







A C Languages for social cohesion
 Languages for social cohesion in multilingual and multicultural Europe
B D Les langues pour la cohésion sociale
 L'adhésion aux langues dans une Europe multilingue et multiculturelle

Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio
 Former les enseignants à l'utilisation du Portfolio européen des langues

What is the ELP?

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Three obligatory components

- **Language Passport** – Summarizes the owner's linguistic identity and language learning and intercultural experience; records the owner's self-assessment
- **Language Biography** – Provides a reflective accompaniment to the ongoing processes of learning and using second languages and engaging with the cultures associated with them
- **Dossier** – Collects evidence of L2 proficiency and intercultural experience

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Two functions

- **Pedagogical function** – the ELP is designed to make the language learning process more transparent to the learner and foster the development of learner autonomy (cf. the Council of Europe's commitment to education for democratic citizenship and lifelong learning)
- **Reporting function** – the ELP provides practical evidence of L2 proficiency and intercultural experience (cf. the Council of Europe's interest in developing a unit credit scheme in the 1970s)

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Key features

- Designed to promote plurilingualism and pluriculturalism
- Values all language and intercultural learning, whether it takes place in formal educational contexts or outside them
- Learner self-assessment is carried out against the metric of the Common Reference Levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference*

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The CEFR's common reference levels

The *Common European Framework of Reference* (Council of Europe 2001) defines communicative proficiency

- at six levels, arranged in three bands:

A1	A2
B1	B2
C1	C2
- in relation to five skills:
 - listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing
- in the form of "can do" statements

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Self-assessment grid (CEFR and standard adult passport)

	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	
Listening	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand phrases and short sentences spoken slowly and clearly. I can understand the main points of a message in a simple audio message such as a radio news report or a short TV news item.	I can understand the main points of standard spoken audio messages such as news reports, news bulletins, radio and TV news programmes, etc.	I can understand standard spoken audio messages such as news reports, news bulletins, radio and TV news programmes, etc.	I can understand standard spoken audio messages such as news reports, news bulletins, radio and TV news programmes, etc.	I can understand standard spoken audio messages such as news reports, news bulletins, radio and TV news programmes, etc.	I can understand standard spoken audio messages such as news reports, news bulletins, radio and TV news programmes, etc.
Reading	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear written messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.
Speaking	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.
Writing	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.	I can understand short and clear audio messages such as announcements on public transport, short radio and TV programmes, etc.

I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).


CercleS ELP: goal-setting and self-assessment checklists

Level B1	My next goal	*	**	***
I can readily handle conversations on most topics that are familiar or of personal interest, with generally appropriate use of register				
I can sustain an extended conversation or discussion but may sometimes need a little help in communicating my thoughts				
I can take part in routine formal discussion on familiar subjects in my academic or professional field if it is conducted in clearly articulated speech in standard dialect				
I can exchange, check and confirm factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within my field with some confidence				
I can express and respond to feelings and attitudes (e.g., surprise, happiness, sadness, interest, uncertainty, indifference)				
I can agree and disagree politely, exchange personal opinions, negotiate decisions and ideas				
I can express my thoughts about abstract or cultural topics such as music or films, and give brief comments on the views of others				
I can explain why something is a problem, discuss what to do next, compare and contrast alternatives				
I can obtain detailed information, messages, instructions and explanations, and can ask for and follow detailed directions				
I can handle most practical tasks in everyday situations (e.g., making telephone enquiries, asking for a refund, negotiating purchase)				
I can provide concrete information required in an interview/consultation (e.g., describe symptoms to a doctor), but with limited precision				
I can take some initiatives in an interview/consultation (e.g., bring up a new subject) but am very dependent on the interviewer to provide support				


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Where did the ELP come from?



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The Council of Europe

Founded in 1949 to

- defend human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law
- develop continent-wide agreements to standardize member countries' social and legal practices
- promote awareness of a European identity based on shared values and cutting across different cultures

Key instruments

- European Convention on Human Rights (1950)
- European Cultural Convention (1954)



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Council of Europe and language learning

European Cultural Convention, Article 2:
 "Each Contracting Party shall, insofar as may be possible,

- a) encourage the study by its own nationals of the languages, history and civilisation of the other Contracting Parties and grant facilities to those Parties to promote such studies in its territory, and
- b) endeavour to promote the study of its language or languages, history and civilisation in the territory of the other Contracting Parties and grant facilities to the nationals of those Parties to pursue such studies in its territory"

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The Council of Europe's cultural/educational agenda

- *Education for democratic citizenship* – hence a commitment to learner autonomy and lifelong learning
- *Promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity* – hence a commitment to plurilingualism and partial competences
- *Facilitating individual mobility* – hence a desire to establish a means of comparing different systems of certification

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Implementing the agenda

- **Language Policy Division (Strasbourg)**
 - Responsible for developing key policy documents and instruments, including the *Common European Framework of Reference* and the *European Language Portfolio*
- **European Centre for Modern Languages (Graz)**
 - "Partial agreement" (33 Council of Europe member states)
 - Projects built around workshops and conferences aim to disseminate ideas and good practice in relation to language teaching and learning
 - 2004-2007: medium-term programme with four strands
 - Project C6: Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio

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The Rüschiikon Symposium (1991)

Recommended the development of a Common European Framework to

- promote and facilitate co-operation among educational institutions in different countries
- provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications
- assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and coordinate their efforts

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The Rüschiikon Symposium (1991)

- Recommended the establishment of a working party to consider possible forms and functions of a European Language Portfolio
- Proposed that the ELP should contain a section in which formal qualifications are related to a common European scale, another in which the learner him/herself keeps a personal record of language learning experiences and possibly a third which contains examples of work done

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Intergovernmental Conference (1997)

- Launched the second draft of the *Common European Framework of Reference*, already revised on the basis of widespread consultation (Council for Cultural Cooperation 1997a)
- Introduced a series of proposals for the development of ELPs for language learners of different ages and in different domains (Council for Cultural Cooperation 1997b)
- Recommended the establishment of pilot projects in the member states

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The ELP pilot projects (1998-2000)

- There was no template to work from: we had to learn from one another
- Between us we covered all domains of language learning: primary, lower and upper secondary, vocational, university, adult
- The Swiss ELP project supported the rest by making available goal-setting and self-assessment checklists that drew on the empirical research on which the common reference levels of the CEF are based
- The *Principles and Guidelines* that define the ELP and govern validation and accreditation evolved in parallel with this work

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Overview of the pilot projects

- 15 Council of Europe member states:
 Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom
- 3 INGOs:
 CERCLES, European Language Council, EAQUALS
- 30,000 learners and 2,000 teachers
- For a full report see Schärer (2000)

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Common findings

- Learners of all ages quickly tire of the ELP if they work with it only occasionally, in order to bring it up to date (especially when that is simply a matter of filling in forms and ticking boxes)
- Learners value the ELP to the extent that it is central to their language learning
- When the ELP is central to language learning it supports the development of learner reflection, self-management and autonomy
- The reporting and pedagogical functions support one another

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