

## **Study Report ePortfolio**

### **ePortfolios and the electronic European Language Portfolio eELP and their potential use in media-net-works and other projects**

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#### **Table of contents**

1. Introduction
  2. Definition
  3. ePortfolio standards and specifications
  4. ePortfolios in practice
  5. Commercial ePortfolio software
  6. Open Source Portfolio software
  7. The electronic European Language Portfolio eELP
  8. Possible Use of ePortfolios in media-net-works or other projects
- Appendix: Overview about the functionality of the Open Source Portfolio (OSP)

## 1. Introduction

This study report gives an overview about ePortfolios and the electronic European Language Portfolio eELP. It describes what an ePortfolio is and in which context it is already used in practice. The report includes a short functionality description of the OSP – an open source ePortfolio. Furthermore suggestions are given how to use ePortfolios or the eELP in the media-net-works project or other projects.

## 2. Definition

*“An ePortfolio is a collection of authentic and diverse evidence, drawn from a larger archive, that represents what a person or organization has learned over time, on which the person or organization has reflected, designed for presentation to one or more audiences for a particular rhetorical purpose.”*

*“The e-portfolio is an information management system that uses electronic media and services. The learner builds and maintains a digital repository of artefacts, which they can use to demonstrate competence and reflect on their learning. Having access to their records, digital repository, feedback and reflection students can achieve a greater understanding of their individual growth, learning and career planning. Accreditation for prior and/or extra-curricular experiences and control over access makes the e-portfolio a powerful tool.”*

An ePortfolio should consist of the following parts:

- summary of the learner’s achievements
- possibility to create different views / presentations for the audience
- possibility for the learner to write reflections about his achievements
- possibility for the audience to comment the achievements
- personal development planning

## 3. ePortfolio standards and specifications

Until today no “real” final specification for ePortfolios has been published. Only a technical specification for an XML exchange format has been published. Some drafts and a whitepaper has been announced for 2005.

The following organisations are working on specifications:

Eifel (<http://www.eife-l.org/eifel>)

They want to publish a whitepaper in 2005.

IMS (<http://www.imsglobal.org/ep/index.cfm>)

They have published a draft for a specification (technical specification and exchange formats) that can be downloaded on their website.

EPIXspec (<http://www.epixspec.org/>)

The ePortfolio Interoperability XML (EPIX) specification was defined by ePortaro, Inc. (<http://www.eportaro.com>) and released to the public on the 29th of January, 2003

## 4. ePortfolios in practice

In Wales ePortfolios are already in use. The government wants to realize that every citizen will have an ePortfolio until 2010.

They are used at <http://www.careerswales.com/> (It’s not possible to test it).

Several universities (mainly from USA, England, Australia, France) are using ePortfolios for their students.

## 5. Commercial Portfolio Software

There are around 30 companies offering commercial ePortfolios. A list can be found at: <http://www.campus-technology.com/article.asp?id=6984>  
Unfortunately most of these commercial ePortfolios cannot be tested.

## 6. Open Source Portfolio Software

There are several projects working on the development of open source portfolio software. But most of these solutions have only a limited range of functions.

The Open Source Portfolio (OSP) is the most auspicious open source solution for ePortfolios which covers all of the functions mentioned in the ePortfolio definition. The software is developed by the Open Source Portfolio Initiative (OSPI). The OSPI is a community of individuals and organizations (e.G. the University of Minnesota and the University of Delaware) collaborating on the development of a non-proprietary, open source electronic portfolio software.

The OSP is based on Java Server Pages (JSP) and Servlets. It is using the Tomcat server and the MySQL database which are also available for free. The complete software package can be downloaded from the website.

Additional information can be found on the project website: [www.theospi.org](http://www.theospi.org).

In the appendix you can find a short manual about the functionality of the OSP.

## 7. The electronic European Language Portfolio eELP

### European Language Portfolio ELP (Europäisches Sprachen Portfolio ESP)

The European Language Portfolio is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language - whether at school or outside school - can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences.

The portfolio is structured into three parts. It contains a language passport which its owner regularly updates. A grid is provided where his/her language competences can be described according to common criteria accepted throughout Europe and which can serve as a complement to customary certificates. The document also contains a detailed language biography describing the owner's experiences in each language and which is designed to guide the learner in planning and assessing progress. Finally, there is a dossier where examples of personal work can be kept to illustrate one's language competences.

A good overview about the European Language Portfolio can be found at:

<http://culture2.coe.int/portfolio>

### **Electronic European Language Portfolio e-ELP**

There is an EU Socrates/Minerva project called "*Project of study of the electronic European Language Portfolio (ELP)*" which tries to implement a European Language Portfolio (ELP) in a digital format.

<http://eelp.gap.it/>

Project duration: **2 years** (from November 2003 to November 2005)

Project partners:

- Intercollege Cyprus (CY)
- Europa Universität Viadrina Frankfurt an der Oder (DE)
- Universidad de Salamanca (ES)

- GAP Multimedia S.R.I. (IT)
- Göteborgs Universitet (SW)
- Högskolan i Skövde

It was announced that in January, 2005 a prototype of the digital ELP would be presented by the partners at the Università degli Studi of Milan during a seminar. Unfortunately until May 2005 no further information could be found on the project website.

## **8. Possible Use of ePortfolios in media-net-works or other projects**

Using an ePortfolio in media-net-works could be very useful to document learner's achievements. The use of the eELP might also be useful in the Leonardo Context for the documentation of the language experience of the students.

Unfortunately the development of electronic Portfolios has just begun. The available open source ePortfolio software does not cover all functionalities of a portfolio or is not flexible enough. No final whitepaper defining an ePortfolio has been published. The development of the eELP is also at the beginning.

Therefore it is too early to use ePortfolio software in current projects.

But the field of ePortfolios is very interesting and could be very useful in the future. The development in this area should be observed very carefully. For the year 2005 a whitepaper for ePortfolios and a first prototype for the eELP is announced.

## Appendix

### Overview about the functionality of the Open Source Portfolio (OSP)

The OSP is currently available in two different versions – the version 1.5 and the version 2.0. From version 1.5 to 2.0 some functionality was added. The first screenshots you will see are from version 1.5 but they look similar in version 2.0. The last two screenshots are from version 2.0 because they show some functions which are not available in version 1.5.

The OSP can be structured into three logical parts:

- Enter
- Share
- View

The Enter part contains the personal information such as education and work history.

In the Share part presentations for different target groups can be created and shared.

The View part gives you the possibility to view and comment other people's portfolios.

### Personal Information

The section contains the learner's personal information such as contact information, interests, education and work history (see screenshot 1).

The screenshot displays the OSP interface for user Thomas Joeckel. The top navigation bar includes the OSP logo, the user's name, and a 'space usage 0.0 of 20.0 MB' indicator with a 'LOGOUT' button. The main content area is titled 'ENTER' and features a 'Collapse tree' button. The tree view is organized into several categories:

- Personal Information**
  - Test Category**
    - Contact Info (NEW)
      - Thomas Joeckel (DELETE)
    - Interests (NEW)
      - Interest 1 (DELETE)
    - Letters of Recommendation (NEW)
  - Education**
    - Education History (NEW)
      - School 1 (DELETE)
      - School 2 (DELETE)
  - Professional**
    - Work History (NEW)
      - Administrator (DELETE)
      - Technical Coordinator (DELETE)
    - Skills (NEW)
      - Test Skill (DELETE)
    - Career Plan (NEW)
      - Become a millionaire (DELETE)
  - Assignments**
  - General Education**

Screenshot 1: The structure of the personal information screen

Screenshot 2 shows the form in which the learner enters the education history. All the schools and the earned degrees are entered there.

The screenshot shows the 'Education History' form in the ePortfolio system. The user is Thomas Joeckel. The form includes fields for 'school' (School 2), 'from' (August 1988), 'to' (August 1992), 'degree earned' (degree 2), and 'date degree earned' (30 August 1992). There are 'SAVE CHANGES' and 'CANCEL' buttons. A sidebar on the left contains navigation options like 'ENTER', 'SHARE', 'VIEW', and 'My Settings'. A right sidebar titled 'ENTER' contains an 'ATTACH MATERIAL' section with options to 'ADD/ATTACH FILES', 'LINK TO WEB PAGE', or 'ATTACH EXISTING'. A 'Comments on this Element' section is also visible, showing no comments and an option to 'Add new comment about this Element'.

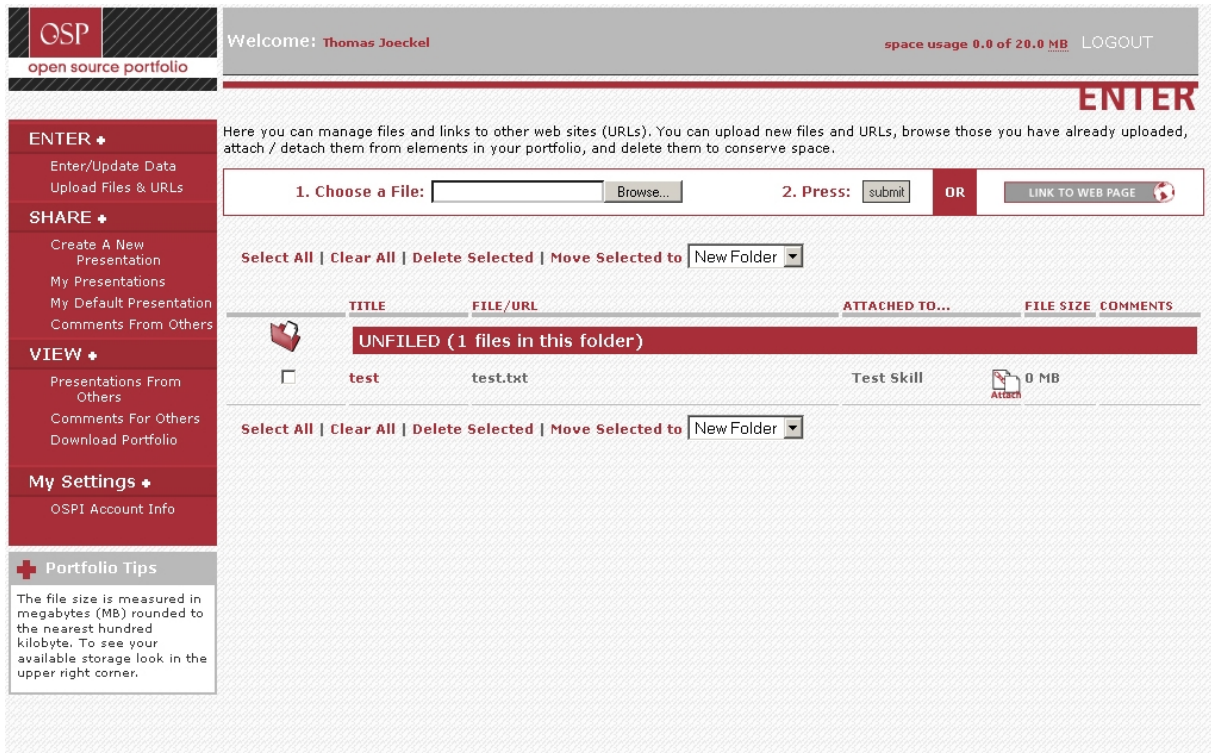
Screenshot 2: Education history

The work history contains all information about the learner's previous employers (see screenshot 3).

The screenshot shows the 'Work History' form in the ePortfolio system. The user is Thomas Joeckel. The form includes fields for 'position title' (Technical Coordinator), 'institution / organization' (Institut inter.research e.V.), 'supervisor', 'street address 1' (Am Alten Schlachthof 4), 'city' (Fulda), 'state', 'zip' (36037), 'country' (Deutschland), 'phone' (0661 23523), and 'start date' (December 2002). There are 'SAVE CHANGES' and 'CANCEL' buttons. The sidebar and right sidebar are identical to Screenshot 2.

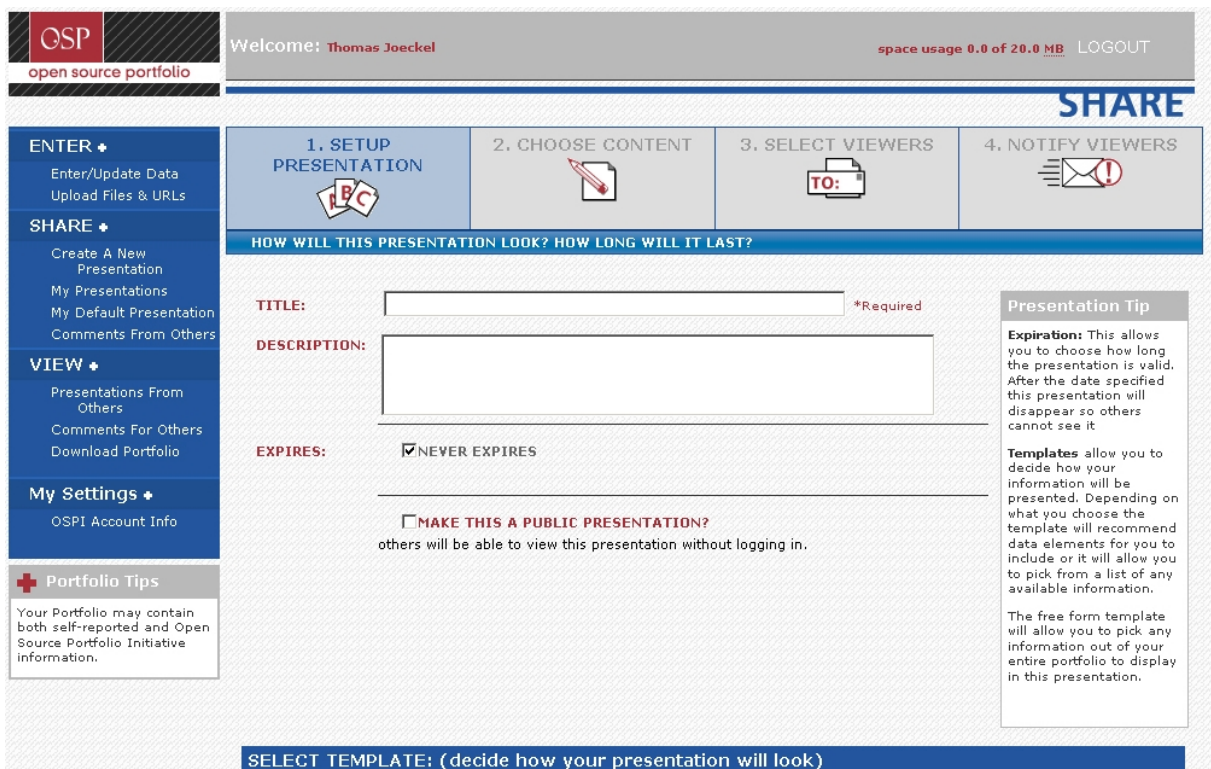
Screenshot 3: Work history

The software allows the learner to attach files to entries in the personal information section (e.g. in the education history or the work history). Therefore it is possible to attach school certificates or references from employers to an entry. The files have to be uploaded to the system (see screenshot 4) and can then be attached to one ore more entries.



Screenshot 4: Uploading files

After the learner has entered the personal information it is possible to create different presentations for specific persons or target groups. The learner chooses a title and a short description for the presentation (see screenshot 5) and selects which content should be visible.



Screenshot 5: Creating a new presentation

The learner can then specify who has the permission to view the presentation (see screenshot 6). This can either be a member of the OSP system or a guest.

The screenshot shows the 'SHARE' interface for a presentation titled 'Test Presentation'. The process is divided into four steps: 1. SETUP PRESENTATION, 2. CHOOSE CONTENT, 3. SELECT VIEWERS (the current step), and 4. NOTIFY VIEWERS. The 'SELECT VIEWERS' step includes a section titled 'WHO GETS TO SEE YOUR DATA?' with two main options: 'Share with a Member' and 'Share with a Guest'. The 'Share with a Member' section has input fields for Last Name, First Name, Email, and User ID, each with an 'ADD' button. The 'Share with a Guest' section has a 'Guest Email' field and an 'ADD' button. To the right, the 'Adding Viewers' section provides instructions on how to add users to the list. Below these sections is a 'VIEWING PRIVILEGES' section with a scrollable list of individuals who will have access to the presentation.

Screenshot 6: Selecting the recipients for the presentation

People looking at the portfolio will see a webpage which will look similar to the one on screenshot 7.

The screenshot shows a user's ePortfolio page titled 'My Local Portfolio'. The page features a 'SHARE' button in the top right corner. The main content area is organized into several sections: 'Contact Info: Thomas Joeckel' (listing name, address line 1, city, zip, phone, mobile, and email), 'Interests: Interest 1' (listing name of interest, activity, and skills), 'Education History: School 1' (listing school, dates, and degree earned), 'Education History: School 2' (listing school, dates, and degree earned), and 'Work History: Administrator' (listing position title, institution/organization, street address, city, zip, and country).

Screenshot 7: An ePortfolio



OSP version 2.0 contains a learning matrix in which the learner can enter the educational objectives and the associated learning achievements (see screenshot 8).

PUL Learning Matrix				
Click on a cell to view/edit				
PULs	Introductory	Intermediate	Advanced	Experiential
Core Skills: Written Communication				
Core Skills: Comprehend, Interpret, and Analyze Text				
Core Skills: Oral Communication				
Core Skills: Analytical Reasoning				
Core Skills: Information and Technological Literacy				
Critical Thinking				
Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness				
Integration and Application of Knowledge				
Understanding Society and Culture				

Screenshot 8: The learning matrix

New features in version 2.0 are templates for presentations (see screenshot 9). These can be used to create new ePortfolio presentations in a very quick and efficient way.

The screenshot shows the ePortfolio interface for Indiana University. The top navigation bar includes 'eportfolio @INDIANA UNIVERSITY', 'Help | Feedback | logout', and 'POWERED BY: OSP2'. The main navigation tabs are 'Workspace', 'CIG', and 'Presentation'. On the left is a 'Dashboard' menu with options like 'add template', 'list templates', 'add presentation', 'list presentations', 'my comments', and 'comments from others about me'. The main content area is divided into 'My Comments' (showing 'testjan' and 'very nice work'), 'Presentations' (showing '7 Presentations' and an 'Add Presentation' button), and 'Template Library' (showing a list of templates like 'Test', 'cvb', 'test2', 'testtttt', 'looseleaf', 'Shane', 'whatever', 'My template', 'udel test', and 'Slide Show').

Screenshot 9: Templates for presentations