify	No costs in relation to the launch of a new platform with new access features / requirements were detected for	Not possible to quantify	The accessibility issues result in extra workload for NEC to support users and promote the use of the platform at national level.	Not possible to quantify

features / requirements		digital skills) affecting users' uptake of tools and services offered by the platform. The costs born by users relate to the additional time spent to access the platform, saving information and filling the templates due to the technical issues encountered when performing tasks. Adjustment costs refer to the time needed for users to get familiar with the new functionalities of the platform (for instance the creation of the profile)				education and training providers		Some adjustment costs born by NECs in relation to the launch of the new platform, refer to the time spent to carry out platform testing at national level and to support users in accessing the platform. Adjustment costs refer to the support NECs have to provide to users when facing technical problems. Moreover, the promotion of the platform with the new tools and services is perceived as a time-consuming task, considering the limited resources within the NECs.		Not possible to quantify
Direct benefit: Increased offer of tools and services	Social recurrent	Jobseekers/learners/workers/volunteers can rely on a broader set of services and	Not possible to quantify	Employers are able to receive information on candidates' profiles in a standardised and transparent way.	Not possible to quantify	Education and training providers are able to verify the skills and qualifications or provide	Not possible to quantify	NECs, within their organisations, can promote the Europass tools and services for skills recognition and	Not possible to quantify	

Table 7 - Simplification and burden reduction

Table 7 (Part I): Simplification and burden reduction (saving already achieved)								
	Learners / job seekers / workers / volunteers		Employers		Education and training providers		Administrations (NECs)	
	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative
Simplification in the provision of services for skills and competence presentation and recognition as well as for labour / learning mobility								
Type: recurrent	The creation of one platform centralising multiple services resulted in a simplification for users that can now rely on one single digital environment to carry out tasks. Simplification concerns mainly a better access to information that, prior the launch of the new platform, was scattered and not integrated.	Not possible to quantify	No simplification and burden reduction have been detected for employers	N/A	No simplification and burden reduction have been detected for education and training providers	N/A	No simplification and burden reduction have been detected for NECs	N/A

Table 7 (Part II): Potential simplification and burden reduction (savings)									
	Learners / job seekers / workers / volunteers		Employers		Education and training providers		Administrations (NECs)		
	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	
	Fixing technical issues related to the use of the platform								
Type: one-off and recurrent	The vast majority of users do not find significant issues with the services on the platform and user experience on the	Not possible to quantify	No potential simplification and burden reduction have been detected for employers	N/A	No potential simplification and burden reduction have been detected for	N/A	NECs support users in using Europass tools and services	Not possible to quantify	

	platform could be considered positive suggesting that tools and services are delivered with no significant burden. For the small part of users who face technical issues, those are considered burdensome and overcoming them would allow for an even better retention of users and an even broader uptake.						education and training provider				
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Source: External supporting study by Kantar

ANNEX V. STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION - SYNOPSIS REPORT

This annex summarises all stakeholder consultation activities undertaken for this evaluation.

Consultation strategy

This Synopsis Report outlines the consultation activities that took place in the context of the evaluation of the Europass Decision 2018/646 and presents the main findings. The evaluation covers the period 2018-2022 with particular attention paid to the period post-2020, when the new platform was launched (July 2020) and new features of Europass became progressively available. The geographical coverage for this evaluation was EU27, European Economic Area (EEA), candidate and potential candidate countries under their agreements concluded with the Union (Article 10, Europass Decision). The Europass e-Portfolio is available in 31 languages, including Ukrainian which was added in May 2022.

The various consultations have followed the consultation strategy designed together with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion with the aim to cover all Europass stakeholders. The consultation strategy included the following:

- **A call for evidence** open to all individuals and organisations including relevant stakeholder groups was made available through the “Have your say” platform.
- **A public consultation** open to all individuals and organisations including relevant stakeholder groups was organised to inform this evaluation.
- **Quantitative primary data** about the experience and views of individuals (users and non-users) and stakeholders. The activity consisted of three targeted surveys:
 - one targeting both users and non-users. These have been reached with two different samples: the general population sample (which included both users and non-users) and the Europass users sample reached out via open link on the Europass platform.
 - one targeting employers, and
 - one targeting education and training providers.
- **Qualitative insights** from two primary sources complement the analysis:
 - in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, and
 - qualitative observations and feedback from non-users discovering the Europass platform and functionalities for the first time. The targeted qualitative observation allowed the study team to gather first-hand feedback from the public when navigating the platform and testing the different features of Europass.

Europass targets individual end-users, such as learners, job seekers, workers, volunteers, and other relevant stakeholders, including education and training providers, guidance practitioners, employers, public employment services, social partners, youth work providers, youth organisations and policymakers.

These stakeholders have been targeted by consultation activities (surveys, interviews and public consultation) in the light of their:

- interest in receiving services provided by Europass;
- expertise in the subject; and
- involvement in running Europass activities.

The below table shows the stakeholder groups targeted through the consultation activities.

Table 8 - Types of stakeholders consulted

Type of stakeholder	Interest
End-users (including both Europass users and potential users)	Europass should meet the needs and expectations of all individual end-users, such as learners, job seekers, workers and volunteers.
Education and training providers	Education and training providers represent another stakeholder category targeted by Europass as both issuers of Europass documents and receivers of applications developed using Europass tools.
Employers	Employers represent another stakeholder category targeted by Europass as both users of Europass tools and receivers of applications developed using Europass tools.
EU institutions / EU level organisations	The European Commission is responsible for providing the tasks described in Article 6 of the Europass Decision and for managing the Europass platform. Furthermore, integration and alignment with other EU-level initiatives are required to ensure coherence.
Public Employment Services	Public employment services (PES) are the authorities that connect jobseekers with employers. They are an important target of Europass as they provide support to job seekers with tools and services for career guidance and job search.
National Public institutions	National Public institutions are responsible for providing the tasks described in Article 7 of the Europass Decision. Furthermore, integration and alignment with other national-level initiatives are required to ensure coherence.
Social partners and civil society organisations	Social partners provide insights into their experience with Europass as they play an essential role in the coordination of interactions between employers and trade unions by exploring synergies and looking after the interest of each party.

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

The total reach of the consultation activities by type of stakeholders is shown below.

Table 9 Stakeholders' participation in consultation activities

Type of consultation	Type of organisation consulted	Number of responses/ consultation activities carried out	Timeframe
Targeted interviews	EU institutions / EU level organisations	13	January-March 2023
	National public institutions, of which:	43	
	EU initiatives present at national level	21	
	Institutions related to Europass implementation	5	
	Public employment agencies	2	
	Education ministry and VET providers	4	
	Employment ministry	6	
	Qualification authorities	1	
	Public Institution	4	
	Social partners and civil society org, of which:	16	
	Private employment service	2	
	Business trade associations	2	
	Organisations linked to education and mobility at EU, national or cross-border levels	3	
	Trade associations	3	
	Trade unions	1	
	Universities admitting international profiles	5	
Call for Evidence	All organisations and individuals (users and non-users)	28	December 2022-February 2023
Public consultation	All organisations and individuals (users and non-users) (see dedicated section to Public consultation for further details on stakeholders involved)	1920	December 2022-February 2023
Survey	Users and non-users	7647	December 2022-February 2023
	Education and training providers	109	
	Employers	98	
Qualitative observations	Non-users	16	January-February 2023

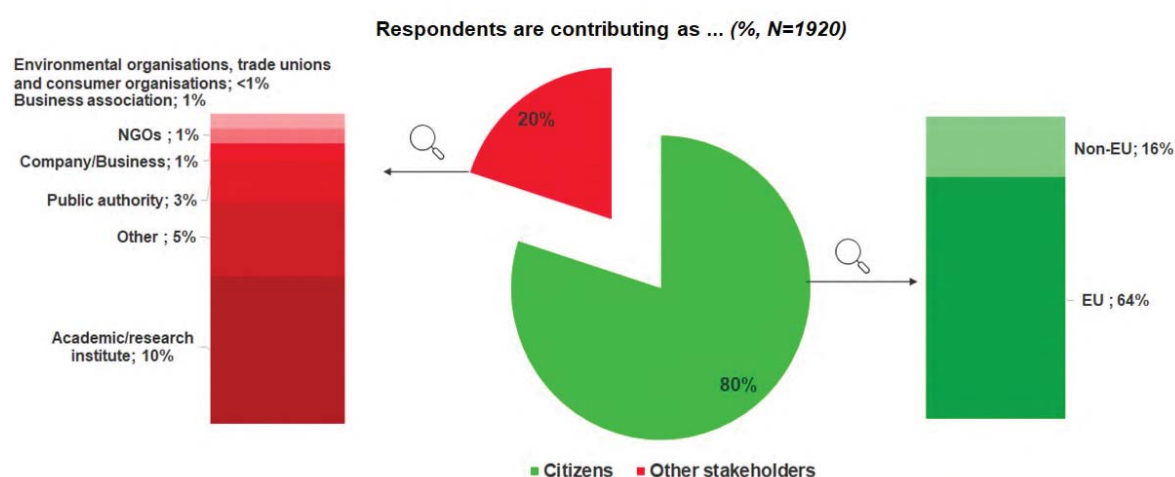
Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Public consultation

Respondents' profile

The public consultation focused on a wide range of stakeholders, including individuals (EU and non-EU citizens), academic/research institutions, public authorities, companies/businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), business associations, consumer organisations, trade unions and environmental organisations. The graph shows the distribution of the 1920⁷⁶ respondents into stakeholder categories. The vast majority of respondents (80%; 1531 out of 1920) are EU and non-EU citizens, while the remaining 20% (389 out of 1920) encompass academic/research institutions, companies, public authorities, NGOs, business associations, consumer organisations, trade unions, environmental organisations and 'others' (National Europass Centres (NECs), organisations/portals related to the Erasmus+ programme). Within respondents giving their contribution as business associations, business organisations, NGOs and stakeholders falling under "other", 36 % (51 out of 145) represent employers, while 64% (94 out of 145) are education providers.

Figure 11 - Respondents to the public consultation



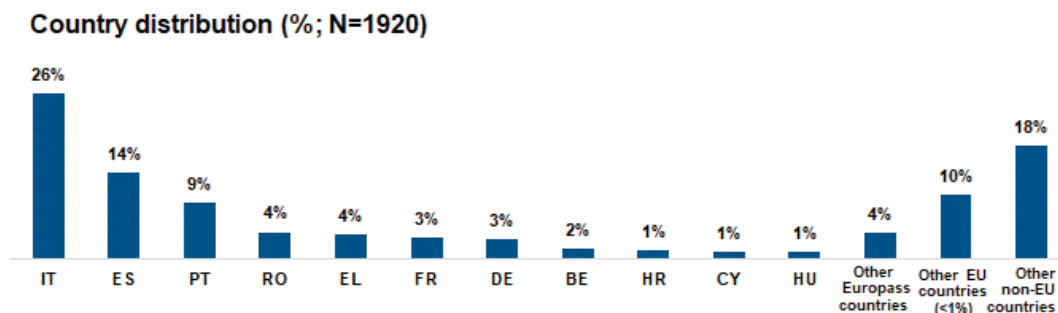
Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Regarding geographical distribution, respondents came from 101 different countries, most of them from Italy (26%, 501 out of 1920), Spain (14%, 261 out of 1920), and Portugal (9%, 169 out of 1920). Furthermore, Romania, Greece, France, Germany, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus and Hungary together represent 19% (377 out of 1920) of the sample. Other Europass countries that took part in the consultation were Turkey,

⁷⁶ In line with the [Rules for feedback and suggestions](#) a suitability check of the contributions has been conducted. This resulted in the exclusion of 34 contributions. In addition, the European Commission carried out a re-classification check of the respondents based on the question 'I'm giving my contribution as' where respondents could classify themselves based on a list of type of stakeholders. As a result, 10 respondents have been re-classified as follows: three 'Consumer organisation' re-classified in one 'Non-EU citizens', one 'Business association' and one 'Academic/research institution'; one 'Business association' re-classified in a 'public authority'; three 'company/business' re-classified in one 'EU citizen' and two 'public authority'; three 'NGO' re-classified in one 'Non-EU citizen', one 'Trade Union' and one 'Academic/research institution'. However, the counting and percentages have not been adapted following the classification check. Moreover, the public consultation results reflect the 28 contributions received to the call for evidence, published on the 'Have your say' platform.

North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, Switzerland and Ukraine (together they represent 4%; 77 out of 1920 of the sample). Among non-EU countries, India, Brazil and Pakistan participated the most (together, they represent 6% of the sample; 118 out of 1920), while the remaining responses came from 65 other countries.

Figure 12: Country distribution of respondents to the public consultation

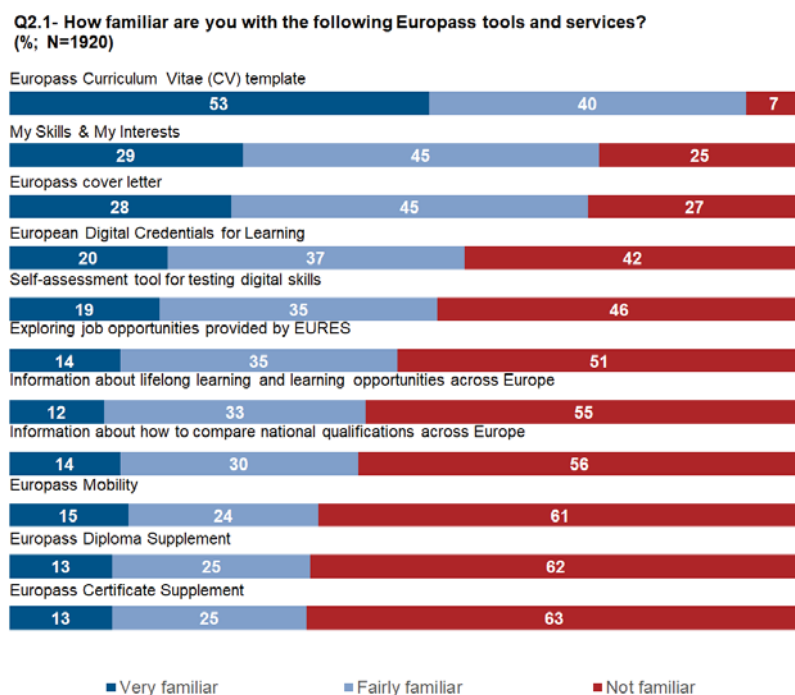


Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Effectiveness

The effectiveness has been assessed in terms of stakeholders' familiarity with Europass tools and services as well as their perception in terms of usefulness. The tool with the highest levels of familiarity is the Europass CV (93%; 1781 out of 1920) followed by the personal spaces to record skills, qualifications and experiences (i.e. My Skills & My Interests) (74%; 1432 out of 1920) and the cover letter (73%; 1402 out of 1920). Whereas the supplement templates (Diploma and Certificate) and the Europass Mobility seem to be less known (around 60% are not familiar with them). Education and training providers and employers are less familiar with the information provided on the platform (about the comparison of national qualifications across Europe as well as learning and job opportunities) compared with other Europass tools.

Figure 13 - Familiarity with the Europass tools and services



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

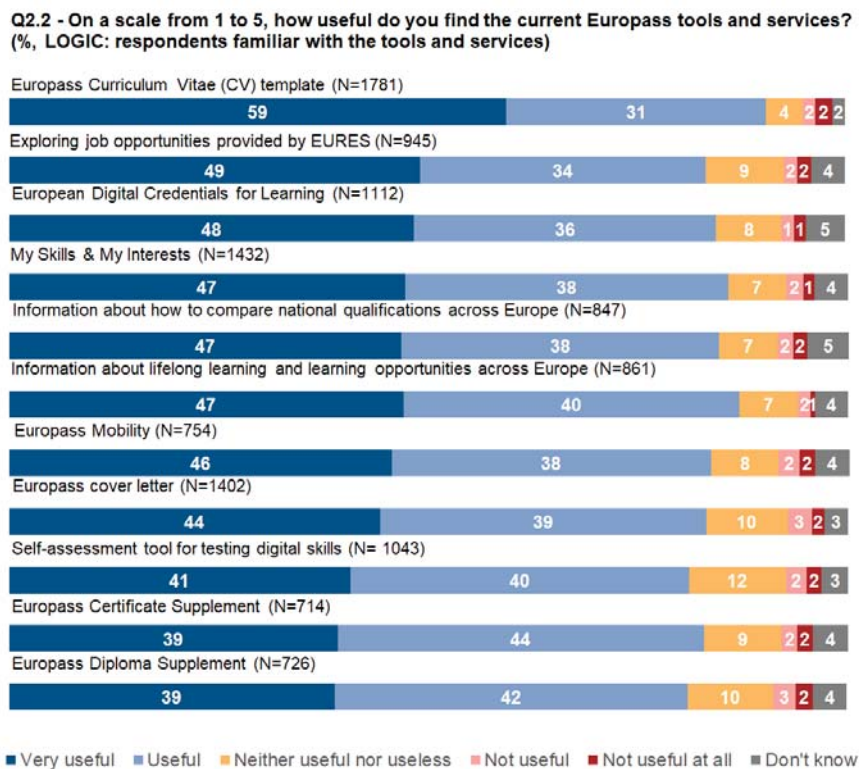
The majority of respondents (at least 80%) of the public consultation find Europass tools and services either useful or very useful. Stakeholders consider particularly useful the tools they know the most. More in detail (for each bullet point below the total of respondents is the number of those who stated they were familiar with a tool or service):

- The Europass CV is the most appreciated tool (90%; 1604 out of 1781). Respondents recurrently mentioned that the free standardised format enhances a clear understanding of personal information, thus fostering comparability.
- The job opportunities provided by EURES are considered either very useful or useful by 83% (790 out of 945). Respondents stated that this service contributes to better understanding the European labour market and its trends as it provides a big database with open positions across Europe.
- The European Digital Credentials for Learning are considered either very useful or useful by 84% (941 out of 1112). Respondents value them mainly because they represent an efficient way to transmit trustworthy information and reduce paper waste.
- My Skills and My Interests is considered either very useful or useful by 86% of stakeholders (1225 out of 1432).
- Information about how to compare national qualifications across Europe is valued by 85% of respondents (714 out of 847). Stakeholders believe that this tool helps to navigate the various certifications across Europe and allows for their comparability.
- The information about lifelong learning and learning opportunities across Europe is considered either very useful or useful by 87% (745 out of 861). Respondents

stated that this service enhances learning and upskilling and helps to make European citizens aware of the importance of continuous training.

- The Europass Mobility is valued by 84% (632 of 754). Stakeholders believe that it is an effective tool allowing for comparability and recognition of skills and qualifications acquired abroad.
- The Europass cover letter is considered either very useful or useful by 83% (1163 out of 1402).
- The self-assessment tool for testing digital skills is valued by 81% (843 out of 1043). Respondents consider this tool effective for detecting and addressing the digital skills that need to be improved before entering the labour market.
- The Europass Certificate Supplement is considered either very useful or useful by 83% (590 out of 714).
- The Europass Diploma Supplement is considered either very useful or useful by 81% (590 out of 726).

Figure 14 - Usefulness of the Europass tools and services



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

In terms of accessibility, results showed mixed results. Half of respondents believe that Europass is accessible to all types of users (51%; 979 out of 1920) and serves a diverse group of users (56%; 1080 out of 1920). Most of the stakeholders consider its tools and services as user-friendly (65%; 1249 out of 1920). In terms of accessibility to more disadvantaged group, roughly a third of respondents believe that the Europass platform is not accessible to older persons and persons with lower digital skills (34% and 32%, 644 and 610 out of 1920 respectively). The lack of digital skills is seen as the main barrier in terms of accessibility and respondents asked for more manuals and

tutorials in support of Europass platform. Furthermore, 44% of the respondents (848 out of 1920) do not know if the platform is accessible to persons with disabilities although 30% (583 out of 1920) of respondents believe it is either accessible or very accessible to them. Some suggestions for improvement include developing more functions for blind people as there are no alternative ways to use the platform for such a group at the moment. Others recommended to add more tutorials and manuals to support people with lower digital skills. Respondents believe that within the disadvantaged groups, the platform is most accessible to long-term unemployed persons with 40% (771 out of 1920) of respondents believing it is either accessible or very accessible to this group.

Efficiency

In terms of efficiency, despite stakeholders encountering technical problems when using the tools and services of the platform (33%), most of them have never requested Europass technical support (91%; 1746 out of 1920). Among those having asked for it, the technical support is perceived efficient by half of them (53%, 92 out of 174). The main reasons for asking technical support were related to log in problems, technical errors for accessing and modifying documents. National institutions tend to perceive the technical support less efficient as users would need a prompter response when facing issues in the use of services and tools.

Coherence

Other stakeholders except EU and non-EU citizens, were asked to assess the level of integration of Europass with other EU initiatives and instruments. The coherence of Europass with EQF, EURES and ESCO is largely recognized by stakeholders. Suggestions to further enhance synergies with these instruments concern better promotion of and communication about the services offered to increase the visibility of job vacancies, learning opportunities, and qualifications. More in detail, concerning the EQF, respondents believe there is a need to improve its visibility as almost three-quarters of users (70%, 1350 out of 1920) are not aware that NQFs can be compared across Europe on the Europass platform. Moreover, of those aware that it is possible to compare national qualifications across Europe, 37% (213 out of 570) have never used the tool on the 2020 Europass platform. The level of awareness differs among different groups of stakeholders; citizens tend to be less aware of what national qualifications correspond to at the European level (EQF) (33% are aware of them; 506 out of 1531), while the majority of other stakeholders beyond citizens do know what national qualifications correspond to at a European level (53% are aware of them; 204 out of 389). The latter might be affected by the fact that certain countries have not referenced their qualifications framework to the EQF and the fact that people holding older qualifications do not have an EQF level.

EU added value

Participants in the public consultation believe these are the main advantages of Europass:

- The free-of-charge platform available to the public (77%; 1482 out of 1920).
- The standardisation of templates (66%; 1274 out of 1920).
- The multilingual features of the platform (65%; 1246 out of 1920).

- The possibility for users to compile all their documents and information in one platform (56%; 1068 out of 1920).
- The trustworthy platform that complies with EU data privacy rules and allows for safe storage of the users' data (48%; 926 out of 1920).
- The availability of tools to self-assess users' digital skills (38%; 723 out of 1920).

On the other hand, respondents believe these are the main disadvantages of Europass:

- 33% (642 out of 1920) believe it is too time-consuming. This is mainly due to technical issues, including problems accessing the platform (due to the 2FA – two factor authentication).
- 12% (229 out of 1920) believe it is challenging to distinguish Europass from other initiatives.
- 39% (757 out of 1920) do not know.

The majority of respondents believe that the European Commission should continue its efforts to support the implementation of Europass (86%; 1650 out of 1920) and provide software and services to support the issuing of digitally signed credentials for learning (83%; 1592 out of 1920). However, job seekers and learners recommend that Europass tailors information and tools e.g. around specific sectors and industries. Stakeholders also acknowledge the fact that digitally signed credentials have a positive impact on increasing the visibility of skills and their comparability. As a result, this would create a positive impact on individuals' employability. Others recommend improving the interoperability of the platform with other initiatives. In general, more significant connections with the private sector are highly recommended by stakeholders who believe that this would facilitate job placements. Some more recommendations concern career guidance and management. Respondents contributing as citizens, expressed the need for improving services such as tutorials on how to use tools and services but also for practical information regarding the skills demanded in the labour market.

Relevance

Overall, Europass features are significantly relevant for respondents. Indeed, the vast majority of respondents (around 80%) perceive the services and information the platform provides as important or very important, especially regarding information and guidance on job opportunities (83%, 1597 out of 1920) as well as on the skills required by the labour market (85%, 1640 out of 1920). Comments from respondents suggest that the Europass offer appears to meet the needs of stakeholders: of job seekers through career guidance and support to mobility, of learners, by promoting learning and upskilling according to labour market needs, and of education and training providers, by informing them on how to improve education programmes. Stakeholders consider Europass particularly important for providing precise, trustworthy and reliable information and services for skills recognition. However, despite the general consensus on Europass relevance, respondents highlighted some further needs that the Europass platform could respond to. For instance, employers wish to make staff recruitment more efficient and improve the understanding of candidates' profiles and their comparability. Stakeholders generally shared the need to be able to access matching and search tools to enhance upskilling and employment.

Surveys

Three online surveys were launched for stakeholders, which addressed: (1) users and non-users; (2) employers; (3) education and training providers. The surveys contained closed and open questions covering the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

Surveys implemented in the context of the evaluation of Europass [table 3, Annex II]

Target	Sample size	Country coverage
Survey for users and non-users	<p>Sample (A) General population: 4040 (recruited via consumer access panels)</p> <p>Sample (B) Platform users: 3607 (recruited via open link published on the Europass platform and sent via e-mail to Europass users)</p> <p>7647</p>	<p>The sample (A) covered 10 EU countries (IT, PT, ES, DE, RO, FR, EL, HR, PL, SE)</p> <p>The sample (B) reached respondents from 40 different countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member States: all • Other Europass countries: BA, CH, IS, ME, MK, NO, RS, TR, UA • Other countries: AL, XK, MD, GE
Survey for employers	109	Companies located in 24 different countries (AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PO, PT, RO, SE, SI)
Survey for education and training providers	98	<p>Educational entities in the sectors of professional training and coaching, higher education, primary and secondary education, e-learning, research and education management.</p> <p>Country coverage: All the Member States plus 6 Europass countries (IS, ME, NO, MK, CH, TR)</p>

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Respondent profiles

Users and non-users

Users and non-users have been recruited through two different channels: (A) a sample of 4040 respondents reached via consumer access panels in 10 EU countries⁷⁷ and (B)

⁷⁷ IT, PT, ES, DE, RO, FR, EL, HR, PL, SE

3607 additional respondents recruited via open link published on the Europass platform and an e-mail notification sent to Europass users.

Regarding country distribution in sample A, the ten countries have been covered in equal shares of around 400 individuals each. Regarding sample B, participants to the survey mainly come from Italy (24%, 869 out of 3607), Portugal (10%; 347 out of 3607), Spain (9%; 307 out of 3607) and Germany (8%, 279 out of 3607). Together, they represent half of the sample. Non-EU Europass countries participated with Turkey being the most represented country (3%; 96 out of 3607 of the respondents). The other non-EU Europass countries represent together 3% of the sample (119 out of 3607), these being: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Ukraine. Among other non-EU countries, four countries participated (together forming 2%, 62 out of 3607): Albania, Moldova, Kosovo and Georgia. The gender profile of the whole sample (N=7647) shows some slight underrepresentation of female respondents (47%; 3607 out of 7647). In terms of age, respondents are mainly people active in the labour market (i.e., from 18 to up to 45), 51% (3866 out of 7647) are employed for more than five years, while 13% (996 out of 7647) have been working for less than five years). Some are still in education and training (14%; 1043 out of 7647), while 11% (874 out of 7647) are unemployed and looking for a job. A significant proportion of respondents are transnationally mobile: 26% (1960 out of 7647) have worked abroad, 14% (1079 out of 7647) have taken part in a mobility exchange abroad, 10% (729 out of 7647) have studied abroad for a complete education cycle, and 5% (388 out of 7647) have volunteered in another country.

Employers

The survey to employers reached out to 109 companies from 24 different countries, most of them located in Germany (14%; 15 out of 109), Sweden (9%; 10 out of 109) and Finland (8%; 9 out of 109). In terms of the size of the enterprises reached, the majority of respondents work in large companies with more than 250 employees (52%; 57 out of 109), a third (30%; 33 out of 109) work in medium-sized organisations with 50 to 250 employees and 17% (18 out of 109) come from small enterprises with less than 50 workers. Most of these companies are active in the computer programming, consultancy and related activities sector (11%; 12 out of 109), followed by financial, scientific, and technical companies (7%; 8 out of 109). In terms of financial turnovers, more than a quarter (26%) of enterprises had a significantly high turnover in 2019 of more than 50M€ followed by companies having an annual turnover between 10 and 50M€ (16%, 17 out of 109). In terms of age, one third of companies (32%; 33 out of 109) were registered between 2011 and 2022 followed by almost a quarter of companies (23%; 25 out of 109) registered before 1980. Companies registered between 2001 and 2010 were the 20% (22 out of 109 of the sample while 10% (11 out of 109) of them registered between 1980 and 1990. Regarding the geographical scope of their services, most organisations (72%, 78 out of 109) sold products or services to other EU countries in 2021, and 64% (70 out of 109) did so to countries outside the EU.

The vast majority of respondents (92%) actively participate in their company's recruitment process. Most of them are HR workers (81%; 88 out of 109), while 15% (16 out of 109) of the companies' contributions have been made by CEOs, owners and higher management. Moreover, in terms of experiences abroad, the majority of

respondents (63%; 69 out of 109) stated that they work either often or very often with people that have studied or followed a training or worked abroad.

Education and training providers

98 education and training providers responded to the survey, and almost half of them (43%; 42 out of 98) are higher education institutions, followed by entities dedicated to adult learning (9%; 9 out of 98), life-long learning (8%; 8 out of 98) and higher VET providers (8%; 8 out of 98). The remaining respondents include 'other' entities (14%, 14 out of 98, indicated different types of providers such as online schools, management consultancies, cultural organisations and primary / secondary schools), general education and training providers (5%; 5 out of 98), labour market training providers (4%; 4 out of 98), continuous vocational education and training providers (4%; 4 out of 98), post-secondary training/education providers (3%; 3 out of 98), initial vocational education and training providers (1%, 1 out of 98). In terms of scope, the majority of entities (61%; 60 out of 98) reached have more than 250 learners enrolled, followed by 15% (15 out of 98) of the entities registering between 50 and 250 learners. Three-quarters of respondents (75%; 74 out of 98) were directors, deans or upper management contributing on behalf of the corresponding educational entities.

Effectiveness

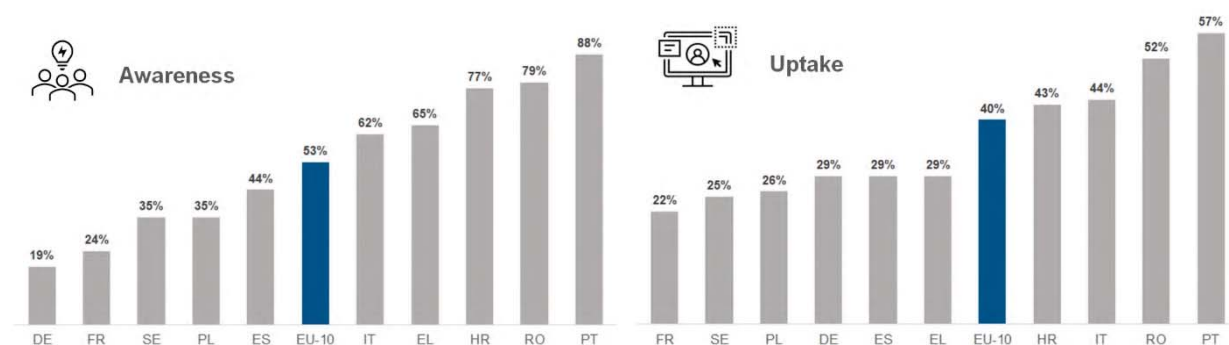
Users and non-users

Europass is well known across the ten countries covered by the general population survey (53%, 2137 out of 4040 of the respondents have heard about it), while 40% (868 out of 2178) have used its tools. Some differences can be observed across countries. While both the uptake and the awareness are remarkable in countries such as Portugal, Romania, Italy and Croatia, in others, such as France and Germany, the awareness and uptake levels are lower. Of those having heard about Europass before, half associates Europass with a CV template (49%; 1041 out of 2137) even though 46% of them (978 out of 2137) understand that Europass is an online platform providing a variety of services and tools for supporting the transparency of skills and qualifications in Europe. Most respondents that have used the Europass platform, also used it prior to 2020 (59%; 509 out of 868).

At the level of web-based tools, the CV and cover letter templates are still the most used (76%, 2648 out of 3463⁷⁸, of the users use them often or sometimes), followed by the Europass profile (69%, 2400 out of 3463). Europass supplements are never used by half of the respondents. Other more recent tools, such as the European Digital Credentials for Learning and the self-assessment test for digital skills, seem to be less used (28% stated to have used it often or sometimes). The uptake of the platform is higher for the web-based tools rather than for the information provided on the platform (around 40% never used it for this purpose).

⁷⁸ Users are here considered those having answered 'Yes' to the question 'Have you ever used Europass?'. These amount to 868 in the general population sample (sample A) and 2,595 in the sample of platform users (sample B).

Figure 15 - Awareness and uptake of the Europass tools and services

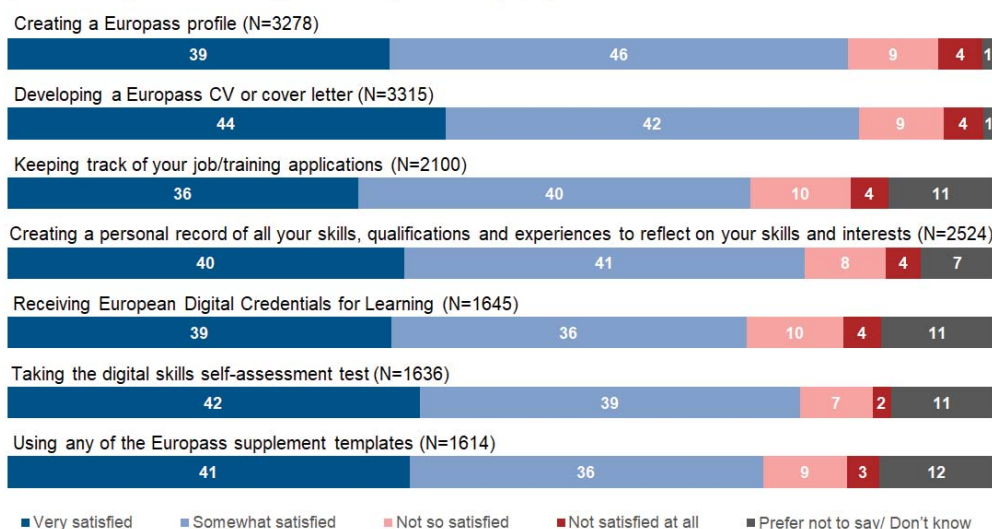


Source: External supporting study by Kantar

All in all, users are satisfied when using the platform. This is particularly true for specific tools such as the CV (86%, 2858 out of 3315 are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied), the profile (85%; 2792 out of 3278 are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied) and My Skills and My Interests (81%; 2039 out of 2524) are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied).

Figure 16: Levels of satisfaction with Europass tools

Q3.1- When using the Europass platform, overall, how satisfied were you with the service? (%; N=3463; LOGIC: respondents having used Europass tools (Q2.6))



Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Positive opinions also relate to the platform's user-friendliness (on average 78%) and the fact that Europass provides fast (on average 74%) and relevant solutions for their needs (on average 77%). While users are overall satisfied with the platform, issues hampering the current effectiveness are accessibility issues and technical issues.

Employers

Compared to end users, the level of awareness is higher across employers (although the targeted sample is not representative), with 66% (72 out of 109) of the respondents having heard about Europass and 44% (32 out of 72) having used the platform at least once. More than half of them have used Europass both before and after 2020, this

indicating a good retention from the old and new platform. Employers have mostly received/used CVs and cover letters (56%; 18 out of 32 have received them either often or sometimes), while digital credentials and supplements templates have never or rarely been received by respectively 78% (25 out of 32) and 72% (23 out of 32). Moreover, the platform is not frequently used to retrieve information (78%; 25 out of 32 stated that they never used the Europass platform to retrieve information). The majority of respondents are satisfied with most Europass tools. In particular, 57% (17 out of 30) of employers are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with CV templates and cover letters. Among those having received digitally certified credentials (17 out of 32), respondents seem to be less satisfied with the quality with 35% (6 out of 17) of respondents being very satisfied or somewhat satisfied, and 47% (8 out of 17) of respondents not knowing.

Education and training providers

Similarly, education and training providers are aware of Europass (66%, 65 out of 98 have heard about it), while 40% (26 out of 65) have used or received documents generated with Europass. Most of respondents (69%; 18 out of 26) have used it within the last three years and 56% (10 out of 18) have also used it before 2020. When looking at the Europass tools, half of the respondents having used and/or received documents generated with Europass state to have used the CV and cover letter, while digital credentials and supplement templates were less used (respectively 46%, 12 out of 26, and 35%, 9 out of 26, stated they have never used them). It seems clear that, while they provide diploma and certificates (63%; 62 out of 98), diploma supplements and digital credentials are more rarely issued by their organisations (the supplements are issued by less than one-third, while digital credentials are issued by 14%, 14 out of 98). Still, on this matter, only 15% (12 out of 80) of the surveyed organisations intended to issue digital credentials. Europass mobility documents are also provided only by a small share of organisations (7%; 7 out of 98). Moreover, the majority of respondents (at least 50%) seem to be satisfied with Europass tools and services except for Europass supplement template (40% of satisfied respondents, 6 out of 15) for which the majority of respondents preferred not to say or did not know how to assess such tool (60%, 9 out of 15).

Efficiency

Users and non-users

On average, 19% of users have encountered problems, challenges or issues when using Europass services and information, with some differences at the level of the tools. The tools that respondents found more issues when using them are the Europass profile (31%; 1007 out of 3278) and the Europass CV or cover letter (31%; 1022 out of 3315).⁷⁹ Most of the problems encountered by users were due to issues when registering on the platform (39%; 1328 out of 3371⁸⁰), technical problems (37%; 1254 out of 3371) followed by the difficulty of navigating through the platform and finding the information needed (34%; 1156 out of 3371). Other prominent problems include

⁷⁹ for both statistics the total of respondents is the number of those who stated using the tool or service

⁸⁰ The basis 3371 corresponds to the total number of respondents that across the different tools have faced the different issues.

the lack of practical information on how to use the tools and services (30%; 996 out of 3371) and the fact that the content was hard to understand (19%; 634 out of 3371).

Relevance

Users and non-users

The relevance of Europass is clear for users and non-users who, in their daily life, need to undertake specific tasks regarding job, education or training applications or to provide proof of their qualifications. Reflecting on their skills to understand needs and interests is very important to them (90%; 6849 out of 7647 consider it very important or somewhat important). Equally, developing a CV, resume and cover letter is a relevant task for the vast majority of them (87%; 6589 out of 7647), together with providing certification of skills and qualifications using digital credentials (79%; 6031 out of 7647) and using tools that help to assess digital skills (73%; 5541 out of 7647). For individuals, Europass is highly valued thanks to its platform bringing together a set of services to carry out all these tasks. Besides these services, the platform also represents an important source of information concerning the European Qualifications framework as well as learning/job opportunities.

Employers

When hiring new recruits, employers sometimes find it challenging to verify the authenticity of the qualifications (59%; 65 out of 109) and to compare skills and qualifications acquired by candidates in another country (54%; 59 out of 109). This shows that Europass tools are also relevant for this type of stakeholder. Understanding candidates' CVs, careers, and accomplishments does not seem to be an issue to this group (64%, 70 out of 109, stated it is either never difficult or rarely difficult to do that when hiring new recruits), and companies highly value the documentation on skills and qualifications acquired through learning/professional experiences in their CVs, resume or cover letter. Verifying the authenticity of certificates, diplomas and qualifications is also considered very important (71%, 77 out of 109), followed by understanding the level of digital skills (61%; 67 out of 109). In addition, more than one-third of employers asks applicants for evidence of their qualifications but noticed some mismatch between expected skills and the ones shown while working in the company. This shows that presentation and understanding of personal information (i.e. skills and qualifications) reported by candidates remains important for employers. The relevance of the Europass platform is widely recognised because it centralises a set of services benefitting employers in their recruitment processes. Moreover, employers believe that it is important to provide jobseekers and learners with information about job opportunities across Europe (94%; 102 out of 109).

Education and training providers

Education and training providers' needs are very similar to the employers' ones. Indeed, when selecting applicants, they often or sometimes find it challenging to verify the authenticity of the information provided (61%; 60 out of 98) and compare skills and qualifications acquired by the applicant in another country (59%; 58 out of 98). They usually ask applicants to provide evidence of their qualifications (40%; 39 out of 98 always). Half of respondents have noticed mismatches between a student's expected skills and those shown during the educational activity. For this half of respondents, it is very relevant to be able to provide certain information and documentation after a student/learner has finished the education course. In particular,

they consider either very important or important the description of the new education activity in the CV, resume or cover letter (81%; 79 out of 98), the information on the learner's digital skills (73%; 71 out of 98) and the information on the learning outcome of qualifications (73%; 71 out of 98). For education and training providers, finding all such services and information in one digital environment is also paramount.

Interviews

For the purpose of this evaluation, 72 interviews have been carried out with relevant stakeholders across three levels: EU-institutions (13), national-level public institutions (43), and social partners (16). National-level interviews were conducted with stakeholders from Portugal, Finland, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Greece, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Estonia, Sweden, France, Poland, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Ireland, Austria, Hungary, Denmark, Slovenia, Malta, Slovakia and Norway. These stakeholders included employment ministries, public employment agencies, education ministries and VET providers, qualification authorities and public institutions and EU initiatives present at national level. Interviewed social partners included business trade associations, universities admitting international profiles, organisations linked to education and mobility at EU, national or cross-border levels, trade associations, trade unions and private employment services. These stakeholders covered the following countries: Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Luxembourg and a few were EU wide.

Effectiveness

Overall, Europass is seen as effective in enhancing the transparency of skills and qualifications through its tools and services. The majority of interviewed stakeholders at the national level, however, pointed out the limitation that the Europass platform has yet to clearly communicate the benefits of Europass for end-users and other relevant stakeholders. Technical issues are also often raised as an area for future improvement.

In the view of EU level stakeholders, Europass is mainly used by end-users to present, document and communicate their skills and qualifications in a structured way across the EU. For these interviewees, Europass also supports the implementation of other European policies and priorities (e.g. EU mobility programmes, such as Erasmus+). Interviews at this level also found that Europass particularly supports labour mobility in Europe by providing access to the tools and services. However, these interviewees remarked that the Europass platform's visibility still needs to be improved once current technical issues are fixed.

Similar findings were encountered for *national level stakeholders*. These interviewees, however, emphasised that the lack of accessibility of the platform (e.g. to less digitally skilled users) and its unresolved technical issues (e.g. slow-loading pages, broken links, issues with drop-down menus) are still halting the uptake of Europass, thus hindering its effectiveness. National stakeholders, therefore, believe that the increasing complexity of Europass – through constant development, complex language and expansion of digital tools - makes it harder for those with low levels of digital skills and/or education to benefit from it fully. According to most of the stakeholders, this significantly affects the uptake of Europass tools and services - a key indicator of its effectiveness. They further suggest that the European Commission's communication campaigns on the Europass platform should be adapted

to different groups of relevant stakeholders (e.g. profession-specific companies, education and training providers of different qualifications levels).

Social partners were generally unaware of Europass promotion campaigns conducted in their countries. They suggested that further promotion should also be done within the private business sector. Interviewed social partners did not share any views on the effectiveness of Europass.

Efficiency

Stakeholders at all levels emphasised that while, in principle, the integration of Europass services with the 2018 Europass Decision was considered as efficient and found to reduce burden, views were mixed when it comes to the efficiency of the Europass implementation.

Interviewees at the EU level stated that the new Europass increases the interoperability of different EU tools and Europass. The Europass platform gathers all the relevant tools and services under one platform, but it also links them to each other, allowing more efficient delivery of all the EU services.

National level stakeholders confirmed the importance of integrating services but also pointed out a few limitations. Most interviewees stated that the Europass platform is becoming too complex and that some key components (CV, cover letter, etc.) go almost unnoticed. These stakeholders believe that before adding any new features, current tools and services should be made more functional, visible and understandable. According to these interviewees, technical difficulties (e.g. two-factor authentication) lead to lower uptake of the Europass tools and services, increasing the burden for end-users and relevant stakeholders to take up the offer. Some of these stakeholders also mentioned that personnel turnover within the European Commission impacted communication and coordination. NECs also asked for more transparency during the Europass Advisory Group meetings, especially regarding the budget. It was pointed out by 6 interviewees from NECs that there should be transparency over the budget allocated to develop and implement specific Europass tools and services. According to these national level stakeholders, discussions during the Europass Advisory Group should address the use of resources to more efficiently deliver specific tools and services. Most NECs strongly emphasise that the current resource allocation is insufficient to implement the tasks envisioned in the new Decision. These interviewees state that to ensure efficient implementation of Europass at the national level, the personnel budget within the NECs needs to be increased. Besides, these stakeholders also state that the time they are given to conduct activities, such as dissemination and promotion campaigns, needs to be longer. The lack of time to perform the activities causes additional burdens and reduces efficiency.

Interviewed *social partners* did not share their views on the efficiency of Europass.

Coherence

Stakeholders at the EU and national levels recognised the coherence of Europass with other EU instruments and policies while views about coherence with national level tools were mixed. They positively mentioned the decision to bring all the pre-existing and new tools into one coherent platform and align the new Europass with several EU policies and priorities.

According to interviews at the *EU level*, Europass, which is part of the European Skills Agenda, is strongly aligned and Europe's Digital Strategy. This enforced the evolution of Europass from a platform with five document templates to a "one-stop-shop" offer for labour and learning mobility – thus, enhancing internal coherence by providing a consolidated offer and external coherence. These stakeholders further positively mentioned the strong synergy with both EQF and EURES.

National-level stakeholders emphasised that by bringing all the tools together, Europass increased the visibility of certain tools to citizens previously less visible to this stakeholder group (i.e. EQF). However, stakeholders at the national level expressed the need to integrate the Europass tools and services into national-level initiatives related to learning and labour mobility within the country. The interviews produced mixed evidence regarding the duplication of services between Europass and national alternatives. In some countries (e.g. France, Sweden), there are some duplication concerns, whereas in others (e.g. Portugal, Italy, and Romania), Europass complements national initiatives without duplication.

Interviewed *social partners* did not share their views on the coherence of Europass.

EU added value

The interviews at all levels acknowledged the EU-added value of Europass.

EU level stakeholders found that Europass has proven to be a concrete tool for standardising information about skills, qualifications and competencies at the EU and national levels. It contributes to increasing transparency and reducing the fragmentation in skills recognition across Member States.

Stakeholders at the national level stated that Europass - combining all the relevant tools and services on information and documentation of skills and qualifications - has benefited mobility within the EU. These interviewees positively mentioned that, through Europass, citizens can obtain information on learning and work opportunities, enable their skills and qualifications to be easily validated and recognised across the EU, and, thus, more easily move abroad. Some stakeholders further highlighted that Europass also has a crucial role in standardising tools and services, thus facilitating mobility within the country whenever labour policies differ from region to region (e.g. Italy and Spain). In other national contexts (e.g. Latvia), however, stakeholders stated that Europass fills a significant gap in the market, given that there are no equivalent alternatives, neither at the public nor the private sector level.

Interviewed *social partners* also stated that the information and guidance on job opportunities offered on the platform should be more detailed and should provide more profession-specific information to increase its attractiveness.

Relevance

Overall, stakeholders confirmed the relevance of Europass services regarding job opportunities, lifelong learning, learning mobility, guidance on skills, digital skills self-assessment and reducing the fragmentation between skills and qualification tools by providing standardised Europass supplements and CV templates. Interviewees considered the increasing transparency of skills and the comparability of qualifications to be the most relevant need currently being addressed by Europass. However, the views of national-level stakeholders showed mixed results when it comes to the relevance of Europass.

EU level stakeholders, however, also pointed out some limitations of the current offer that still need to be improved to make Europass more relevant to end-users and relevant stakeholders. Stakeholders flagged that the tools and information provided on the platform are currently not tailored to any specific stakeholder group – thus, not adapted to the specific needs of the various types of end-users. According to the interviews, there is a lack of understanding of who is the key target audience of Europass. This lack of clarity on who are the end users and their specific needs affects the relevance of the Europass platform and its components. Interviewees also pointed out that the information provided on job and learning opportunities is not up-to-date and thorough, which, according to EU level stakeholders, limits the extent to which these tools remain relevant to end-users.

National level stakeholders also recognise the relevance of the platform's job and learning opportunity sections. When it comes to job opportunities, stakeholders believe that the interoperability with EURES makes these tools even more relevant. Several of these interviewed stakeholders, however, point out the limitation that these services related to job and learning opportunities are not yet widely used by end-users. Similar to the EU level stakeholders, most of the interviewees commented on the completeness of the information provided under the job opportunity service of the Europass platform. Another highlighted issue by most of the interviewed stakeholders that limits the tool's relevance is the language in which job opportunities are posted and the lack of synergy with some national databases (e.g. Slovenia). Regarding the European Digital Credentials for Learning, interviews produced mixed evidence. Most stakeholders at the national level confirmed that there would be growing interest and demand for European Digital Credentials for Learning in the future. Some interviewees were, however, slightly reluctant to use European Digital Credentials for Learning as they believe it is too early to introduce new standards on digital credentials in their national contexts. In some countries, public institutions are not ready to take up digital credentials (e.g. France). Most of these stakeholders also see the self-assessment tool for digital skills positively, but a few remark that in some Member States, it will compete closely with national alternatives (e.g. France).

Social partners also recognised the relevance of Europass. This was observed, especially regarding the new Europass platform offering stakeholders a one-stop-shop solution. At the same time, these stakeholders also remarked that the information and guidance on job opportunities offered on the platform are not detailed enough and should be more profession-specific to increase its attractiveness. One of the interviewed business trade associations considered the learning opportunity area difficult to navigate. Some of the social partners, such as education and training providers, think the platform is too complex and have difficulties to see the benefit of its tools and services – these stakeholders opt for alternative market solutions. Social partners added that international and intercultural skills are well recorded through Europass, which, in their view, facilitates mobility (both for learning and working). These interviewees also commented that - through the improvement of cross-border mobility - Europass further develops EU integration.

Qualitative observations

Overall, 16 participants completed the qualitative observations across four countries: Spain (5), Estonia (4), Croatia (4), and Norway (3). The sample observed consisted of individuals between 19 and 36 years old who have never used the Europass tools and

linked services and who had a mixed educational background and level of digital skills. Participants in the qualitative observation were selected from the user survey who indicated that they have never used the Europass platform before and consented to participate in the study. The sample consisted of 12 female and four male participants, with secondary or tertiary education varying across several occupational categories, such as employed, seeking employment, and student. The sample consisted of three participants between the ages of 18-24, four participants between the ages of 25-29 and nine participants between the ages of 30-36.

Effectiveness

Although non-users participating in the observations found the Europass platform relevant, participants further provided insights into the effectiveness of its implementation. While the qualitative observations only assessed the experiences of non-users, these observations highlighted key issues affecting end users' **retention** level, the overall **uptake** of the platform by users, and **satisfaction** with the Europass tools and services. In this regard, the findings of all 16 observations revealed mixed results on effectiveness of Europass.

When it comes to **retention**, the main challenges were two-fold. First, the two-factor authentication posed the biggest challenge to participants using the Europass platform, including those who are younger and have completed some form of higher education. Even among these groups, the two-factor authentication proved challenging and discouraging. Second, the qualitative observations showed that all 16 non-users participating in the observations find the platform complex and time-consuming due to the additional steps needed to log in and the technical problems they often face on the platform. The qualitative observations also showed that the platform could be more intuitive to navigate for new users. Internal server errors often occurred during the qualitative observations (e.g., broken links, homepage not working), hampering the user experience and affecting the willingness to stay on the platform.

Regarding users' overall **uptake** of the platform, the qualitative observations revealed that limitations to the platform prevented participants from considering taking up the Europass tools and services in the future. While participants greatly appreciated the Europass CV and cover letter builder and the ability to store their documents on a single platform, technical issues, such as malfunctioning of key pages and sections of the platform, forced participants to disengage from the platform (e.g. participants noted that the website was not always working due to internal server errors or otherwise experienced broken links when navigating across sections of the website. Furthermore, participants faced issues with translations, drop-down menus, and slow-loading pages, among other technical problems that made the platform harder to use). This influenced their perception on how they consider using the Europass platform in the future. Participants were unsure how Europass could help them achieve their career and learning goals. The features, tools, and functions available on the Europass platform were not always clear to participants. For instance, while participants hypothesised on the potential value of the digital skills self-assessment, My Interests, and My Skills, they were not entirely sure how these features could be used in the future. Participants explained that technical improvements in the Europass platform would lead them to find a clear benefit of the Europass tools and services. Furthermore, the qualitative observations revealed that uptake was inconsistent across tools and age groups. According to participants, the Europass profile/CV template was

more important for recent graduates and early career professionals as it supports them in describing their skills and qualifications in a structured way. As mentioned, this kind of support was not found to be relevant among the participants that have a stable employment or otherwise extensive experience in preparing resumes and cover letters.

EU added value

Finally, the Europass platform represented **added value** to non-users participating in the observations by providing equal opportunities and a unified way of competing in the European labour market. According to 6 participants, Europass allows them to present their CVs in a standardised way and to have access to information on job and learning opportunities. On the other hand, the Europass platform might only benefit end users in the later stages of their careers if they seek opportunities more broadly across the European Union. 4 participants mentioned that if they wish to stay in their current country of residence or already have a country in mind where they would like to work, they will opt to use national (e.g., country-specific job vacancy websites) or private solutions (e.g., LinkedIn) when searching for a job.

While all participants see the additional value of Europass for society compared to alternative national public and international private solutions, the platform is not always able to respond to individual needs. All 16 participants in qualitative observations said they would prefer to use alternative solutions (e.g., national job boards, LinkedIn, Indeed) instead of Europass due to the platforms' limitations and technical issues.

Relevance

The qualitative observations identified a strong need among non-users participating in the observations for information and guidance on job and learning opportunities across the European Union, making the platform **highly relevant** among this target group. Participants expressed the need to have access to information and guidance on job and learning opportunities and to use it for their career goals. During the qualitative observations, participants mentioned that information regarding job and learning opportunities across Europe is available through different national public and private initiatives, which makes it difficult to know where to find relevant information according to their needs. Europass provides tools and services in one platform which was regarded as an additional element of its relevance. However, the relevance of the Europass platform differed among participants for two reasons: mobility interests and the career stage of users.

First, participants interested in seeking opportunities across the European Union found the Europass platform relevant because it offers them a single platform to access job opportunities and information about moving within and to the European Union. However, participants wishing to stay in their country of residence mentioned that they would not consider the Europass platform a relevant source of information and guidance on job opportunities. In these cases, participants preferred to look for national-level platforms and solutions to obtain more reliable and comprehensive information about job opportunities in a particular country.

Second, the qualitative observations also highlighted how the need for information and guidance on job opportunities provided by the platform might differ depending on what stage participating non-users are in their careers. According to participants, Europass responds to the needs of recent graduates and job seekers entering a labour

market to a large extent. While the Europass platform offers the same services to all users, the qualitative observations revealed that recent graduates and early career professionals are more likely to find the platform tools and services relevant. This is because the ability to track and present their experiences, qualifications, and skills in a structured manner and look for job openings in a single platform is highly attractive to users with less experience managing their careers. On the other hand, participants in a later stage of their careers explained that it was unlikely that they would use the platform in the future because they already have a stable employment status, are less in need of labour and learning mobility opportunities, or because they have a CV and cover letter template that they trust.

ANNEX VI. MAIN CHANGES TO EUROPASS AND EVOLUTION OVER THE EVALUATION PERIOD

This annex makes a comparison between the previous and current Europass platforms. In this context, Table 10 “Evolution of Europass, its components and governance” shows that the previous and current Europass platforms are not fully comparable.

Table 10: Evolution of Europass, its components and governance

Tool/service/ action	Before 2018	Europass 2018 Decision	Changes implemented so far	Further changes expected
PLATFORM AND DOCUMENTS				
Europass platform/ e-Portfolio	No e-Portfolio. Website to download template as well as documents on skills and qualifications (CV, cover letter and Europass documents).	Platform encompassing classic Europass supplement documents as well as a wide range of other features to help learners, volunteers, workers and job seekers. Article 3	Transformation into a one-stop shop for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recording all skills, achievements, and experiences of users in their Europass profile - creating a CV and cover letter - reflecting on skills (MySkills) - tracking interests (MyInterests) - job/learning opportunities and qualifications - applications manager/tracker - information provision - self-assessment test for digital skills. 	
Information provision	Information was scattered – Information on qualifications, qualifications frameworks, learning opportunities and validation was part of the Learning Opportunities and Qualifications Portal (LOQ). This also included a NQF comparison tool. Data on qualifications and learning opportunities were part of the Qualifications Dataset Register and were searchable and visualised in the LOQ Portal and ESCO.	Platform providing information on learning opportunities, qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems, opportunities for the validation of formal and informal learning, and the recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including third countries. Three other elements of Article 3.2 of the Europass Decision are under development: 3.2 (e) services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management 3.2 (f) skills intelligence as produced by relevant Union-level activities and	Upon the Europass launch the LOQ was integrated into the new Europass platform and the qualifications available in the ESCO database were migrated to Europass. A new education and training opportunities and qualifications search function for the Qualifications Dataset Register was implemented on the Europass platform. A job and volunteering opportunities search function was included directly on the Europass website (drawing from EURES data) and a direct CV-posting feature on EURES was integrated into the platform. A revamped NQF comparison tool was developed.	Addition of further information and learning opportunities and qualifications by national-level authorities and NECs. Development of the elements of Art. 3.2 of the Europass Decision linked to guidance, validation and recognition. Addition of information on skills intelligence tailored to user needs.

	<p>Skills Intelligence information was available at Cedefop.</p> <p>There was no EU platform for information on career guidance but a separate website of the Euroguidance network.</p> <p>Recognition information was included in the ENIC-NARIC website and in the EU Website on recognition of professional qualifications.</p>	<p>agencies within their domains of competence; and</p> <p>3.2 (g) information on skills and qualifications that could be relevant to the particular needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration.</p> <p>Article 3.2</p>	<p>Pages on different types of content (e.g. language skills), country context pages and links to other EU initiatives and national services were also added.</p> <p>Development of the elements of Art. 3.2 of the Europass Decision linked to skills intelligence.</p>
Europass CV and cover letter	<p>CV and cover letter editor.</p> <p>Downloadable CV and cover letter template.</p>	<p>Document template remains but as part of a larger ecosystem of documents and services in the e-Portfolio.</p> <p>Article 3.1 (a)</p>	<p>Europass CV and cover letter have been developed under the Europass e-Portfolio.</p> <p>Change of the template, more customisable.</p> <p>New ways to share the CV and cover letter.</p>
Diploma Supplement (DS)	<p>Exists since 1997. Provided by higher education institutions.</p>	<p>A 'Europass Diploma supplement' remains to allow end users to present their learning achievements at higher education level.</p> <p>Article 3.1 (b)</p>	<p>The template was updated following an inter-ministerial agreement in 2018 (the template is a joint product between European Commission, UNESCO and Council of Europe), under the Bologna Process.</p> <p>The Diploma supplement template was digitalised under the European Digital Credentials for learning infrastructure.</p> <p>Further roll-out of the use of the digital Diploma supplement.</p>
Certificate supplement (CS)	<p>Existing. National CS Inventories have been developed at national level.</p>	<p>A 'Europass Certificate supplement' remains to allow third parties to understand the learning outcomes achieved by the holder of a qualification received via vocational education and training.</p> <p>Article 3.1 (b)</p>	<p>No structural change to the work on the CS so far.</p> <p>Possible revision of the CS template and its digitalisation in the context of the European Digital Credentials for Learning Infrastructure.</p>

Europass Mobility	Existing. Provided by the NECs in their own database.	Remains an integral feature of Europass. The mobility documents received can be stored by the users in the Europass library. The templates are available on the website. Article 3.1 (b)	Ongoing revision of the Mobility template and its digitalisation in the context of the European Digital Credentials for Learning infrastructure.
Language Passport	The Europass-Language Passport was one of the five Europass documents – and was based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).	Acknowledgement of pre-2018 Language Passport. Recital 10	The language passport is adapted into the new Europass as a dedicated section available on the Europass profile and CV editor where users can add their language skills and corresponding levels according to the Common European Reference Framework. NA
Digital skills assessment	A digital skills self-assessment grid was available on the old Europass platform.	Skills assessment and self-assessment tools are an important part of the new Europass. Article 3.1 (c)	The Commission plans to further improve the DigSAT tool with personalised road maps and suggestions for further learning
Digital credentials	Digital credentials were not included in Europass prior to 2018.	Authentication services for digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications are needed. Article 4.6	Further roll-out of EDC and its standards to become generally accepted standards for digital credentialing in the field of learning, ensuring the interoperability of issuing, verifying, and recognition of digital credentials across Europe.
My interests	Not available in the previous Europass framework	Europass web-based tools should also present information with the aim of	Creation of Europass Digital Credentials for Learning (EDC) infrastructure with the feedback of national-level institutions and providers. Possibility to store the EDCs acquired in the Europass library (in a web-wallet). Digitalisation of the Diploma supplement. A dedicated web based tool allowing users to add their career or learning goals and

supporting guidance provision, further supported by national services.		favourite cities or countries to learn or work in.
My skills	Not available in the previous Europass framework	<p>Article 1.2 Guidance is described, in part, as helping individuals identify their skills and interests.</p> <p>Article 2 (d) A dedicated web-based tool allowing users to identify their skills in their profiles and recommends skills they might already have, based on those previously entered.</p> <p>The tool also provides a description of skills and classifies them according to ESCO</p>
Linkage with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)⁸¹	No integration into Europass ⁸² . – The LOQ portal served as EQF Portal.	<p>EQF information page available through the Europass website including EQF Referencing reports, links to NQF websites, links with national qualifications registers/databases, NQF comparison tool revamped. References to the framework are included in Europass tools and services. The Diploma Supplement, Certificate supplement and Europass Mobility refer to EQF.</p> <p>Further development of availability of information on qualifications and frameworks through the Qualification Dataset Register (QDR) and on Europass Information pages, as well as better integration with information available on Cedefop and European Training Foundation.</p>
INTEROPERABILITY AND INTEGRATION (with other tools/services/actions)		
Integration of ESCO terminology	There was no link to ESCO prior to the new platform, launched in 2020 (ESCO was launched in July 2017).	<p>Proposal to further test the use of ESCO terminology to promote interoperability with labour market as well as education and training platforms.</p> <p>ESCO terminology is used through the different elements of the platform, e.g., when entering a work experience, ESCO terms are suggested to the user, same in the 'My Skills and My Interest' sections, and in the searches for Jobs and learning opportunities functions.</p>

⁸¹ Mentioned in this section rather than in interoperability due to the EQF information being hosted directly on the Europass platform and not on a separate one, contrary to EURES for example.

⁸² The introduction of EQF dates back to 2008 which could explain why it was not included in the original 2004 Europass.

Links with EURES	There was no link to EURES prior to the 2018-2020 transition period.	Synergies between the Europass and EURES platforms could be beneficial to job seekers and reinforce the utility of both platforms. Recital 18	A EURES job search is already available on the Europass platform. EURES CVs can now be re-used on Europass and Europass CVs can be published in EURES.	Increasing the interoperability of EURES and Europass to enhance the utility of both platforms (i.e., transmitting applications directly from Europass e-Portfolio to EURES).
Qualifications and learning opportunities databases through QDR (Qualifications Dataset Register)	There was no link between the QDR and Europass prior to the 2018-2020 transition period, but the QDR was linked to the LOQ platform (separate).	Make information on learning opportunities, qualifications, and recognition practices available on the Europass online platform, including through links to relevant national websites. Article 7.1 (d)	A courses search function (searching for both learning opportunities and qualifications) sourced from QDR is available on the Europass platform (data is visualised on Europass e-Portfolio). Data available on the QDR (i.e., qualifications, learning opportunities and accreditation) is incorporated as a Europass component ⁸³ .	Expansion of QDR data for qualifications and learning opportunities provided by countries to cover more countries (all Europass countries) and a broader scope of qualifications and learning opportunities.
European Learning Model (ELM)	Original versions of ELM (ELM v.1) were used on the LOQ platform.	Synergies must be strengthened between Europass and other relevant instruments and services offered at Union level. Article 4.8	Newer versions of the ELM were integrated into Europass to standardise the description of learning opportunities, qualifications, credentials and accreditation.	ELM ensures interoperability with other EU tools, to ensure interoperability of credentials and databases in Europe
Digital Skills and Jobs platform (DSJP)	There was no link between the DSJP ⁸⁴ and Europass prior to the 2018-2020 transition period.	Synergies must be strengthened between Europass and other relevant instruments and services offered at Union level. Article 4.8	No interoperability changes have been implemented so far.	NA

⁸³ This result was reached by integrating the LOQ platform into Europass

⁸⁴ The DSJP was not launched until 2021 which explains why it was not present in the previous period.

Youthpass	There was no link between the Youthpass and Europass prior to the 2018-2020 transition period.	Synergies must be strengthened between Europass and other relevant instruments and services offered at Union level. Article 4.8	No interoperability changes have been implemented so far.	NA
European Blockchain Services Infrastructure (EBSI)	There was no link between the EBSI ⁸⁵ and Europass prior to the 2018-2020 transition period.	Synergies must be strengthened between Europass and other relevant instruments and services offered at Union level. Article 4.8	Ongoing work between Commission services exploring technical synergies.	NA
European Student Card Initiative	There was no link between the ESCI ⁸⁶ and Europass prior to the 2018-2020 transition period.	Synergies must be strengthened between Europass and other relevant instruments and services offered at Union level. Article 4.8	No interoperability changes have been implemented so far.	NA
MANAGEMENT				
National Europass Centres (NECs)	NECs were responsible for the national-level coordination of the 2004 Europass Decision. They were the main points of contact, coordination and communication for Europass activities in Member States and other Europass countries. They were also responsible for the	NECs should coordinate with EQF National Coordination Points and National Euroguidance Centres to enhance their impact. Recital 6	Role of the NECs was broadened, not only reaching the target audience but accelerating transparency measures at national level. Their funding still comes from Erasmus+.	Further cooperation with EQF-NCPs and Euroguidance Centres as well as national EURES coordination offices and Erasmus+ National Agencies.

⁸⁵ The EBSI was not launched until 2018 which explains why it was not present in the previous period.

⁸⁶ The ESCI started as an EU funded project in 2016 before being scaled up for the current programming period 2021-2027.

<p>provision of information and guidance to ease mobility.</p> <p>The NECs were supported by Erasmus+ (and predecessors) funding.</p>			
General role of Member States' Authorities	<p>Member States had no individual tasks, only joint tasks with the Commission.</p> <p>These included appropriate national-level communication activities, cooperation with services, the facilitation of equal opportunities, the involvement of relevant stakeholders and the protection of personal data.</p>	<p>Member States are given individual tasks including the coordination of activities related to web-based tools, the promotion of Europass visibility, the provision and creation of national-level information and the involvement of stakeholders.</p> <p>Article 7</p>	<p>Member States assumed the tasks set out by the 2018 Decision.</p> <p>NA</p>
Europass Advisory Group (AG)	<p>Did not exist before 2018.</p>	<p>The Commission should ensure the oversight and implementation of the Decision through the creation of an Advisory group.</p> <p>Recital 32</p>	<p>The creation of a Europass AG with regular meetings. Presentation of progress updates and guiding documents.</p> <p>NA</p>
User-centricity	<p>Less user-centricity was required as the pre-2020 Europass platform mainly consisted of a website to download templates as well as documents on skills and qualifications (CV, cover letter and Europass documents).</p>	<p>The 2020 Europass platform should be developed based on user-centricity principles and by gathering information about user requirements, including through surveys and testing.</p> <p>People with disabilities need to be prioritised in terms of access to and use of Europass.</p> <p>Recital 28</p>	<p>Creation of a help desk and the integration of end user feedback reports in the implementation of the platform.</p> <p>Adherence to the Accessibility guidelines as far as possible (continuous efforts to improve the platform's accessibility).</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation of Europass' ability to meet the needs of users.</p>

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

Table 11 below provides an overview of the features that have already been made available to users with the launch of the new platform in 2020, features developed after 2020 and the ones which still need to be implemented.

Table 11 – State of play of implementation of features in the 2020 online platform

Tools and services	Features included with the launch of the 2020 online platform	Implemented/ further developed after 2020	To be implemented in the future/In development
Web-based tools			
Documenting and describing personal information in a variety of formats, including curriculum vitae (CV) templates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Documenting and describing skills and qualifications acquired through working and learning experiences, including through mobility and volunteering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Documenting the learning outcomes of qualifications, including the Europass supplement templates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Supporting authentication services for any digital documents or representations of information on skills and qualifications		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Assessment of skills and self-assessment of skills		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Available information or links to available information on the following topics				
Learning opportunities ⁸⁷	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Qualifications and qualifications frameworks or systems in line with the EQF ⁸⁸	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Recognition practices and relevant legislation in different countries, including third countries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Information on skills and qualifications that could be relevant to the particular needs of third country nationals arriving or residing in the Union to support their integration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Opportunities for validation of non-formal and informal learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

⁸⁷ Learning opportunities have been uploaded by 10 countries (BE (nl), FR, EL, NO, MT, PT, IS, IE, RS, SE) since the launch of the new platform in 2020, while three other countries (HR, SI, DE) are still in the testing phase.

⁸⁸ Qualifications information have been uploaded by 19 countries (BE (fr+nl), AT, CZ, DE, EE, EL, FR, IE, LT, LV, MT, NL, HU, PL, PT, SI, SE, IS, TR) since the launch of the platform in 2020, while one country (HR) is in the testing phase.

Services offering guidance for transnational learning mobility and career management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Skills intelligence as produced by relevant Union-level activities and agencies within their domains of competence		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	89
Creation of an interface delivered in the official languages of the institutions of the Union	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Open standards available free of charge, for reuse by Member States and other stakeholders on a voluntary basis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
An option for users to store personal data such as a personal profile in compliance with Union data protection law	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Support for and ensuring technical interoperability and synergies with other relevant instruments and services offered at Union and, where appropriate, national levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Source: External supporting study by Kantar

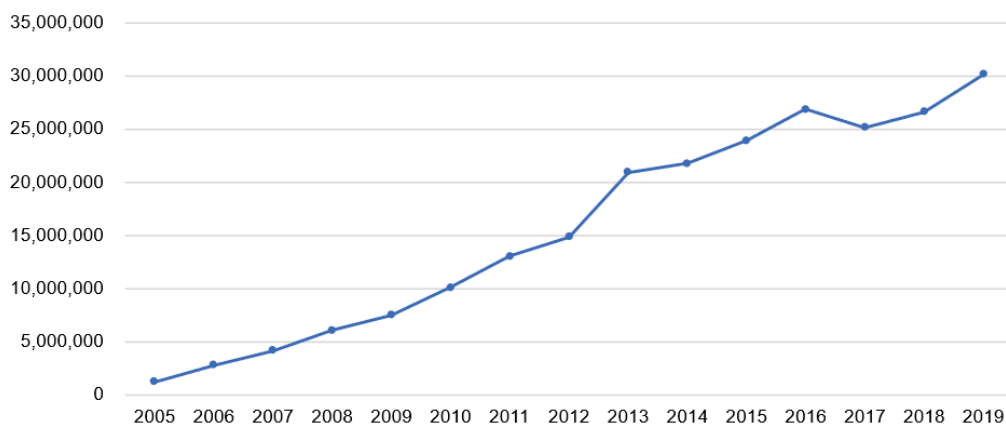
⁸⁹ The Job and Skill trends tool was launched in June 2023

The learning opportunities and qualifications search function was improved in June 2023. Member States and Europass countries are encouraged to publish data on learning opportunities and qualifications or to keep their data up to date for the countries which have already published information on Europass. While the platform references link to validation, guidance and recognition resources in the different Europass countries, so far, the platform has not produced any new information in these areas. At the same time, the information on learning opportunities and qualifications is not fully complete, as some Member States and Europass countries are not sharing information yet. By the end of 2022, 10 Europass countries had completed this task for learning opportunities and 19 for qualifications. The missing inputs are expected gradually in the next few years.

ANNEX VII. UPTAKE OF EUROPASS TOOLS AND SERVICES

In terms of the uptake of Europass, there was a positive trend in the number of Europass page visits from 2005 to 2019⁹⁰. No data was collected on the old platform regarding the numbers of individual users, given that such a feature was not available at that time; hence site visits represent a proxy. However, it needs to be noted that this is imperfect as not all visit results in people using one or multiple tools and some users will visit the site multiple times. Since the inception of the initiative, the number of page views increased significantly from less than 5 million in 2006 to over 30 million in 2019, as shown in Figure 17. Over time, the old platform helped Europass to be accessed by many people, but the exact number cannot be ascertained from the data available.

Figure 17: Number of page visits on Europass (2005-2019)

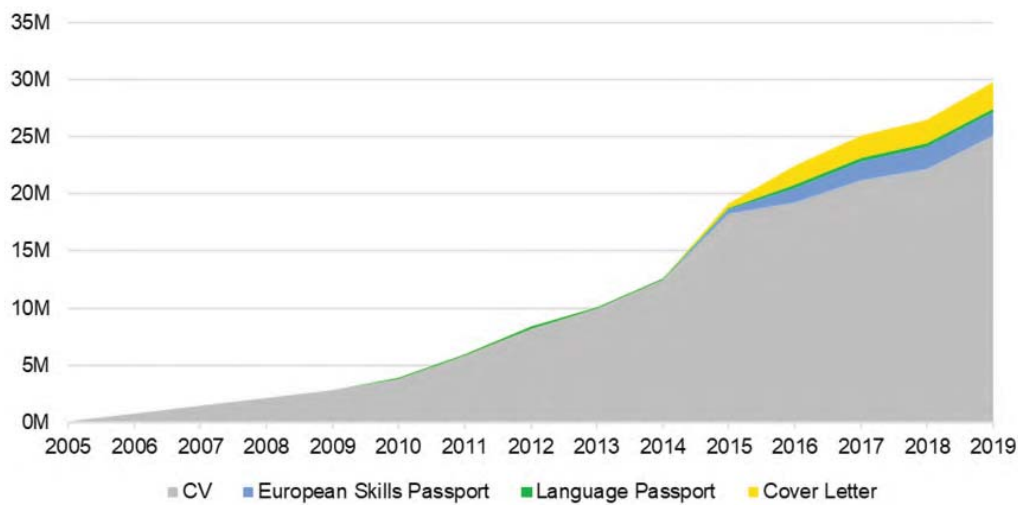


Source: External supporting study by Kantar – estimation based on Data from Cedefop user statistics (2005-2019)

As regards the usage of tools, looking at historical data (before 2020), the CV was clearly the most frequently used service, compared to the European Skills Passport, Language Passport and Cover Letter, as it accounted for 93% of the documents generated online, as shown in Figure 18. For all tools, except for the ‘Language Passport’, the increases in the number of documents generated were relatively stable.

⁹⁰ In the absence of data on the number of registered users for the previous Europass platform, the number of page visits are used as a proxy for usage levels.

Figure 18: Number of documents generated online (2005-2019)



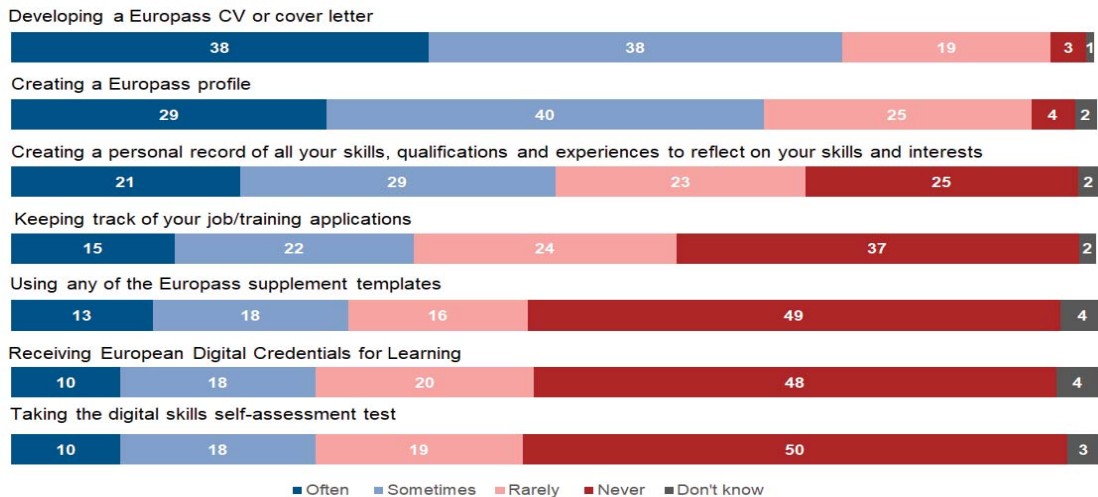
Source: External supporting study by Kantar – estimation based on data shared by CEDEFOP

While the Europass CV remains the most frequently used tool, the new Europass platform launched in 2020 offers more services and tools than its predecessor (for further information on the uptake of Europass tools and services, please see chapter 4.1.1 “Effectiveness”). Although some tools and services might be more frequently used by different stakeholders, their value does not only rely on their uptake and usage.

On the current platform, the uptake varies between the different Europass tools and services, which is illustrated by Figure 19, based on the user and non-user survey. The Europass CV and cover letter are the best known and most frequently used Europass tools, as confirmed by all the research tools. Figure 19 shows that the majority of Europass users (76%) use the CV and cover letter often (38%) or sometimes (38%).

Figure 19 - Uptake of Europass web-based tools and services

Q2.6- How often, if at all, have you used any of the following web-based tools on the Europass platform?
(%; N= 3463; LOGIC: respondents having used Europass (Q 2.3))

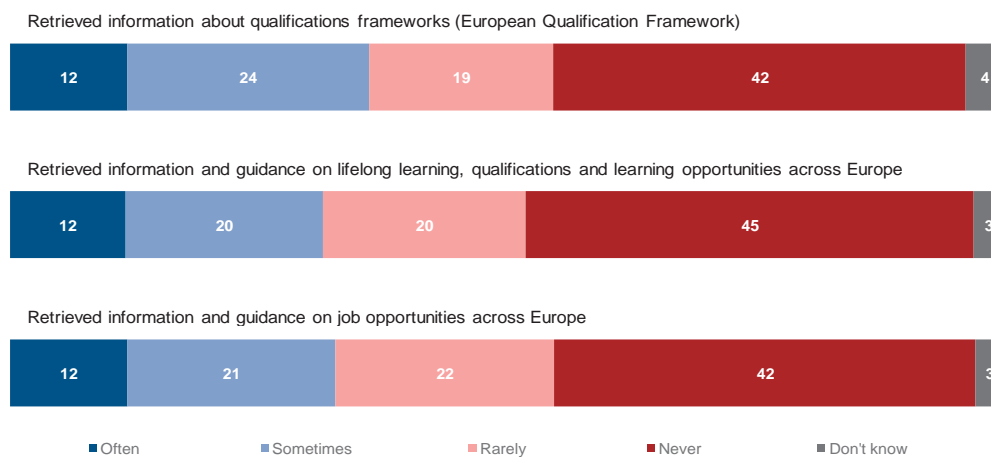


Source: External supporting study by Kantar – based on survey to the general population and to platform users

As shown in Figure 20, slightly more than half of the surveyed users state that they use the platform to gather information about qualifications frameworks (36% often or sometimes), guidance and lifelong learning (33% often or sometimes) and job opportunities (32% often or sometimes).

Figure 20 - Use of the Europass platform for retrieving information

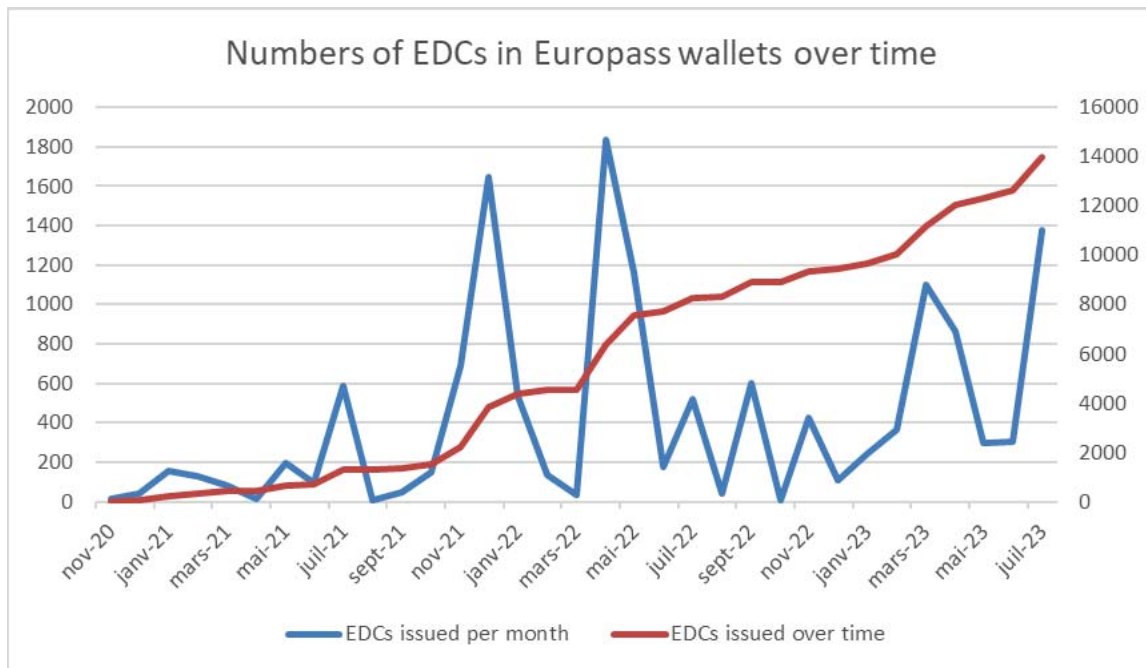
Q2.7- How often, if at all, have you done any of the following on the Europass platform?
 (%; N= 3463; LOGIC: respondents having used Europass (Q2.3))



Source: External supporting study by Kantar – based on survey to the general population and to platform users

Figure 21 provides an overview of the number of EDCs stored in Europass wallets between November 2021 and July 2023.

Figure 21 - Overview of the number of EDCs stored in Europass wallets by months and over time⁹¹

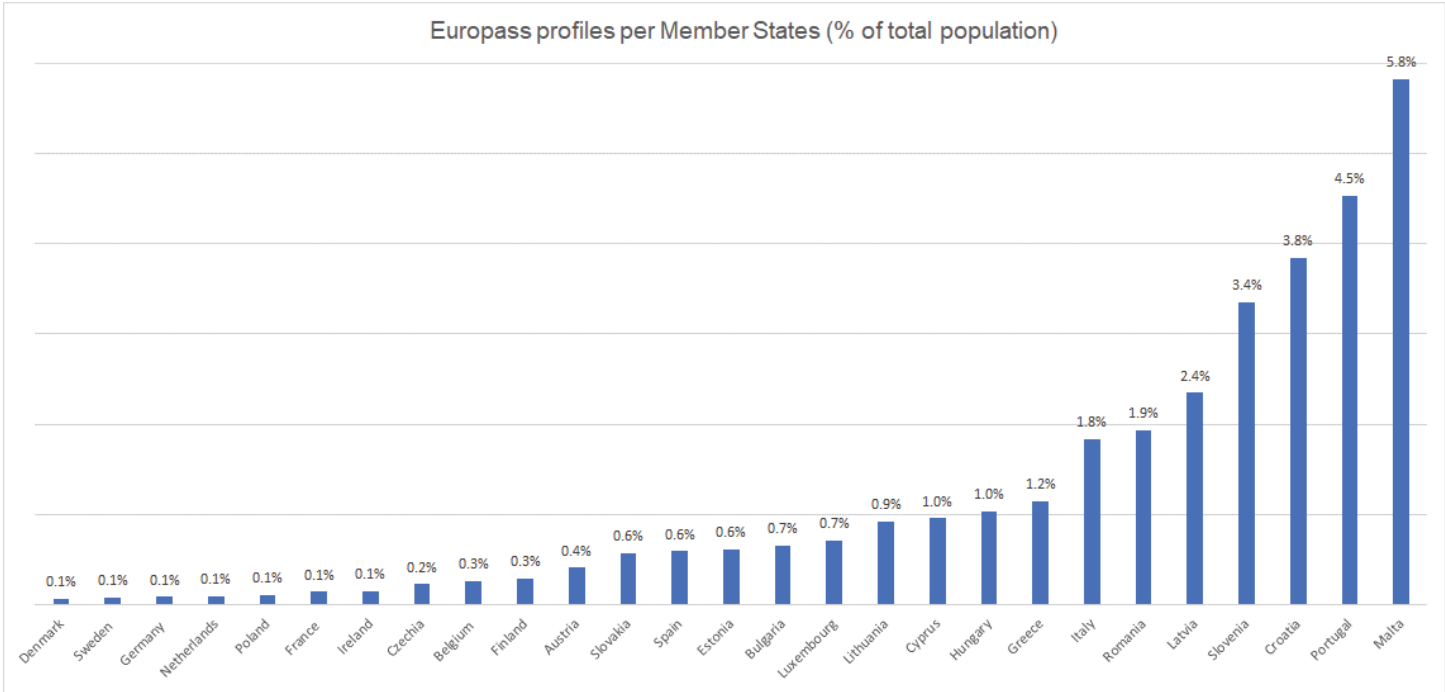


Source: based on Europass user statistics provided by the European Commission

In terms of geographical distribution, the majority of Europass users can be found in Italy, Portugal and Romania (in total numbers). As can be seen in the figure below, these countries also host higher shares of Europass profiles when compared to the total population. The percentage of Europass profiles per country (out of the total population) for Portugal, Romania and Italy is 4.5%, 1.9% and 1.8% respectively. There are also higher percentages of Europass profiles (out of the total population) in Malta, Croatia, Slovenia and Latvia.

⁹¹ EDCs stored outside Europass wallets cannot be accounted for as EDCs are not tracked for data privacy reasons.

Figure 22 – Share of Europass profiles across Member States over their total population



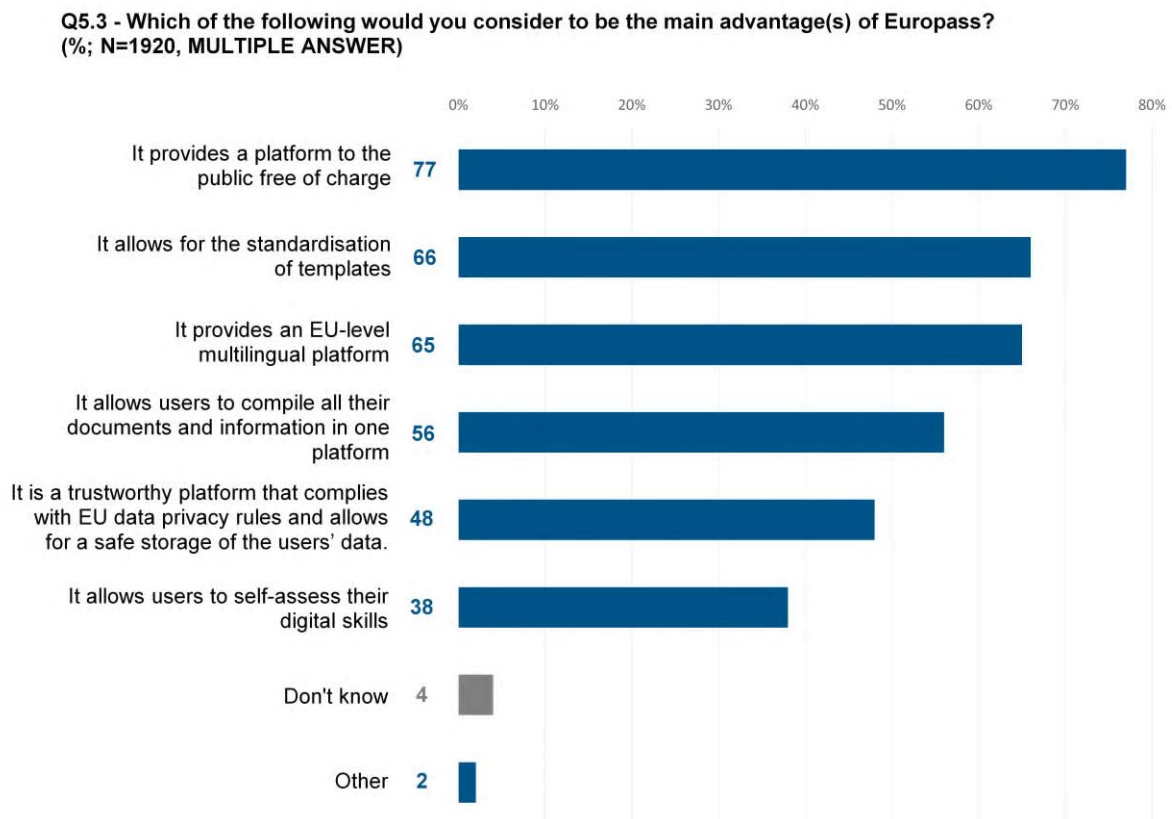
Source: External supporting study by Kantar, based on Europass platform data (31 December 2022) and EUROSTAT data on 2023 population (1st January, 2023)

ANNEX VIII. USER AND STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION OF EUROPASS

This annex presents figures on the main advantages of Europass, the importance given to the information and services provided on the platform as well as the users' perception of Europass as a user-friendly and accessible platform.

As shown in Figure 23, the majority of public consultation respondents (77%) consider as the main advantage of Europass the free of charge provision of the services. This is followed by the provision of standardised templates and the multilingual features of the platform (66% and 65% of respondents respectively). Moreover, 76% of respondents to the public consultation stated that they have never used other platforms or tools for the same reason they used Europass. This illustrates users' trust in the Europass platform and in services provided by the European Commission.

Figure 23 - Main advantages of Europass

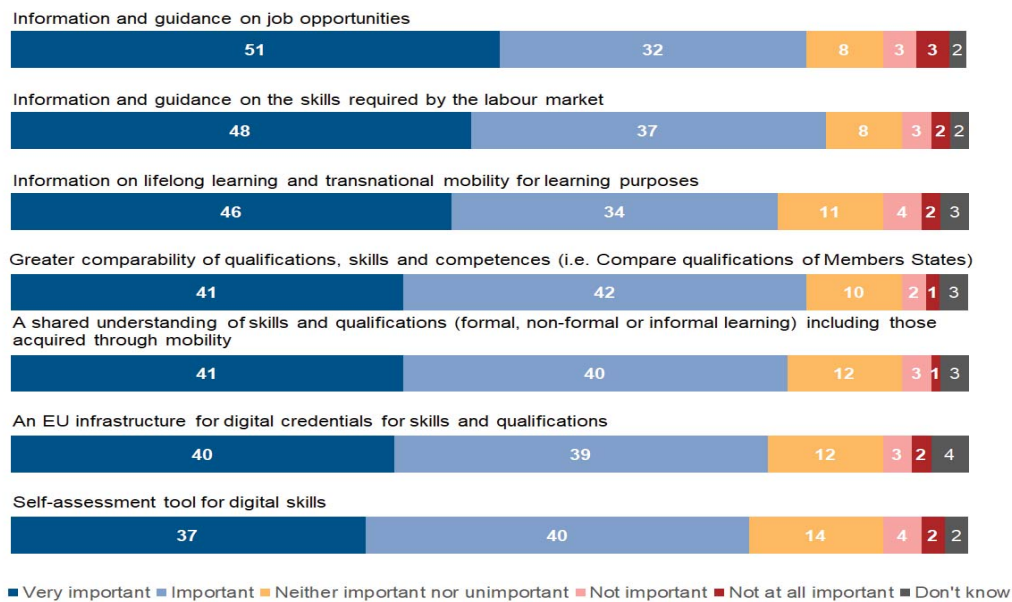


Source: External supporting study by Kantar – based on Europass Public Consultation

The majority of public consultation respondents (80% of 1920 respondents) expressed that Europass tools and services are either very important or important to them (see Figure 24). This positive appreciation applies in particular to information and guidance on job opportunities and information on guidance and skills required by the labour market (respectively 83% and 85% of respondents found these aspects very important or important).

Figure 24 - Importance given to the information and services provided by Europass

Q1.1 - On a scale from 1 to 5, how important it is for you to receive the following information/services?
(%; N=1920)

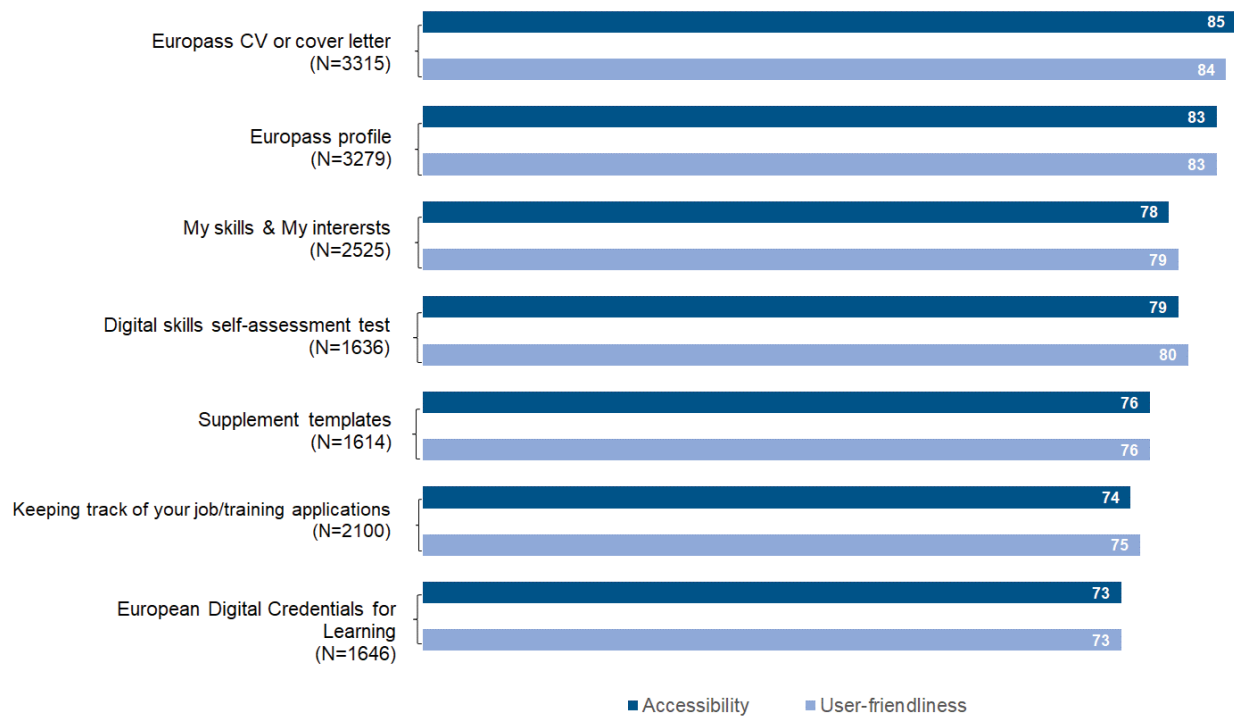


Source: External supporting study by Kantar – based on Europass Public Consultation

According to end-user survey results, accessibility and user-friendliness of Europass tools are positively valued by end-users (see Figure 25). The Europass CV or cover letter appear to be the most accessible and user-friendly tools, followed by the Europass profile.

Figure 25 - Share of end-users perceiving Europass tools and services as accessible and user-friendly

Accessibility and userfriendliness of Europass tools and services (%)



N= number of respondents having used Europass tools

Source: External supporting study by Kantar - survey to the general population and to platform users