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A new teacher portfolio towards lifelong learning

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Abstract

The integration of a novel teacher portfolio for newly recruited teachers in Italy epitomizes a new approach to meeting the demands of lifelong learning within the teaching profession. This paper explores the deployment and implications of this innovative model, which has been embraced by over 40,000 teachers during their probationary year starting from the 2023/24 school year. Anchored in a set of minimum professional standards, the teacher portfolio promotes self-evaluation across a broad spectrum of teaching competencies, from didactics and engagement in school life to organizational involvement and professional advancement. It encourages teachers to undertake reflective practice by documenting their professional development experiences, thereby fostering growth and facilitating adaptation to the complex realities of contemporary classrooms. This transformative instrument is pivotal for the systematic documentation of teachers' professional trajectories and serves as an essential mechanism for continuous professional development and self-assessment. Its adaptability, extensive applicability across all educational levels and disciplines and flexibility across professional development phases (from Initial teacher Education, to Induction, to Continuous Professional Development) renders it a valuable tool in sustaining the principles of quality teaching and learning processes. Leveraging preliminary empirical data from the 2023/24 school year, based on the widespread adoption of the teacher portfolio by a significant number of teachers in their probation year this study articulates the teacher portfolio's potential to markedly influence teachers' professional growth from a lifelong learning standpoint.

Keywords: Teacher portfolio, Induction, Teacher Standards, Reflective Practice, Lifelong Learning

Introduction

The introduction of a new digital portfolio for newly hired teachers in Italy during the 2023/24 school year marks a significant step toward addressing the ongoing training needs of the teaching profession. Teachers and educators are required to engage in lifelong professional development, and countries worldwide are committed to supporting their teachers in maintaining motivation and continuously improving their expertise throughout their careers. Self-reflection (Schön1983; Vinatier, & Altet, 2008) plays a key role in this process, serving as a critical lever for fostering growth and development.

The use of digital portfolios (also known as e-portfolios) has been widely studied in the context of pre-service teacher education. Recent research highlights that while portfolios show promise in supporting reflective practice (Imhof & Picard, 2008; Hopper et al., 2018), demonstrating student-teachers' skills and knowledge, and tracking their growth over time (Montgomery, 2003), their impact depends on various factors. These include the quality of implementation (e.g., clear instructions and feedback) (Zeichner, & Wray, 2001), individual characteristics such as self-efficacy and proactive learning approaches (Imhof & Picard, 2008), and the degree of ownership and personalization (Montgomery, 2003). Granberg (2010) adds that successful portfolio integration requires a nuanced understanding of pedagogical implications, continuous reflection on practices, and collaborative efforts among teacher educators and institutions.

In pre-service teacher education, a recent systematic review by Feder and Cramer (2023) synthesizes empirical evidence based primarily on quantitative data regarding the effects of portfolios. Their findings reveal a prevalence of qualitative studies, reflecting the complexity of portfolio use and its multifaceted impact on aspects such as reflection and professional identity. Despite the context-dependency of these results, key effects of portfolios include enhanced reflection, self-assessment, professional development support, facilitated dialogue and feedback, and improved motivation and engagement among student-teachers.

Feder and Cramer (2023) further emphasize the need for more methodologically rigorous research, particularly quantitative studies with larger sample sizes and longitudinal designs. This would provide stronger evidence of the effectiveness of portfolios and yield more generalizable findings—precisely the aim of the current study.

To our knowledge, large-scale research on portfolio use in both induction and in-service teacher education is scarce. However, small-scale qualitative studies offer valuable insights. For instance, Fox et al. (2008) examined portfolios of teachers at different stages of a professional development program and concluded that reflections within the portfolios offer important insights into teacher development, though individual differences in growth patterns must be considered. Similar conclusions were drawn by Aras (2021) in a study of early childhood teachers in Turkey, and by Espinoza & Medina (2021), who explored the impact of e-portfolios on the learning experiences of in-service English teachers in Chile.

Even rarer in the literature is the exploration of portfolio use beyond pre-service teacher education. Boulton (2013), in an action-research study, investigated the feasibility of extending e-portfolio use into the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year and beyond. The study highlighted two key aspects: interoperability to support the transition and sustained professional development. Boulton found that digital portfolios could effectively support new teachers throughout their careers by encouraging ongoing professional learning. However, the study also stressed the importance of NQTs feeling a sense of ownership over their portfolios to use them as tools for self-directed learning and reflection.

One aspect that is notably underexplored in the literature is the connection between portfolios and teacher professional standards. Montgomery (2003) is one of the few to discuss this, emphasizing that aligning digital portfolios with professional standards is essential to demonstrate the attainment of required competencies. This aligns with a broader recognition of the importance of Teacher Professional Standards as key components in educational systems globally (Darling-Hammond, 2021).

The extensive research demonstrating the effectiveness of portfolios in teacher education, despite differences related to various stages of professional development, has driven the large-scale adoption of the digital portfolios in induction programs in Italy since 2015, used by over 300,000 teachers (Pettenati, 2022). The recent introduction of a renewed portfolio version, flexible and adaptable to different stages of professional growth, offers an opportunity to explore its usability on a national scale within the context of teachers' continuous professional development.

This paper analyzes the introduction and preliminary results of the new portfolio, used in 2023/24 by more than 40,000 newly hired teachers during their probationary year. The study explores its potential for supporting lifelong learning. Drawing on empirical data from

monitoring questionnaires administered to the entire cohort of newly hired teachers, the research questions guiding this paper are:

- Does the use of the online portfolio contribute to enhancing the quality of teacher training during the induction period?
- What is the potential for the portfolio to support Continuing Professional Development (CPD)?

Materials and Methods

The teacher portfolio is an online tool, designed to support teachers' professional growth, facilitating reflection and documentation of various development milestones. The theoretical framework for the lifelong teacher portfolio was developed in 2021 through collaborative research by Indire, the University of Macerata, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Di Stasio et al., 2021). Building on previous large-scale teacher portfolio models (Rossi et al., 2017), this model centers around Teacher Standards, which support self-assessment and the evaluation of competencies defining professional practice. The model is structured around four key functions: Documentation, involving the curated collection of materials that substantiate professional development; Reflection and Narrative, where teachers link selected materials to articulate their competencies and growth; Projection, allowing teachers to assess their skills against a professional competence profile; and Publication, which enables teachers to share aspects of their professional journey with others.

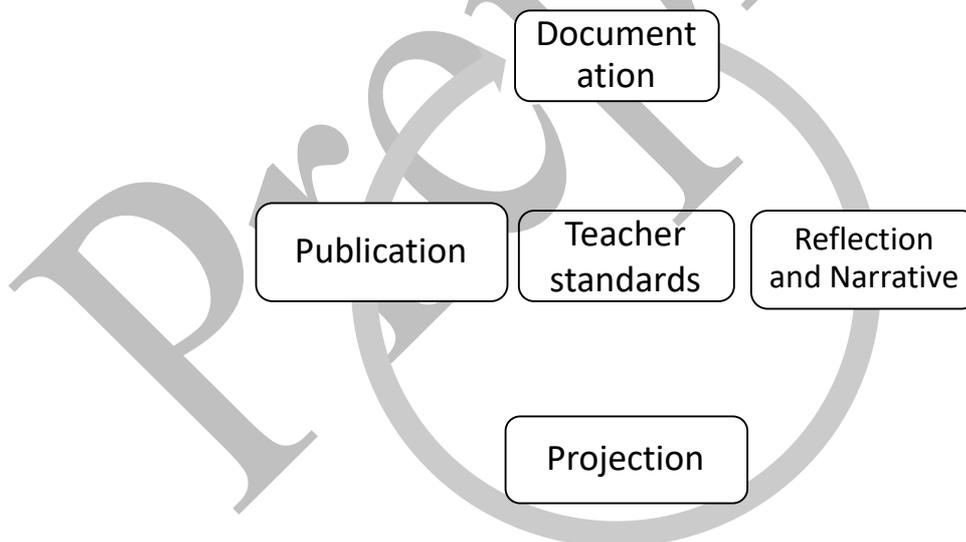


Figure 1 – Teacher's portfolio model (Di Stasio et al., 2021)

By construction, such a portfolio model should provide its suitability for accompanying teachers in a lifelong learning perspective through all phases and stages of maturity, from initial teacher education to in-service training.

As of school year 23/24, the general and theoretical portfolio model (Di Stasio et al., 2021) was reworked and implemented in the new version for newly qualified teachers for the purpose of supporting the documentation of professional development in the training and probationary

year, as articulated according to DM 226/2022 by which it is regulated.

In accordance with the theoretical model, the new portfolio is based on two core constructs - Teacher Standards and Documentation of Experience - and culminates in a series of online activities that both mirror and integrate the face-to-face and school-based practices, fostering a comprehensive approach to teacher professional development (Fig. 2, upper section).

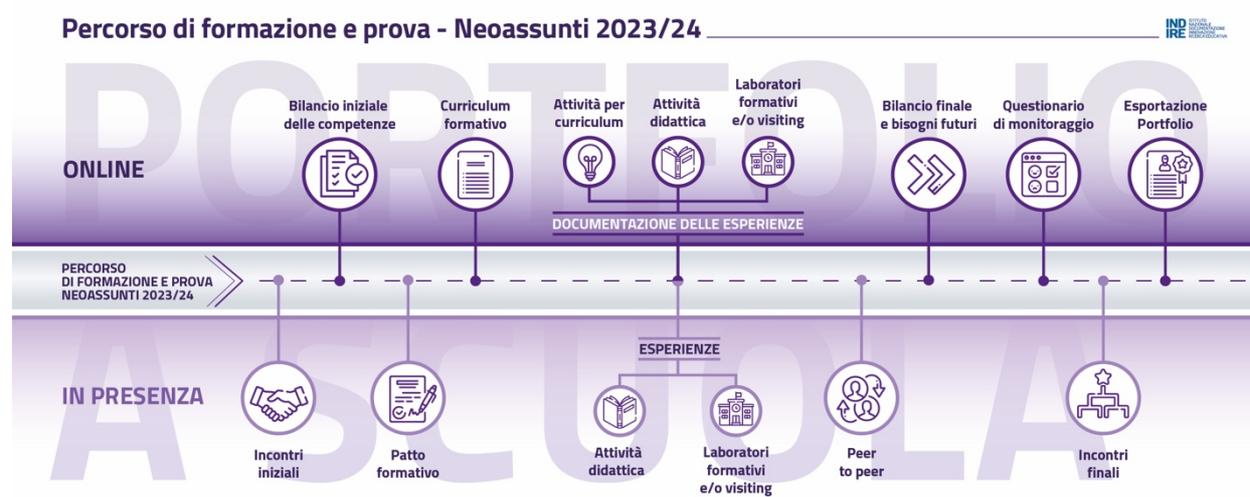


Figure 2 (upper section) –Description of the online activities of the new teacher’s portfolio released for newly qualified teachers in the induction school year 23/24

The Standards in the Competency Framework of the new portfolio for newly hired teachers have been designed to provide flexibility, accommodating various stages and purposes of professional growth. This adaptability allows the portfolio to be used primarily for self-assessment ("Where am I?"), as preparation for training decisions ("What do I want to improve?"), and to identify areas where one’s role can extend beyond the classroom ("In what areas can I support my professionalism?").

Building on the work done at the ministerial level (MIUR, 2018) and on large-scale experimentation experiences with Competence Framework documented for the initial and entry training phases (Magnoler, 2017, Pettenati, 2022), the competences profile developed in the new portfolio (Pettenati, 2024) revolves around 3 main areas (Table 1): the Didactics area, the Institution and Community area, and the Profession area, 8 Professional Standards and 36 Competence Indicators.

Area	Teacher Standards
A. Didactics – Area of pedagogical, methodological, and relational competencies	Standard 1: Design and manage learning situations that promote the eight European key competences for lifelong learning, transforming teaching into meaningful and critical experiences, including the use of digital and face-to-face teaching tools, and using tools to document, assess, and certify students' personal competencies, also with an orientation perspective.
	Standard 2: Adopt and adapt teaching strategies and methods, including those personalized for the inclusion of students with disabilities and special educational needs, integrating disciplinary and interdisciplinary epistemologies and methodologies.
	Standard 3: Use assessment strategies and methods to promote learning.

	Standard 4: Manage relationships and behavior in the classroom to foster learning in a calm and collaborative environment.
B. Institution-Community – Area of competencies related to participation in school life and the social context	Standard 5: Actively participate in the organized professional experience at school, understanding and applying the functions and methods of internal and external assessment of formal, non-formal, and informal learning.
	Standard 6: Work collaboratively with the school’s professional community.
	Standard 7: Establish positive relationships with families, institutional partners, and social partners.
C. Profession – Area of continuous training, professional care, and development of new responsibilities	Standard 8: Engage in continuous training and professional development, integrating foundational knowledge and teaching methods specific to one’s subjects, with the ability to design and flexibly manage class/interclass groups for the personalization and promotion of talents, as well as the development of cross-cutting and communication skills.

Table 1. Professional Standards used in the Competency Assessment of Newly Qualified Teachers, School Year 2023–2024 (Pettenati et al., 2024)

The Teachers Standards were also designed with the aim of linking to the most recent normative documents defining the "Concluding Profile of the Qualified Teacher, Professional Competencies and Minimum Professional Standards on initial teacher training for secondary school teachers, " (DPCM 4/8/2023), but also with Annex A to DM 226/22, which regulates the training and probationary year and provides a tool (structured observation grid) for reciprocal observation between tutor and newly hired teacher, declining the evidence that can support the explication of professional competencies especially with regard to the area of Didactics.

The self-assessment is supported by the provision of five levels of mastery ranging from "the competence has never been tested" (level 0) to "the competence is mature and accredited and can be made available to/for colleagues and the school" (level 4) (Figure 4).



Figure 4 – Interface of the Competency Framework for the self-assessment activity implemented in the newly hired teachers portfolio s.y 23/24

Eventually, the section of the new teachers portfolio called Documentation of Experiences in the general model (Figure 1), has been implemented to allow the documentation of formative-professionalizing Experiences specific of the probationary. This section aims to support reflection in action and after action (Schon, 1993) and to stimulate constant adjustment of one's professional actions (Vinatier & Altet, 2008). It provides for the description of training

activities (workshops, visits to innovative schools, didactic activities) according to the specific induction model (DM 226/22) on which reflection guided by specific questions-stimulus is also part of the mandatory activity (Figure 5). Documented Experiences are also to be linked by the teacher to one or more Professional Standards that are influenced by the experience itself.

Esperienze

I campi obbligatori presentano un *, è inoltre obbligatorio indicare almeno uno standard di competenza.

Scegli la tipologia di esperienza che vuoi inserire *

Attività didattica

Titolo* rimangono: 255 caratteri

Abstract* rimangono: 1500 caratteri

Data inizio* Data fine*

gg/mm/aaaa gg/mm/aaaa

L'esperienza ha permesso di migliorare la tua professionalità? Se sì, quali competenze del Bilancio ritieni di aver rafforzato? rimangono: 2500 caratteri

B I S @ **☰ ☲**

L'attività si è sviluppata come avevi progettato o previsto? In caso contrario, cosa hai modificato e per quale motivo? (Ad esempio: eventi imprevisti, reazioni degli allievi, loro difficoltà non previste, un'errata previsione dei tempi, ecc.)* rimangono: 2500 caratteri

B I S @ **☰ ☲**

Quali credi siano state le tue scelte (di metodo, di strumenti e materiali di supporto utilizzati, di valutazione ecc.) più efficaci? Per quale motivo? rimangono: 2500 caratteri

B I S @ **☰ ☲**

Scegli lo/gli standard di competenza che sono stati approfonditi in prevalenza grazie all'esperienza che hai svolto. E' obbligatoria la scelta di almeno uno standard.

Area A - Didattica

Standard 1 - Progettare e gestire situazioni di apprendimento

Standard 2 - Adottare e adattare strategie e metodi didattici

Standard 3 - Adottare strategie e metodi di valutazione

Standard 4 - Gestire relazioni e comportamenti in classe

Area B - ISTITUZIONE-COMUNITA'

Standard 5 - Partecipare all'esperienza professionale a scuola

Standard 6 - Lavorare in modo collaborativo con la comunità professionale

Standard 7 - Instaurare rapporti positivi con gli stakeholder

Area C - PROFESSIONE

Standard 8 - Impegnarsi nella formazione continua

Figure 5 – Interface of the Documentation of the Experiences section in the newly hired teacher's portfolio s.y 23/24

The complete structure of the portfolio (sections and related descriptors, guiding questions) for newly qualified teachers is summarized in the table below.

<p>PROFESSIONAL TRAINING RECORD <i>Describe a maximum of 3 experiences (formal or informal) that have been significant for your professional growth.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Title- Duration of Experience- Brief Description <p>Open-ended Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What knowledge/skills did you acquire during this experience, and how do they contribute to your professional practice?- Which competencies from your initial self-assessment do you feel you have strengthened, and why? <p>Multiple choice question: Which teacher standards were impacted by this experience? (Select from Standards 1 to 8)</p> <p>---</p> <p>LABORATORIES / STUDY VISITS <i>Describe 1 to 4 laboratories and/or 1 or 2 study visits.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Title- Duration of Experience

- Brief Description

Open-ended Questions for Laboratories

- Which of the following topics was addressed in the laboratory session you attended?
- Did the laboratory provide you with elements (methods, strategies, tools, or content) that you plan to or have already implemented with your students? If so, which ones?

Open-ended Questions for Study Visits

- What innovative practices did you observe?
- Are the practices you observed generalizable or applicable in your class or school? Are they sustainable, or do they require specific resources for implementation?

Multiple choice question:

Which teacher standards were impacted by this experience? (Select from Standards 1 to 8)

DOCUMENTATION OF A DIDACTIC ACTIVITY

Describe a teaching activity carried out during the probationary year

- Title
- Duration of Experience
- Brief Description

Open-ended Questions

- Did this experience enhance your professionalism? If so, which competencies from your initial self-assessment do you feel you have strengthened?
- Did the activity unfold as you had planned or anticipated? If not, what adjustments did you make and why? (e.g., unforeseen events, student reactions, unexpected difficulties, inaccurate time estimates, etc.)
- What do you consider to be your most effective choices (in terms of methods, support materials, evaluation, etc.)? Why?

Multiple choice question:

Which teacher standards were impacted by this experience? (Select from Standards 1 to 8)

INITIAL SELF-ASSESSMENT (To be completed at the beginning of the probation year)

- Self-assessment based on 36 competence indicators using a 5-level mastery scale.

FINAL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES (To be completed at the end of the probation year)

- Self-assessment based on 8 teacher standards using a 5-level mastery scale.

Open-ended Questions

- What skills (abilities, knowledge, attitudes) did you choose to develop or did you improve this year? Do you feel they have improved? If so, in what ways, and through which activities?

- | |
|---|
| <p>- Among the proposed thematic areas, which topics do you wish to further develop in the future, considering both your personal interests and the improvement needs of your school (as expressed in the Three-Year Curriculum Plan and relevant to your specific role)?</p> |
|---|

Table 2 – Structure and sections of the Teacher Portfolio for Newly Qualified Teachers

To answer to the research question, this study employs a national survey aimed at assessing the perception of newly qualified teachers regarding the perceived value of this portfolio during their probation year and the potential use of a new online portfolio from the perspective of continuing professional development (CPD).

The primary tool for data collection was a questionnaire consisting of 17 items. The questionnaire was designed (Marradi, 2019) to elicit responses that would provide insights into:

- Explore the potential use of the portfolio for continuing professional development; assess how the portfolio can be integrated into continuing professional development practices, identifying opportunities and perceived benefits for teachers.
- Evaluate the contribution of the portfolio to training quality; analyze how the use of the portfolio may positively influence the quality of teacher training, highlighting areas for improvement and expected outcomes.
- Gather feedback on teachers' experiences in the new environment; collect direct insights from teachers regarding their experiences using the new portfolio, understanding challenges faced and usability features that are most appreciated.

The target population for this survey included all teachers undergoing induction during the school year 2023/2024, totaling over 46.000 individuals. A robust response rate was achieved, with 42,072 respondents participating by June 16, 2024. Data were collected through an online platform to facilitate ease of access and completion. Some questions in the questionnaire, particularly those related to the potential use of the portfolio, were contingent on previous responses, where participants had expressed a certain level of interest (from moderate to high) in continuing to use the portfolio. Therefore, the number of respondents may vary across different questions.

The responses were analyzed quantitatively using statistical methods to identify trends and patterns in perceptions regarding the online portfolio's utility in CPD. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the data.

Results

Based on the responses from the questionnaire, the use of the online portfolio appears to have contributed positively to enhancing the quality of teachers' training during the induction period.

The portfolio helped and guided in completing all the stages of the probation year in a clear and organized way: a significant number of teachers, 34.9%, reported that the portfolio helped them "a lot" in completing the stages of the probation year, with an additional 44.5% saying it helped them "quite a bit." This indicates that nearly 80% of the teachers found the portfolio to be a very helpful organizational tool. Only a small percentage, 1%, felt that it did not help at all. Moreover, the portfolio contributed to building a coherent and comprehensive view of the activities carried out during the probation year: 29.7% of the teachers said the portfolio helped "a lot" in creating a coherent view of their probation year activities, with 51.7% saying it contributed "quite a bit." This reflects a strong consensus (over 80%) that the portfolio helped

in providing an organized understanding of their activities. Moreover, most teachers saw the portfolio as a valuable tool for fostering reflective practice: the portfolio contributed to facilitating critical reflection on teaching: 29.8% of respondents stated that the portfolio contributed "a lot" to critical reflection on their teaching practice, while 47.0% felt it contributed "quite a bit."

The results for the question "Would you like to continue using the portfolio?" reveal a moderately positive trend towards continued use of the portfolio, but with some reservations.

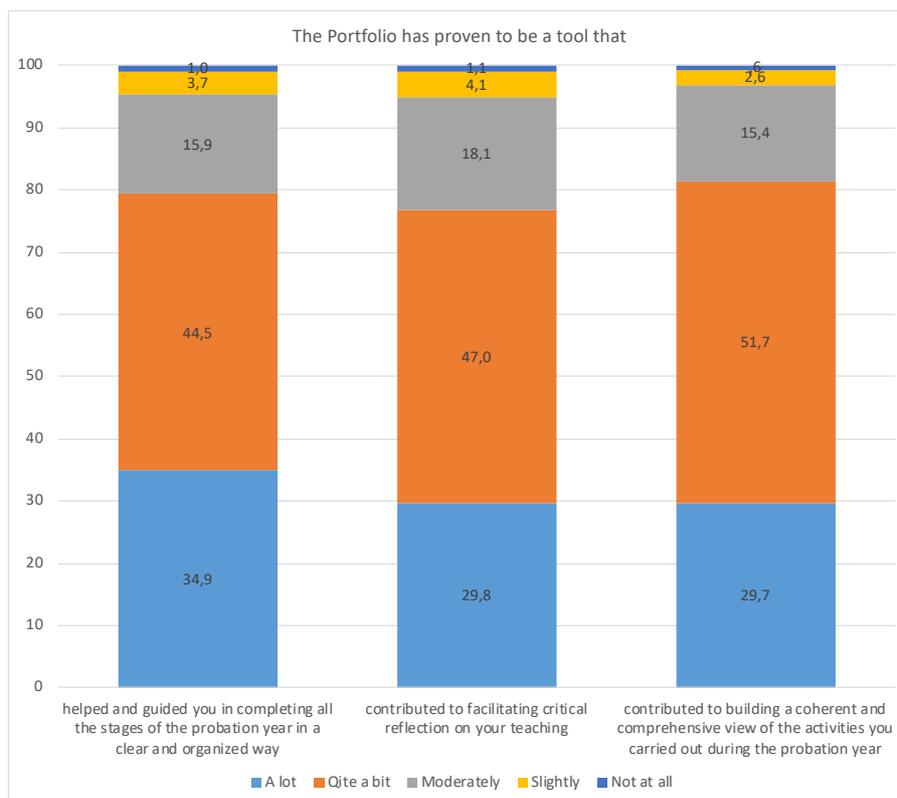


Figure 6 – Perception of the effectiveness of the portfolio as a tool for the probation year

Only 8.4% of respondents expressed a strong desire ("A lot") to continue using it, while 33.4% answered "Quite a bit," indicating significant but not enthusiastic interest. Together, these groups make up 41.8% of respondents, showing a generally positive, though not overwhelming, inclination towards the portfolio. The largest group, 36.2%, expressed moderate interest ("Moderately"), suggesting that most teachers see some value in the portfolio but do not view it as essential or highly beneficial. A further 16.6% responded "Slightly," showing low interest in continuing to use the portfolio, and finally, 5.3% indicated no interest at all ("Not at all"). This relatively small percentage suggests that only a minority of teachers find the portfolio completely irrelevant or of little use for their professional needs.

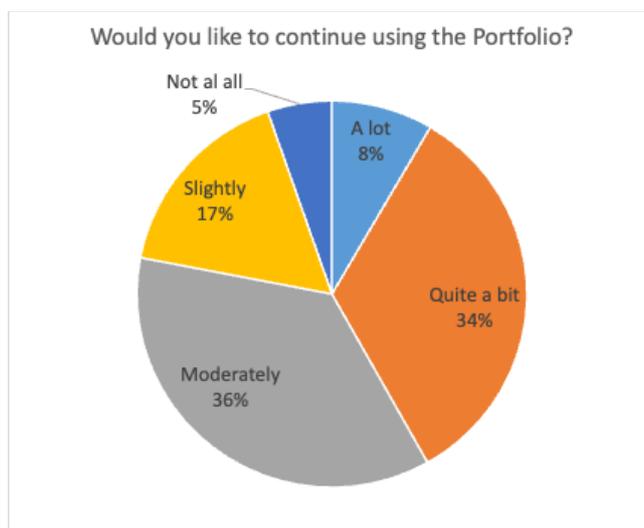


Figure 7 – Perception of lifelong use of the portfolio

Based on the responses from the questionnaire to the previous questions, we surveyed the areas of potential use of the new portfolio for continuing professional development (CPD) only among those respondents that answered positively (from “moderately” to “quite a bit”) for a total of 32.771 individuals.

Among those, a significant proportion of teachers answered that the portfolio can be a tool of interest “as a self-assessment tool with a view to continuous professional development” since, 30.3%, believe the portfolio could be “a lot” of interest as a self-assessment tool for CPD, while 47.0% say it could be of “quite a bit” of interest. Hence, a strong majority (over 75%) see the portfolio as highly relevant for self-assessment in their ongoing professional growth. Only 6.0% do not see it as useful in this context. Also, the portfolio is seen useful also “for documenting and monitoring the development of professional skills”: 23.7% of respondents indicated that the portfolio could be “a lot” of interest in tracking professional skill development, with another 49.1% rating it as “quite a bit” useful. Again, this reflects a high level of support (over 70%) for the portfolio as a monitoring tool. The potential for using the portfolio in transitional periods is seen as more moderate: only 9.7% of teachers found it to be “a lot” of interest “in transition phases (e.g., returning from maternity/paternity leave, taking on new roles, etc.)” while 37.4% rated it as “quite a bit” useful, and 33.1% saw it as “moderately” useful. However, 8.2% felt it was not relevant at all.

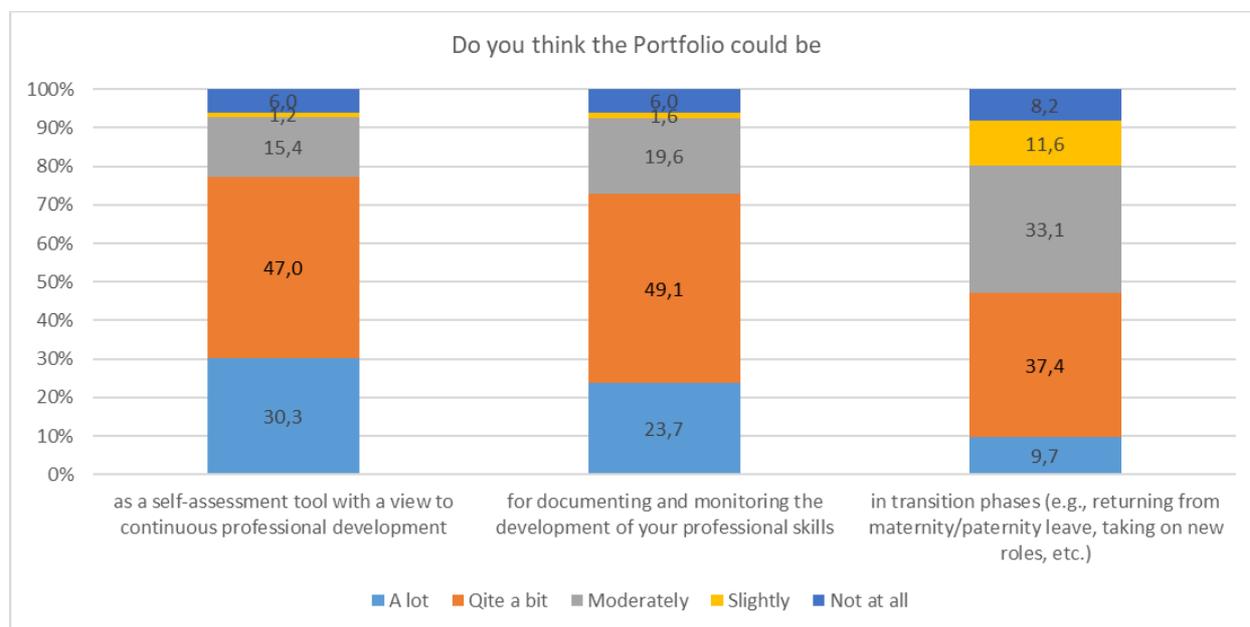


Figure 8 – Teachers' perspectives on the portfolio as a tool for self-assessment, skill monitoring, and use in transitional periods

With regards to the interest of using the portfolio to sustain professional opportunities (within and outside the own school) and social accountability we witness a general positive outlook from the respondents: 20.8% of teachers felt the portfolio could be "a lot" useful in improving professionalism in schools other than where they currently teach, and 42.5% rated it as "quite a bit" useful. A smaller proportion, 7.2%, felt it was not relevant. This is confirmed also by the answer assessing the interest of using the portfolio a potentially helpful networking and collaboration tool: 20.3% of respondents indicated that the portfolio could "a lot" help in making them more accessible for inter-school projects or collaborations, with 41.9% agreeing it could be "quite a bit" useful.

Similarly to the previous question, 20.7% of teachers believe the portfolio could "a lot" contribute to enhancing professionalism within their own school, while 44.9% found it "quite a bit" useful. The majority of teachers see it as a valuable tool for professional development in their immediate teaching environment. The use of the portfolio as a tool for social accountability, instead, is viewed as moderately useful, with 15.8% of teachers seeing it as "a lot" relevant and 40.0% viewing it as "quite a bit" useful. However, 28% and 8,3% consider it respectively "moderately" or "not relevant at all". This suggests that while the portfolio has potential in fostering accountability, it is not universally seen as essential in this regard.

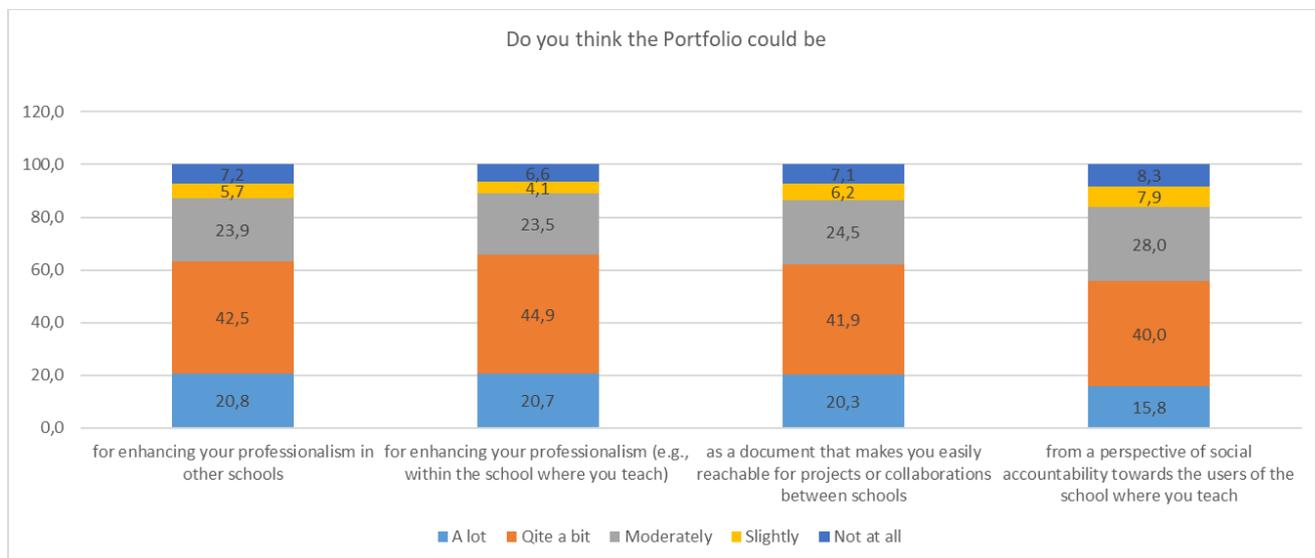


Figure 9 – Teachers' perceptions of the portfolio's usefulness for sustaining professional opportunities and social accountability

In contrast to the positive aspects above cited, 15.4% of the entire cohort of teachers surveyed, i.e. 42.072 individuals, said the portfolio required "a lot" of additional bureaucratic work, while 30.9% felt it required "quite a bit." However, a notable 34.3% reported that it required only a moderate amount of additional work, and fewer teachers, 5.2%, felt it did not add much or any bureaucratic burden.

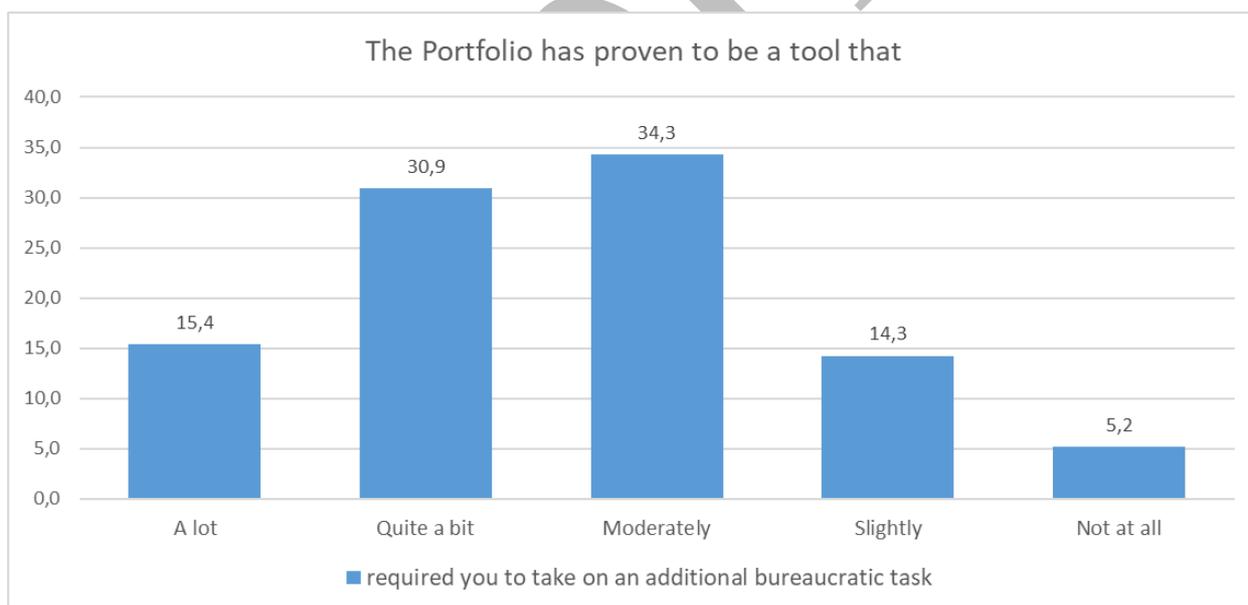


Figure 10 – Teachers' perceptions of the bureaucratic workload associated with the portfolio

Discussion

The findings from this study suggest that the online portfolio used in the large-scale induction Italian program is largely perceived as a useful tool for enhancing organization, reflective practice, and providing a coherent and systemic view on the overall training and probation year. A significant majority of teachers, nearly 80%, expressed that the portfolio helped them complete probationary tasks in an organized and clear manner. Similarly, over 80% reported that it contributed to building a coherent view of their activities during the probation year.

However, a more nuanced picture emerges when considering the portfolio's broader use. While many teachers see potential for the portfolio to be used as a self-assessment and skill development tool (75% expressing interest), the enthusiasm for its long-term use is more reserved. Only a minority (8.4%) expressed strong interest in continuing to use the portfolio, with the majority giving more moderate responses. This indicates that while the portfolio has value, it may not yet be viewed as indispensable by most teachers, maybe due to the need of a clearly defined focus and purpose for the continued use. Similar hesitancy has been observed in other studies where portfolios were implemented for professional development but emotional and personal challenges were faced by teachers during the portfolio creation process both because of the ambiguity around the portfolio's purpose and audience and the emotional labor involved in reflecting on and presenting one's teaching (Fitzpatrick & Spiller, 2010).

One critical limitation of the portfolio, as revealed by the data, is its perceived bureaucratic burden. Nearly half of the respondents (46.3%) reported that it required a moderate to significant amount of additional work, which may dampen enthusiasm for its continued use. Another notable point is the mixed feedback on the portfolio's applicability in transition phases (e.g., returning from leave or taking on new roles) and for social accountability purposes. These areas were not as positively rated, suggesting that while the portfolio is useful for ongoing self-assessment and skill development, its role in these specific contexts may need refinement or further clarification to increase its perceived value. This finding aligns with Beck et al.'s (2005) conclusion that while e-portfolios can support professional growth, they must be carefully designed to emphasize reflection and teacher development, rather focused on summative outcome of the portfolio. The overlap between portfolio completion and the other formal obligations of newly hired teachers, as mandated by Italian regulations, may exacerbate this issue.

Several limitations should be acknowledged in this study. First, the study relied solely on a quantitative survey based on 3 out of the 17 questions from the teacher's questionnaire related to the preliminary data extraction from 40,072 teachers out of a total sample of approximately 46,500. The remaining questions in the survey will allow to explore additional aspects related to the initial findings discussed here and investigate other dimensions, such as the usability of the portfolio tool.

Moreover, while allowing for large-scale data collection, this study did not capture the more in-depth, qualitative insights into teachers' experiences and challenges. Future studies should incorporate interviews or focus groups to explore the nuances of portfolio use, especially in terms of how it affects professional identity and reflective practice as well as its potential lifelong use. Moreover, the study's focus on teacher perceptions also highlights an important gap: while teachers acknowledge the portfolio's potential, this study does not measure the direct impact on teaching practices or student learning outcomes. This aligns with the broader literature (Feder & Cramer, 2023), where many studies focus on user perceptions rather than concrete outcomes. Future research should also aim to quantify the impact of portfolios on actual teaching performance and, possibly, on student achievement, providing a more comprehensive understanding of their effectiveness.

Second, the study was conducted within the specific context of the induction period for newly hired teachers in Italy, a time when teachers are already managing numerous professional commitments. This may have influenced their perception of the portfolio, particularly in terms of its workload as well as its summative purpose. The concentration of tasks during this period may have led to feelings of "fatigue," which could negatively affect their views on the tool's usefulness. Moreover, the portfolio's dual role as both a self-assessment tool and a key element in external evaluation (for the Evaluation Committee) may have affected its perception. The shift from a development tool to one used for evaluation could alter how teachers engage with

the portfolio.

The results of this study align with research findings (Rossi, 2005; Fitzpatrick & Spiller, 2010; Giannandrea, 2017) findings, particularly given the context of large-scale portfolio implementations. In the case of Italy, the national-level adoption of the portfolio for newly hired teachers establishes a foundation for its systemic use across the teaching profession. However, as Fitzpatrick and Spiller emphasize, the institutional framework must play a crucial role in regulating and guiding this adoption to ensure that it achieves the necessary balance between institutional requirements and the personal, reflective growth of individual teachers. Clear institutional guidelines and support are essential to harmonize the broader professional objectives with the reflective and developmental journey of each teacher. Further research could explore how perceptions of the portfolio change over a longer period, once the initial pressure of the probationary year has passed.

Conclusion

Thanks to the conceptual framework built around the two core constructs of Teacher Standards and Documentation of Experiences, the new teacher portfolio is proposed as a tool for strengthening teachers' professional identity, serving as a bridge between theory and practice and between initial training and continuing professional development. Its implementation and adoption by a significant number of teachers in their training and probationary year allows us to explore its potential for broader implications and from a continuing education perspective.

The online portfolio shows promise as a tool for supporting teacher organization, reflection, and skill development during the induction period. The study's findings suggest that while teachers recognize the portfolio's potential for self-assessment and professional growth, enthusiasm for its sustained use is tempered by concerns about bureaucratic workload and relevance. These findings extend previous research by confirming the portfolio's value in the induction phase but also highlight areas for improvement, particularly in terms of reducing administrative burdens and enhancing its applicability beyond the induction period.

Moreover, this study reinforces the call for future research to focus on measuring the portfolio's concrete impacts on teaching practices and learning outcomes, moving beyond teacher perceptions to offer a fuller understanding of its effectiveness.

Future studies should also explore the interoperable implementation of the portfolios for initial teacher education and in-service training to demonstrate its validity in supporting lifelong learning, examining whether it can be adapted to meet the evolving needs of teachers throughout their careers.

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