

EU Lifelong Learning Programme 2007- 2013 (2012/C 232/04)
Subprogramme Leonardo da Vinci. Call for proposal 2013 EAC/S07/12
Action "Transfer of Innovation"
Project number: 2013-1-ES1-LEO05-66707

“INTERPRETING OUR EUROPEAN HERITAGE”

ECVET for transparency and recognition of learning outcomes and
qualification in European Tourism Sector

WP 2 – Analysis and preparatory researches in participating countries on the tourism sectorial professional field concerned by “heritage interpretation” activities

Report on preparatory analysis and researches on the
field of professional figures concerned by “heritage
interpretation” activities in Europe

Synthetic version for the dissemination (Info-pack 1)

8 April 2014

INDEX

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Analysis and preparatory researches on the tourism sectorial professional field concerned by “heritage interpretation” activities.....	4

1. Introduction

Tourism constitutes one of the most important economic sectors in Spain and Europe, with a very significant occupational relevance. Within the tourism sector the “heritage interpretation” activities is gaining more and more importance. The cultural and natural tourism in the European areas offers concrete and expanding job opportunities to a large number of people in order to satisfy the demand of services and products in a very large and quite diversified range of activities and qualifications across the European countries and regions (hiking guides, speleological guides, horse trials guides, environmental awareness educators, etc.). On the one hand those qualifications are often not clearly defined in terms of learning outcomes. On the other hand they are also frequently regulated, in terms of access to the training and qualification opportunities, in a way that in fact is very limiting the mobility beyond the system “borders” of vocational education and training (VET).

Interpreting our European Heritage is a project initiated by Koan Consulting and funded by the European Commission in the Lifelong Learning Programme. Interpreting our European Heritage project aims at a better transparency and recognition of the learning outcomes characterising the “heritage interpretation” activities and the qualification of “European Heritage Interpreter”, applying and implementing the European tools and frameworks EQF and ECVET. The project partners are VET providers, enterprises and non-profit associations operating in the field of tourism from Spain, Italy, Hungary, Belgium, Austria and Slovenia.

The major activities at this aim are focused on the implementation of ECVET, the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training. The project develops a Memorandum of Understanding which defines the professional field in heritage interpretation in terms of learning outcomes achieved in formal, informal and non formal contexts and quality standards. Through learning agreements, credit awarding and the transfer validation the professional figures will be enforced throughout Europe. The multiplication and mainstreaming of these results is giving a wide acceptance to the qualification.

These activities will enhance the mobility of nature-based tourism professionals, contributing to the emergence of generally accepted qualifications and training standards.

2. Analysis and preparatory researches on the tourism sectorial professional field concerned by “heritage interpretation” activities.

At the overall aim of enabling an ECVET process for engaged persons and trainees within the tourism sectorial professional field concerned by “heritage interpretation” activities carried out a detailed survey of the professional figures operating in tourism sector in Spain, Italy, Hungary, Belgium, Austria and Slovenia

Overall in the different countries **28 professional figures** involved in heritage interpretation activities in the tourism sector have been identified. Of these figures **4 were detected in Spain, 8 in Italy, 3 in Hungary, 7 in Belgium, 3 in Austria, and 3 in Slovenia.** (see table 1).

All figures were classified within the European Qualification Framework (EQF), a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, as well as within their national classificatory system. The EQF consists of 8 levels from which level 1 to 5 refer to vocational education, while level 6 to 8 describe higher education. The professional figures analysed by the project were limited to level 5 of the EQF.

The analysis was done in cooperation with the providers of the qualifications. The providers answered a questionnaire aiming at their professional self-awareness, the understanding of legal framework and the need of a certification at European level.

Spain	Italy	Hungary	Belgium	Austria	Slovenia
Nature tourist guide EQF Level 5	Hiking guide with possible horse trial, speleological, bicycle touring specialisations EQF Level 4	Tourist guide EQF Level 3	Tourist guides EQF Level 4	National Park-Ranger EQF Level 5	Tourist animator EQF Level 4
Cultural heritage tourist guide EQF Level 5	Competences system needed to carry out environmental education for sustainability EQF Level 4	Environmental technician EQF Level 4	Curator EQF Level 7	Forester / Forest educator EQF Level 6	Tourist informatory EQF Level 4
National Park monitor EQF Level 3	Didactical Farm Operator EQF Level 4	Nature conservation technician EQF Level 4	Manager of pedagogical service EQF Level 7	Hiking guide EQF Level 4	Hiking guide EQF Level 4
Heritage interpreter EQF Level 5	Tourism Helper EQF Level 4		Scenographer EQF Level 7		
	Specialised Tourist Guide EQF Level 4		Museologist EQF Level 7		
	Hotel Director EQF Level 6		Heritage interpreter EQF Level 8		
	Front office qualified operator EQF Level 3		Manager of tourist guides EQF Level 7		
	Travel and Tourism Agency Technical Director EQF Level 6				

Table 1: Professional figures identified by the Interpreting our European Heritage project partners.

With the aim of a common European perimeter of figures involved in “heritage interpretation” activities in the tourism sector for the activation of the ECVET process the survey’s results lead to the definition of the following criteria:

- The project will work on figures classified within the EQF level 5 and lower;
- The project will work on the figures of guides (natural and cultural) and environmental educators related to “heritage interpretation activities” as transversal fields. It will also include the figure of rural accommodation operators dedicated to tourism activities that relate to the tasks of “guides or educators”.

On the basis of these shared criteria, within the inventory of 28 professional figures detected in the Interpreting our European Heritage participating countries, the following 4 figures were identified as basis for the further development of the project (table 2):

Spain	Italy	Hungary	Belgium	Austria	Slovenia
Environmental educator					
Nature Guide					
Tourist Guide					
Rural and Agro-Tourism Accommodation Manager					

Table 2: Selected professional figures

The next step within the project is the definition of an action plan for the ECVET process to be activated in the tourism sector professional field concerned by “heritage interpretation” activities.

The results of the workpackage 2 activities have been summarised in a detailed report on the preparatory analysis, researches and the methodology used for the survey. This report is available in the download area of the project website:

<http://www.interpretingeuropeanheritage.com/>