Changing the public sector through digital learning environments?
E-portfolios and teaching public administration

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Abstract
Mahara is an open source ePortfolio system, combining the logics of a learning diary, a social media platform and an electronic passport. It is promoted as a learner-oriented “personal learning environment” supposedly more useful for blended learning than more institution-centric learning management systems such as Moodle. At the FH Campus Wien it is also used by teachers-as-learners in the frame of its competence-oriented didactic certificate program. The present paper presents background information on the use of e-portfolios in teaching and learning, but also analyses some of the avenues through which Mahara provides subjectivation pressures and cues for identity work of learners. We also provide some thoughts on the ideas of society that are inscribed into and performed by Mahara, as well as of its individuals and their learning and competence. This enables us to also discuss the implementation of Mahara in mid-career programs of public administration and management and reflect on Mahara’s relation to the changing paradigms in public administration towards increased collaboration and coordination – a paradigm shift which is strongly enabled by digitalisation.

In our presentation at the workshop we will share our experience with this e-portfolio system, addressing the following questions:

- In what ways and through what functions and spaces does the system support reflection?
- What is the system’s relationship between public performance and private reflection? How are both related to learning?
- To what extent is the system compatible with institutional logics of the public sector? Can it be appropriated by mid-career students?