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European Language Portfolio for adult migrant learning the language of the host country

A guide for teachers

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1. What is the European Language Portfolio (ELP)?

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is a personal document devised by the Council of Europe to promote lifelong language learning. It supports the development of learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism (the ability to communicate in two or more languages at any level of proficiency).

The ELP has three obligatory components:

- a **language passport**, which presents an overview of the owner's linguistic profile – the language(s) he/she uses in daily life, the proficiency he/she has achieved in second/foreign languages (L2s), his/her experience of using those languages, and any relevant qualifications that he/she has gained;
- a **language biography**, which provides a reflective accompaniment to L2 learning and use, focusing on goal setting and self-assessment, learning strategies, the intercultural dimension of language learning, and plurilingualism;
- a **dossier**, in which the owner collects samples of work that reflect the L2 proficiency he/she has achieved and his/her intercultural experience (the dossier may also be used to organize work in progress).

The Council of Europe conceived and developed the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in parallel with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). The ELP has complementary pedagogical and reporting functions that make it particularly appropriate for use in language programmes for adult migrants.

For a detailed explanation see *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: an introduction* by David Little. Council of Europe.

For further information about the European Language Portfolio visit www.coe.int/portfolio

The *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* is another tool of the Council of Europe which is designed to help people think about and learn from intercultural encounters. The process of developing intercultural competence is key to an adult migrant's engagement with a new culture. This tool, therefore, is of relevance to all adult migrant language learners and may be integrated into a language course.

For further information about the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* visit www.coe.int/lang-autobiography

2. Why use the ELP with adult migrant learners?

For adult migrants, the time spent learning the language of the host community provides an excellent opportunity to begin the process of integration into a new culture and society. While language learning is the principal purpose of the ELP, by learning the language of the host country the migrant can also develop awareness and understanding of the culture and society in which he or she is living.

This version of the European Language Portfolio has been developed to support adult migrants both in learning the language of the host community and also in learning about and adjusting to a new country, society and way of life. The ELP provides ideas for classroom and individual use while also prompting reflection on and analysis of experiences and beliefs. These reflections are focused, in particular, on two key aspects of the migrant language learning experience: firstly on the process of language learning and how this may be adjusted to individual strengths, weaknesses and needs; and secondly on an exploration of cultural understanding.

As part of the process of reflection and analysis, the adult migrant language learner is encouraged to take responsibility for many parts of the learning programme and to explore both similarities and differences between life in his or her country of origin and life in the host country.

The ELP has the potential to help adult migrants to achieve their language learning goals but also to increase their understanding of the society in which they are now living.

3. Parts of the ELP

3.1 The Language Passport – purpose and content

The Language Passport provides pages in which the learner records his/her personal and linguistic identity. Learners indicate what they are able to **do** in different languages. For adult migrants it is particularly important to acknowledge and include **all** the languages they know, even if they have only partial competence in some of them. The Language Passport which is provided for this ELP limits itself to basic information in order to accommodate the difficulty of communicating with adult migrant learners who may begin their course with little, if any, proficiency in the target language.

Teachers should also note the standard adult Language Passport (© Council of Europe) which is suitable for learners with higher levels of proficiency or for completion at the end of a language course. This is available in English and French versions on the Council of Europe's ELP website (www.coe.int/portfolio)

In *My Personal Identity* the learner records typical details of his/her life with an additional focus on study and work. This focus reappears throughout the ELP and is intended to help adult migrants to identify or clarify the direction their life may take in the host country. Even when expressing personal identity the learner is prompted to think about what he or she will do in the future in terms of study, work or other

My Personal Identity

Family name: _____

First name(s): _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Date of birth: _____

Country of origin: _____

Nationality: _____

In (*country*) since: _____ (date)

Occupation: _____

Work/study I have done: _____

My target for future work/study/occupation: _____

My hobbies or interests: _____

Languages I use on a regular basis: _____

occupation. Throughout the ELP the learner will identify and record personal targets and thus become responsible for shaping an individual pathway towards their achievement.

The Language Passport also requires learners to think about and assess their proficiency in all the second/foreign languages they know. The page, *My learning and linguistic identity*, provides a simpler version of the page entitled *My proficiency in languages*. In the latter, self-assessment refers to the self-assessment grid of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (© Council of Europe). When recording their proficiency in the language of the host community learners also refer to the checklists in the Language Biography.

Learners also have the opportunity to record any relevant certificates or diplomas which may support their aims in relation to further study or employment.

3.2 The Language Biography

Introduction

The Language Biography focuses on past experience, present learning and future aspirations. It is designed to help shape learning according to the pedagogical principles which are fundamental to ELP use. These principles include the regular identification of learning targets, reflection on learning experiences, and self-assessment of learning progress and achievement.

My learning and linguistic identity

I am (name)

I originally come from (country)

I am years old (age)

I live in (city)

I went to school in for years

I went to college/university in for years

My area of study was

I did vocational training/apprenticeship in.....

I am trained as

My home language is

Other languages that I know:

Language	What I can do in this language				Where I use/have used this language
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	

For many adult migrants, the process of settling in a new country can prove overwhelming. As a result, awareness of personal strengths, skills and abilities can become lost. In order to make strong connections with previous experience, and to highlight its potential benefit for the individual learner, the Language Biography is divided into two parts. Part 1 focuses on the learner's life and experience prior to arrival in the host country. It includes exploration of how previously gained skills may contribute to life in a new country. By recognising and reflecting on previous experiences, learners become empowered to use their personal strengths to address the challenge of learning a new language and culture.

The Language Biography Part 2 focuses on the 'here and now' and provides structured support to encourage effective learning. In this part of the ELP learners set learning targets and reflect on learning experiences. They begin to think about themselves as learners, identify how they learn most effectively, and come to understand their learning problems and how to remedy them. In other words, they monitor and record their own progress through the language course. They thus become active agents in the process of learning, to which they contribute at every stage.

They are also prompted to think about and discuss what is happening in their local environment and how this compares with their place of origin. This gives them an opportunity to explore how misunderstandings may occur as a result of cultural differences. Developing awareness of cultural similarities, differences and norms is a critical learning requirement for adult migrants.

Language Biography Part 1

In this part of the Language Biography you assess your current proficiency in the language that you are learning now and identify your learning priorities at this time.

You note intercultural experiences that you have had during visits to other countries for travel, work or study and identify how intercultural experiences can support your integration in this country.

You think about the important events in your life and examine the difference between the activities that you used to enjoy in the country you came from and those that you are involved in now. You also identify how previous experiences can be used in your life now.

You also identify how you can be an effective learner.

Language Biography Part 2

This part of the Language Biography focuses on current learning. It provides a place to record your personal attitude to your course. You are also encouraged to think about yourself as a learner so that you can make the most of your programme of language learning.

Think about how you like to learn and where you may find more learning opportunities outside the classroom.

Identify your personal learning priorities and goals, record your learning experiences and assess how your learning is progressing.

By entering the dates of your goals and self-assessment you can monitor your own progress.

Language Biography Part 1

Part 1 of the Language Biography begins with *My first self assessment for learning (language)* which helps to explore the situations in which the learner has already encountered difficulties. This activity is repeated in Part 2 of the Language Biography to encourage learners to recognise and think about the progress they have made during their language learning.


The activity prompts learners to identify and record their initial learning priority.

Low level or non-literate learners

This page is suitable for use with low level learners. It would be helpful to use illustrations to support the statements in the self-assessment. Learners should mark as many of their current abilities in the target language as possible. Later, when they revisit this page in the Language Biography Part 2, they will see a significant improvement in their proficiency.

It would be more effective to identify initial learning priorities by using a picture-based approach such as that suggested on page 16 below.

My first self-assessment for learning (language)

Mark a place on the line to indicate how you see your abilities now. (Example -  +)

Date of self-assessment: _____

- 1 When I **first arrived** in (country) my (language) was
(-) _____ (+)
- 2 I can **express** my thoughts and feelings in (language)
(-) _____ (+)
- 3 I can **answer** other people's questions
(-) _____ (+)
- 4 I can **explain** things
(-) _____ (+)
- 5 I can speak on the **telephone**
(-) _____ (+)
- 6 I can understand forms and other documents that I **read**
(-) _____ (+)
- 7 I can fill in forms and **write** messages
(-) _____ (+)

+++++
My learning priority

Date: _____

My personal target at this time is to learn how to:

(Examples: apply for job, talk to children's teachers, explain to doctor, talk to landlord etc.)

What I want to do in the future:

What I must do now to achieve this:

Part 1 of the Language Biography also contains a number of activities which are designed to raise questions about and awareness of cultural similarities and differences.

In *Intercultural Experiences* learners are prompted to think back over experiences they may have had in the past and to identify how these experiences could help them settle into a new society.

See also the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* (© Council of Europe) for further reflection on intercultural experiences.

Intercultural experiences

Think about the experiences you have had and the similarities and differences that you noticed in different places.

Country or place	When (dates)	Why I was there (work, family, holiday, study, other)	Where I stayed (friends, family, flat, hotel, other)

What I noticed about daily life in this place:

How this experience has helped me to settle in this country:

Country or place	When (dates)	Why I was there (work, family, holiday, study, other)	Where I stayed (friends, family, flat, hotel, other)

What I noticed about daily life in this place:

How this experience has helped me to settle in this country:

Differences and similarities encourages reflection on how the norms of two societies may differ but may also have strong similarities.

Learners are encouraged to explore both the differences and similarities that they have experienced between countries.

This page should be revisited at intervals when a query arises in class or a discussion takes place resulting in the identification of either differences or similarities.

Low level or non-literate learners

This page is suitable for use at a basic level with low level learners. For example, it could be visited initially when a member of the class is celebrating a birthday, family occasion or religious celebration. Later it will be possible to talk about experiences in more detail.

Differences and similarities

There are differences between countries and cultures but there are also similarities. Think about both differences and similarities that you have noticed between another country and this country.

In another country <small>(a country I lived in or my country of origin)</small>	In this country

Additional pages may be used as necessary.

Things I have noticed about language and culture invites learners to bring their queries and uncertainties to the class. It is often the case that adult migrants fail to get support in understanding the society in which they are living. When they cannot understand the norms that surround them, integration becomes a great challenge. The language classroom provides an excellent opportunity for exploring and questioning aspects of language or culture which are difficult to understand.

This page may be visited at intervals during a language course as learners experience different situations in the host country.

Things I have noticed about language and culture
 Through work, study, leisure activities and the things we do in daily life we are constantly in contact with language and culture. This page allows you to think about and note some of your language and cultural experiences.

Date:	
Situation, activity, media or resource	Aspect(s) of language or culture that I noticed
Date:	
Situation, activity, media or resource	Aspect(s) of language or culture that I noticed
Date:	
Situation, activity, media or resource	Aspect(s) of language or culture that I noticed
Date:	
Situation, activity, media or resource	Aspect(s) of language or culture that I noticed

Additional pages may be used as necessary.

Past, present and future encourages the learner to think about what he/she did in the past and how important these activities were to him/her. Learners are prompted to think about the languages that they associate with different activities.

This activity is followed by **Using my personal skills, abilities and interests** in which learners capture the activities that they enjoyed in the past and consider how these may be used to support them in life in the host country. These activities are designed to help bridge the gap which can occur between life in the country of origin or previous country of residence and life in a new country.

Low level or non-literate learners

The ‘life-line’ is suitable for use with low level learners. They could enter a small number of points – for example when they started school, when they got married (if applicable), when they came to the present country etc.

Past, present and future

Here you can compare life in the past with your present life in this country. You should think about the things you did in the past and what you do now. You can also think about what you would like to do in the future.

Example:

My life line in years:

Things I have done and do now:

My activities interests and hobbies	How often I did/do them	At home/outside	With family/friends/club	Why I enjoyed/enjoy this	Language I used/use for this activity

Using my personal skills, abilities and interests

Think about your activities, skills and abilities and see how these could help you in your life now. Are they useful for working, relaxing, meeting people, learning etc.?

Things I enjoy doing: (for example sports, learning, skills, singing, speaking languages, organising etc.)

How these interests can help me in my life now:

What I could do to use these interests now:

Learning comes into focus in *How I learnt in the past*. In order to identify their own learning strengths, learners reflect on the approaches they have used to learn effectively. These strengths should be used and developed as their language learning proceeds.

Respecting a learner’s first language and other languages

Throughout all ELP and other learning activities it is important that learners are encouraged to use their first languages both as learning tools and as expressions of identity.

The teacher should identify opportunities to include examples of first language knowledge and use. Each learner’s first language should be acknowledged as a key element in the learning process and should be used as a bridge to learning the target language.

For those learners who have already learnt other languages, either formally or informally, these too can provide support in the current learning challenge.

How I learnt in the past

Think back to when you were studying in school or college. If you learnt a language formally you should focus on that. Try to remember how you helped yourself to learn and remember new information. Write an example of the different resources and approaches that you have used. Use the grid below to help you think of things. Add other ideas in the blank rows.

	Example(s)
Memorising new information	
Asking questions (of teacher or other students)	
Using a personal study notebook	
Participating in a class quiz	
Explaining something to someone else	
Writing a summary text	
Giving a presentation to the class	
Doing an internet search	
Reading	
Creating a mind map	
Doing a puzzle	

Choose the two methods from the list above that helped you to learn most effectively:

Which is best for you?

1. Using a visual approach – diagrams, drawings, charts etc.

2. Using text, key words, lists, written notes etc.

3. Both approaches combined

Language Biography Part 2

The second part of the Language Biography focuses on current learning and progress. At all stages learners share responsibility for their own progress.

Responsibility begins with the activity *My personal expectations of this language course* in which learners articulate their expectations of the course, their teacher and themselves. This activity can often help to clear up misunderstandings which arise from learners' experiences of different educational cultures.

Low level or non-literate learners

This activity may not be possible initially with low level learners. However, it should be introduced as soon as a class can understand the basic concept. The importance of this page is that it can be used to establish a 'joint' set of expectations which in turn can include the parameters of behaviour for the class. For example, learners may decide that mobile phones should be fully switched off, teacher should give homework, there should be a 5-minute break during the class etc. These collective decisions may then form part of a class contract.

My personal expectations of this language course

Think about what you must do to make this course successful. Think also about what you expect the teacher to do and discuss what the teacher will expect from you.
Your expectations will change over time so it is necessary to return to this page at intervals.

What I expect from the course	Date

What I expect from the teacher	Date

What I expect from myself	Date

Learning to understand a new culture is an on-going process and the activity *Understanding cultural differences* allows the learner to have pride in explaining his/her country and to question apparent differences between it and the host country. This activity also provides an opportunity to explore differences in language use and to include examples from learners' first languages.

Important events also allows comparisons to be drawn between countries, and similarities as well as differences to be recorded.

Low level or non-literate learners

This activity can be carried out at a basic level with low level learners:

- Learners identify a small number of things, for example 3, that they want to say about their own country and the same for things they would like to ask about the current country of residence.
- The points are collected from the whole class. Repetitions can be identified (i.e. points that a number of people specify).
- Short sentences can be constructed around the points.
- Learners write the short sentences into the ELP.

Understanding cultural differences
Sometimes it is necessary to explain cultural differences. Think about what you would like to tell other people about your country and what you would like to ask people about this country.

My country
I would like to tell people about:

.....

.....

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This country
I would like to ask people about:

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Thinking about how to learn is a key to successful learning.

How well do you know yourself as a learner again encourages reflection on the challenges of language learning and helps learners identify methods and approaches that suit them. This activity encourages the identification of personal targets which also helps to raise awareness of learning.

Low level or non-literate learners

This page could be introduced in a basic way with low level learners. ‘Things I have learnt in the past’ should be used initially. ‘What I have to learn now’ could be examined in relation to the identification of learning priorities then, later, more precise objectives.

How well do you know yourself as a learner?
Think about different things that you have learnt in your life. How did you learn them? Did you have particular techniques? Note down your answers here:

Things I have learnt in the past	How I learnt them
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Now think about learning a language. There are many different parts to language learning. Identify some of the things you will have to learn and make a note of a good approach to learning that suits you.

What I have to learn now	How I can learn it
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

My priorities presents a number of themes which are important for migrant language learners. This page may be used as many times as necessary to identify priorities both for individuals and for an entire class. When learners are engaged in making decisions about their learning, the relevance of learning tasks and activities becomes clear and learners become active partners in the overall process.

This page may be used frequently and in conjunction with the checklists when learners are identifying their learning targets.










Low level or non-literate learners

This page may be a useful starting point when learners have no existing proficiency in the target language. It is also a useful approach if literacy levels of the class are generally low. Pictures support comprehension and, in this case, allow for the initial identification of important learning targets. For example, these or similar pictures could be used as a basis for learners to decide the immediate learning priority for the group. The decision may be made on the basis of a vote by the learners.

By involving learners, even those with little or no proficiency in the target language, in deciding the immediate focus of their learning the relevance of the course becomes clear and motivation follows.

My priorities

Learning priorities are presented here as general themes.
Think about and note your personal learning priorities as they change over time.
Priorities can be used to set learning targets (see the next page) as the course progresses.

Theme	Date	Reason for choosing this theme
 House or apartment		
 Family		
 Children's education		
 Money		
 Health and hospital		
 Work and occupation		
 Further education and training		
 Food and shopping		
 Dealing with officials		

You will return to these themes at different stages of your language course.

Learning targets and self-assessment provides a systematic means of identifying targets, reflecting on learning and assessing the result. The activity of target setting should be carried out in conjunction with the checklists which are included in the Language Biography Part 2. Checklists provide scaled descriptors which allow both teachers and learners to identify the level at which they are working and to monitor and record achievement and progress.

As a language learner, the adult migrant has a potential advantage in that he or she may engage with the target language during daily activities.

This page should be used as often as necessary to reflect changing targets.

Low level or non-literate learners

The same approach may be used with learners at very low levels of proficiency or those beginning to develop literacy. In this case it is necessary for the teacher to mediate the activity at a basic level. For example, engaging briefly with each learner on an individual basis:

1. Refer to what has been the focus of the class (e.g. introducing, travelling by public transport, counting numbers or whatever the topic may be).
2. Get the learner to demonstrate his or her new ability.
3. Give praise then mark the page with a tick or other mark to indicate that a target has been achieved and enter the date.
4. Repeat this process at the end of each learning cycle.
5. Gradually the learner will take a more active part, for example in entering the date, or ticking that the target has been achieved and tested.

Learning targets and self-assessment

When you have identified and recorded your learning priorities you can use these to identify clear learning targets. Targets, like priorities, will change and develop over time. You should look at your targets from time to time and review what you have learnt. In this way you can keep a record of your progress and achievement.

Date:	Learning target:
My learning activities to achieve this target:	
My learning experience: (Was it effective? Why? Why not?)	
How I know that I have achieved this target:	
If I have not achieved my target, what I must do now:	
Target achieved	Date:

Date:	Learning target:
My learning activities to achieve this target:	
My learning experience: (Was it effective? Why? Why not?)	
How I know that I have achieved this target:	
If I have not achieved my target, what I must do now:	
Target achieved	Date:

Additional pages may be used as necessary.

Learning outside class and **Opportunities to learn (language)** are intended to bridge the gap between the classroom and the world outside. They raise learners' awareness of the opportunities for learning that exist in daily life. When learners have more heightened awareness of the language and society surrounding them, external opportunities to learn will become more fruitful.

Low level or non-literate learners

This page is suitable for all learners. For low level learners it will be necessary for the teacher to mediate the information. However, making progress in any part of the ELP is particularly important for those learners who are experiencing the greatest difficulties in learning. The ELP is a place to note **achievement** and the **visual expression** of achievement is a motivating factor.

The teacher should visit this page following relevant learning. For example, if hobbies or interests have been a learning topic:

- Teacher points to the relevant place on page
- Asks learner to say something about his or her hobbies or interests
- Asks if learner knows any words in the target language relating to these hobbies/interests
- Asks if the learner has met any native speakers in relation to the hobby/interest
- Enters a tick in the box 'No I can not' or 'Yes I can'
- Enters any words or expressions that the learner knows in the target language in the box 'What I can learn'

Learning outside class Ways I can use or learn language outside class			
Situation	No I can not learn there	Yes I can learn there	What I can learn
At home			
At work			
In the shops			
Through my hobbies or interests			
Internet / Television			
Other?			

Inevitably migrant language learners encounter communication problems and these may have a negative effect on their confidence.

Solving communication problems helps learners to bring such problems to class and explore how they achieved, or could have achieved, a successful outcome. By understanding how communication strategies may be used, learners become more confident and, consequently, more inclined to engage in communicative events.

Solving communication problems

All language learners meet situations where there is a communication problem. It is important to be aware of different ways to solve these problems. Think about problems that you have met and note how you were able to deal with the situation. When you are aware of possible strategies you will be able to use them in difficult situations.

	Date:
Problem	
Solution	
What I learnt from this experience	
	Date:
Problem	
Solution	
What I learnt from this experience	
	Date:
Problem	
Solution	
What I learnt from this experience	

Additional pages may be used as necessary.

Plurilingual competence, which is an underlying objective of the European Language Portfolio, is clearly demonstrated in an individual's ability to make use of all language knowledge in order to carry out a task.

This page allows learners to demonstrate how they have used their proficiency in a number of languages to provide assistance to another person. This situation may occur frequently in the migrant context. An individual with some proficiency in the host language may be requested to act as interpreter or translator for a friend or another member of the migrant community. The situation may be serious in that it could involve interpreting in relation to health, employment, housing etc.

The ability to carry out such a request successfully is a clear demonstration of plurilingual ability.

Experiences in using my languages to help others

As a speaker of a number of languages you will encounter situations where others seek your assistance as an interpreter, translator or mediator. Think back over recent experiences and note them on this page. Describe the situation; who was involved; if you needed to prepare – for example by gathering information or checking words; was the outcome successful?

When (date)	What was the situation/context?	Who were the other people in this interaction?	How did you prepare?	How would you assess the outcome?

A range of possible activities is provided to help learners use their immediate learning experiences in order to understand how they learn most effectively.

My approach to learning prompts general reflection on the individual learner's preferences.

Planning my learning now provides an analytical approach to current learning activities, breaking down learning tasks into their component parts and prompting decisions about how effective learning may be achieved.

Planning my learning now

Finding the best conditions for success

Think about what you are learning now. Fill in the details about the language, topic, and the focus of the topic.

Language: _____ Topic: _____

Focus (X): Reading Listening Speaking Writing Mixed skills

Now think more about learning this thing by answering the questions below:

Is this a continuation of another lesson? Yes No

Do I need to learn new grammar in order to learn this? Yes No

Do I need to learn and use new vocabulary? Yes No

Have I done anything like this before? Yes No

Is there a good example that I could look at to get some ideas? Yes No

What way would you learn this best?

Working method	Yes	No	Note
Working alone in a quiet place			
Working alone at home with music in the background			
Working with a friend			
Working with a group of other students			
Working for a long time to get it all done			
Working for a number of short sessions			

Now you know which learning situation you like best. Think about the things that could prevent you from learning. If any of these statements applies to you, then put X in the box beside the statement.

I don't always concentrate on what I am learning.	
I don't always leave enough time to learn properly.	
I don't use my dictionary, grammar book or textbook when I should.	
I am not interested in learning this thing.	
I find this particularly difficult to learn.	
I don't plan my learning so that sometimes it is not effective.	

Thinking back on what I have learnt today is a prompted reflection on a recent learning experience which helps to consolidate the learning that has taken place.

My self-assessment for learning (language) is also included in the Language Biography Part 1 and may be reused at regular intervals throughout the language course. The purpose is to confirm to the learner that he or she is making progress. Such confirmation is important as learners often experience periods during which progress may seem to have ceased. This may not be the case but external confirmation is often required to convince a learner that progress continues.

Thinking back on what I have learnt today
Self-monitoring classroom learning

Date: _____ Topic: _____

You have just had a lesson in your language class. You have five minutes to think about what you have just done.

Use these questions to help you think about your learning.

- Did you study individually or in a pair or group? _____
 - What percentage of the class did you understand fully? _____
 - Did you ask any questions? _____
 - Did you make useful notes? _____
 - What was the most helpful part of the class?

 - Was the class based on listening, reading or writing or a combination of all three?

 - Did this class add to your knowledge of the language or topic? _____
 - Did you learn anything that you could use in another situation? _____
 - How will you remember new information?

 - Did you enjoy learning this thing? _____
 - Why?

-

The *Learning Diary* prompts learners to reflect on a period or cycle of learning and to extract the aspects of that learning that are of most importance to them.

Low level or non-literate learners

This page may be used by learners of all levels and is very important for lower level learners as a means of reinforcing that they are making progress in learning. It also allows the teacher to help each learner identify the topics and, importantly, the vocabulary or terms which are of greater relevance to each individual.

In the absence of functional literacy the teacher should write in the vocabulary that is selected by the learner.

Learning Diary

Date: _____
In the past (week, month) I have learnt:

Topics:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Important vocabulary:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Work I have done:

Listening: _____

Speaking: _____

Reading _____

Writing _____

Where I have used my new language outside class: _____

Most language courses provided for adult migrants address the needs of general language learning. However, migrants who seek to enter a particular area of work, need to identify the language demands of their intended profession or occupation. ***Language for profession or occupation*** prompts learners to think about language for specific purposes, basing the analysis on their previous experience of working in a particular occupation.

Language for profession or occupation

This page prompts you to think about the specific language that you require in order to follow your profession or occupation in another country.

My profession/occupation:

Situations where specific language was required for my job:

.....

.....

.....

What specific language do I already know in *(language)*

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

What specific language do I need to learn?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

How can I learn this language? What resources do I need?

.....

.....

How can I use my first language (or another language) to help me?

.....

.....

The purpose of this page is to help learners address the challenge of finding employment in a systematic way.

This page encourages learners to think about the different ways of finding information about employment possibilities. They are also encouraged to think about what they must provide if applying for a job such as a letter of application and a Curriculum Vitae.

Those learners in a group who are already in employment are a useful resource for both the teacher and other learners. If seeking employment is a common objective in a group of learners, the topic should be addressed in class and tasks such as writing letters of introduction or application and preparing a suitable *Curriculum Vitae* should be carried out. It is also necessary to examine and prepare interview techniques.

The workplace: Finding employment

I can research job vacancies in my area of employment by using the following resources:

Source of information	Information is up-to-date (Yes/No)	Need to send letter or email	Need to have C.V.	Note*
Internet				
National newspaper(s)				
Local newspaper(s)				
Employment agency				
Directory of businesses				
Professional directory				
Other				
Other				

*Make a **note** of the internet sites/addresses and suitable newspapers and directories for future reference. Also note any contact information such as telephone numbers etc.

Preparing for an interview is very important for migrant language learners. By thinking about and preparing questions and answers, the learner can overcome many concerns about being interviewed in the host language. Good preparation means that the challenge of being interviewed in a second language diminishes as the learner focuses on presenting him or herself in the most effective possible way.

This page encourages learners to think through the interview process and to predict what may arise.

The workplace: Preparing for an interview

Questions I have prepared to answer	
What I want to say about myself	
What I want to say about my experience	
Information I have gathered about the job/employer/company	
Questions I will ask	

Additional pages may be used as necessary.

LB(2) 19

Checklists are an integral part of all ELPs and, for this version, they are provided at the first four proficiency levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (© Council of Europe). However, teachers may consider using only the levels that are relevant to a particular group of learners. For example, for many migrant learners the achievement of Level A2 proficiency in relevant skills in the host language allows them to initiate the process of integration and engage with the labour market. In this case, it would be appropriate to use only Levels A1 and A2.

Checklists are valuable to both teachers and learners. For the teacher, they provide scaled descriptors which may be converted into learning activities. The teacher may be confident that the activities are at an appropriate level and guarantee progression. For the learner, checklists support the identification of learning targets and allow visible monitoring of progress. In order to ensure that learning targets correspond to the needs of individual learners, checklists may be used in combination with the ELP page *My priorities*.

For further information see

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language* by David Little. Council of Europe.

A2 LISTENING	This is my target	I can now do this with help	I can now do this without help
I can understand what people say to me in simple everyday conversation when they speak slowly and clearly			
I can understand everyday words and phrases relating to areas of immediate personal relevance (e.g., family, student life, local environment, employment)			
I can understand everyday words and phrases relating to areas of personal interest (e.g., hobbies, social life, holidays, music, TV, films, travel)			
I can understand clear simple messages and recorded announcements (e.g., on the telephone, at the railway station)			
I can understand simple phrases, questions and information relating to basic personal needs (e.g., when shopping, eating out, going to the doctor or dentist)			
I can follow simple directions (e.g., how to get from X to Y) by foot or public transport			
I can usually identify the topic of conversation around me when people speak slowly and clearly			
I can follow changes of topic in factual TV news items and form an idea of the main content			
I can identify the main point of TV news items reporting events, accidents, etc., if there is visual support			
I can understand short, simple stories when they are told or read clearly and slowly			
I can understand simple, concrete instructions about how to use materials and equipment			
I can understand simple descriptions of operations related to my work if they are supported by practical demonstrations			

3.3 The Dossier

The third part of the ELP is the Dossier. This is effectively an open space in which learners can file and organise their work, resources that are useful to them, tests that they have completed and corrected, and any other documentation that is relevant to the language course or to their future in a new country. The Dossier for this ELP has been divided into four parts with suggestions provided for the content of each part. Learners should be encouraged to keep their work and, at regular intervals, to make decisions about what may be removed and replaced with later examples of work. The Dossier fulfils two important functions for the learner. Firstly it helps learners to organise their work so that it becomes a valuable resource and, secondly, it encourages learners to examine critically the work that they have already filed and to assess whether they have produced better examples.

Inevitably the Dossier becomes a substantial file as learning progresses.

4 Using the ELP in general

Every statement on every page of the ELP suggests or reflects a learning activity. The ELP should not be seen as a series of pages which must be filled in. In fact it is unlikely that any page could be completed in a single class. For the teacher, the topics or activities suggested both in Language Passport and Language Biography pages, and in the ELP checklists, can be used to help plan lessons.

The time necessary for learners to achieve proficiency at any level varies considerably. Some learners progress rapidly in particular skills or themes that are of interest to them. On the other hand, they may make slower progress in other skills or different thematic areas. In the case of

adult migrant learners, it is important to support individual learning relative to their personal aims and ambitions, which the ELP helps them to identify and clarify.

4.1 What to use

The pages that have been created for this adult migrant ELP cover a range of possible teaching contexts. Checklists have been provided at the first four levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (© Council of Europe), a variety of pages of greater and lesser complexity address cross-cultural awareness and learning how to learn. For less intensive courses, it will not be possible to use all pages. On the other hand, where learners have a more intensive or longer course it may be possible to do so. Developers or teachers must make decisions about using the pages that are most appropriate to a particular group of learners.

It is important, however, that ELP use includes activities to explore **cross-cultural awareness** and **learning how to learn** as these are the pedagogical principles that underpin the ELP. Furthermore, the process of setting learning targets and reviewing and assessing progress in learning is fundamental to ELP use. See *Using Checklists* below for more information on this.

4.2 When to use the ELP

The ELP is central to the decision making and learning of each individual student in a language course. Therefore it is permanently present throughout the course as a learning resource. Time spent working with the ELP will vary in accordance with the intensity of the course. For example, if classes are held once a week, then it may be appropriate to use the ELP at the end of a cycle of learning so that

learners have thoughts to record, the possibility of self-assessing their progress and a reason to set new learning targets. This may occur every two or three weeks. With more intensive courses ELP use can be more frequent – perhaps at the end of every teaching session or in more depth at the end of a teaching week.

Learners should record what they have done, and file their work and resources that may be of use in the future. In addition, the ELP should be used as a basis for discussing new themes or learning targets.

It is important to note that time spent working with the ELP provides an authentic learning experience. It entails discussion, negotiation, decision making and real engagement with the target language.

4.3 How to begin using the ELP

The ELP should be introduced to learners at the beginning of their course. The teacher may decide the most appropriate approach in relation to the learners and their existing levels of target language proficiency. Some teachers may begin with the first page of the Language Passport, *My Personal Identity*, as a means of getting to know new learners and exchanging information in the group. It may be appropriate to begin by looking at the page *My priorities* to help learners understand from the outset that the course will reflect their real needs as migrants. This approach can prove motivating for learners. For very low level learners the pictures on this page will support communication. It may be necessary to begin by creating material for the Dossier. For example, an introduction may include information about the school, days of classes, procedures to be followed if the student is unable to attend, etc. This information may be printed and filed in the Dossier for future reference.

By introducing the ELP at the beginning of a course, teachers help their learners to understand that it is a central tool for the duration of their learning and they will be using it on a regular basis.

4.4 Using ELP pages in the classroom

Pages in the ELP should not be ‘filled in’ and then forgotten but revisited whenever it is relevant to what is being taught.

For example, *How I learnt in the past* (Language Biography 1) prompts learners to think about how they learn and, by identifying the approaches that suit them, make their language learning as effective as possible. Eleven statements about learning are provided with spaces for learners to add their own ideas or experiences.

When the statements have been explored over a period of time learners make a choice of two approaches to learning that suit them. Finally they are asked to consider whether they respond better to visual or text-based learning. By visiting this page at intervals learners are prompted to think actively about different classroom methods and what they find helpful. By the time they complete the page they should have a deeper insight into themselves as learners.

This page can be used in the following way:

- Following a learning activity, refer learners to the page and read out two or three of the statements
- Ask learners to think about whether they find these approaches helpful

- Elicit responses from the learners about their own preferred methods
- Return to the learning theme and use a short activity to consolidate what was being learnt previously (e.g. quick quiz, crossword, mind map, brainstorming etc.)
- Ask learners if this has helped them remember the new information
- Get learners to enter two or three notes on the page providing examples from their own experience (some of these should be negative as not all approaches will suit all learners)
- Leave the ELP page and return to it following a different type of activity so that learners have the opportunity to identify how they respond to a different learning challenge

When learners have completed most of the page, take time to discuss their preferred learning approaches and then the remainder of the page can be completed. The process may last for a whole language course.

It is also possible to use an ELP page as a stimulus in advance of a learning activity. For example, when discussing a forthcoming festival or event in the local area *Differences and similarities* (Language Biography 1) or *Important events* (Language Biography 2) can be used to introduce the topic. By getting learners to offer information on what is familiar to them, the teacher encourages them to explore what is new and unfamiliar.

The examples above may be applied to all pages in the ELP. In planning their classes teachers should always consider how they can help the class to engage with the ELP as a means of activating knowledge or reflecting on learning.

4.5 Using checklists

As noted above, checklists provide an invaluable support for teachers, helping them to plan teaching activities and verify the level at which the activities have been designed. They also provide a means of checking that a language course has achieved coverage of an appropriate range of situations and types of language use. It is important that teachers familiarise themselves thoroughly with the checklists so that they can quickly find descriptors relevant to a planned learning activity.

Checklists are an equally important resource for learners, helping them to learn about the stages of learning and the demands made by different language activities.

For example, when identifying new learning targets the activity may proceed as follows:

- Having completed a cycle of learning on a particular theme, learners discuss and select a theme that is relevant to the class (see *My priorities* Language Biography 2).
- The teacher draws attention to relevant descriptors and helps learners understand the demands of different language skills in relation to this theme.
- Learners highlight or write the date against the descriptors that will be the primary focus of their next cycle of learning.

When they know what they must achieve, learners more easily understand the purpose of learning activities and can review and assess their achievement at the end of the learning cycle.

- On completion of the learning cycle, learners return to the highlighted descriptors and consider how well they can perform the tasks in question.
- Learners then write the date against the descriptors they have mastered

Inevitably there are many interconnections between different checklists and for learners there is satisfaction and motivation in seeing progress take place across several different pages at the same time.

For more information about using checklists for goal-setting and self-assessment see the introduction to *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: Goal-setting and self-assessment checklists*.

4.6 The ELP content

The ELP does not restrict the scope of teaching but accompanies and reflects the process of learning. Its use can be integrated with any classroom activities, topics or teaching objectives.

There are many interconnections between general ELP content and learning themes so that learners are frequently able to record their thoughts or progress in several different places at the same time.

4.7 The physical form of the ELP

For adult migrant learners, the ELP becomes a central tool and, as such, is used frequently throughout their language course. Consequently it may grow into a substantial file. It is important, therefore, to consider the best means of presenting the ELP to learners so that it can perform this important function.

Not all learners will need to use every page, as discussed above, but every ELP should contain particular elements. These elements include the Language Passport (for personal and linguistic identification); Language Biography (to accompany learning and support learners in developing cross-cultural and learner awareness); and the Dossier to file material and create a learning resource. The number of individual pages may be reduced and fewer checklists may be included when this is considered appropriate.

The ELP is most effective when material can be inserted or removed and this does not happen easily when the ELP is produced in the form of a book. The use of a ring binder allows for flexibility and expansion and allows the ELP to act as a learning portfolio.

4.8 Ownership of the ELP

The purpose of the ELP is to reflect an individual learner's thoughts, beliefs, challenges and progress through a language course. It is a personal document and, as such, will contain information that the owner may consider sensitive. It is most important that learners are confident in their use of the ELP and that it is not used for any purpose other than supporting learning.

5 The ELP and assessment

The European Language Portfolio is a personal document which gradually develops to contain the learner's thoughts, reflections, difficulties and successes. However, one of the on-going processes throughout ELP use is the self-assessment of work and progress in learning, and recording this on a chronological basis. It is important to remember that self-assessment is valid both as a form of assessment and as an instrument of learning. With the support of teachers, learners can develop their skills of self-assessment and will become increasingly aware of learning demands, personal learning styles and how they may achieve success.

All ELP pages prompt learners to think, assess and record. The support of teachers is essential in the early stages of a language course but over time learners become empowered to carry out these procedures themselves. The ability to self-assess is a key transferable skill and, as such, will support learners far beyond the language class.

6 Creating an ELP for adult migrant learners from these pages

As indicated above (Section 4.1), these pages may be used to assemble an ELP to meet the particular needs of adult migrant language learners, taking into account the level(s) of proficiency of the learners and the frequency of contact and duration of a language course. Section 7 below illustrates examples of how to create ELPs for three different profiles of learners.

All ELPs have three obligatory components as described on page 2. The ELP as learning and teaching tool is firmly based on pedagogical principles and the successful implementation of these principles is, in turn, dependent on regular and appropriate ELP use.

For further information about developing and registering a European Language Portfolio with ideas for its use and implementation in the classroom visit:

www.coe.int/portfolio

7 Creating ELPs for learners with different proficiency profiles

Learner profile 1: learners with a low level of proficiency

Learners enter the language course with little if any proficiency in the target language. They are generally literate but some have low levels of literary and others are literate in a different writing system.

Some learners are already working and others hope to gain employment in manual or service occupations. Their personal targets are to improve proficiency in Listening and Speaking and to develop some basic proficiency in Reading and Writing.

It is expected that in the duration of the course, learners will achieve the following profile according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*:

	Level A1	Level A2
Listening		
Reading		
Spoken Interaction		
Spoken Production		
Writing		

An ELP for these learners should contain the following pages. Teachers should also use their discretion and introduce additional pages as appropriate either to individual learners in a group or to the thematic content of a course.

ELP pages for low-level learners

Language Passport

My Personal Identity LP2*

My learning and linguistic identity LP3

Language Biography Part 1

My first self-assessment for learning (*language*) LB(1)2

Differences and similarities LB(1)4

Past, present and future LB(1)6

Language Biography Part 2

Understanding cultural differences LB(2)3

How well do you know yourself as a learner? LB(2)5

My priorities LB(2)6

Learning targets and self-assessment LB(2)7

Learning outside class LB(2)8

Learning Diary LB(2)16

Language Biography Checklists

Levels A1 and A2 for all skills

Dossier

Dossier content should be adjusted to reflect learners' profiles and targets.

* Each page in the *European Language Portfolio for Adult Migrants* is identified by an individual letter/number combination.

Learner profile 2: learners with a higher level of proficiency

Learners enter the language course with individual profiles which indicate existing proficiency in the target language. For some learners proficiency is generally at Level A2 with some skills reaching Level B1. Learners are all literate and some intend to pursue further education or training through the target language.

While many of the learners are now working in manual or service occupations, their aspirations are to achieve employment as supervisors, administrators, secretarial assistants, researchers and so on.

It is expected that in the duration of the course, learners will achieve the following profile according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*:

	Level A2	Level B1
Listening		
Reading		
Spoken Interaction		
Spoken Production		
Writing		

A small number of learners will exceed these levels of proficiency due to previous educational experience and existing learning skills.

ELP pages for higher-level learners

Language Passport

My Personal Identity LP2

My proficiency in languages LP4

Self-assessment grid LP5

Certificates and Diplomas LP6

Language Biography Part 1

My first self-assessment for learning (*language*) LB(1)2

Intercultural experiences LB(1)3

Things I have noticed about language and culture LB(1)5

Past, present and future LB(1)6

Using my personal skills, abilities and interests LB (1)7

How I learnt in the past LB(1)8

Language Biography Part 2

Understanding cultural differences LB(2)3

How well do you know yourself as a learner? LB(2)5

My priorities LB(2)6

Learning targets and self-assessment LB(2)7

Learning outside class LB(2)8

Solving communication problems LB(2)10

Experiences in using my languages to help others LB(2)11

Thinking back on what I have learnt today LB(2)14

Language Biography Checklists

Levels A2 and B1 for all skills

Dossier

Dossier content should be adjusted to reflect learners' profiles and targets.

Learner profile 3: preparing for employment

Learners enter the language course with individual profiles which indicate varying levels of existing proficiency in the target language. For some learners proficiency is generally at Level A1 with some skills reaching Level A2. Other learners have higher levels of proficiency, achieving a profile across Levels A2 and B1. The common factor among these learners is their target of preparing and competing for employment on the labour market. Employment targets range from basic manual labour to IT or office-based work.

Despite the range of occupations, all learners must develop particular skills in the target language which relate to job-seeking, making application, preparing a *curriculum vitae*, interview skills, and so on. In addition, it is important that those approaching employment should develop awareness of cultural norms and the behaviours associated with these.

The focus of this course is on seeking and gaining employment and it will be important that each learner maintains an ELP which supports this objective. Each ELP will be highly individual as learners pursue their own employment interests. The ELP should become a key resource in the process of job seeking.

The following ELP pages are suitable for learners who are actively seeking employment. Pages should be selected in relation to each individual's proficiency in the target language in addition to the job-seeking target. The ELP should be used to supplement classroom activities which support the overall objectives of the course.

ELP pages for learners seeking employment

Language Passport

- My Personal Identity LP2
- My learning and linguistic identity LP3
- My proficiency in languages LP4
- Self-assessment grid LP5
- Certificates and Diplomas LP6

Language Biography Part 1

- My first self-assessment for learning (*language*) LB(1)2
- Intercultural experiences LB(1)3
- Differences and similarities LB(1)4
- Things I have noticed about language and culture LB(1)5
- Past, present and future LB(1)6
- Using my personal skills, abilities and interests LB (1)7
- How I learnt in the past LB(1)8

Language Biography Part 2

- My personal expectations of this language course LB(2)2
- Understanding cultural differences LB(2)3
- Important events LB(2)4
- How well do you know yourself as a learner? LB(2)5
- Learning targets and self-assessment LB(2)7
- Learning outside class LB(2)8
- Solving communication problems LB(2)10
- Experiences in using my languages to help others LB(2)11
- Thinking back on what I have learnt today LB(2)14
- Language for profession or occupation LB(2)17
- The workplace: Finding employment LB(2)18
- The workplace: Preparing for an interview LB(2)19

Language Biography Checklists

Checklists should be selected to reflect individual learner's abilities and needs.

Dossier

Dossier content should focus on the world of work and job-seeking skills.