

**LEONARDO DA VINCI
TRANSFER OF INNOVATION**

“EU Tourism Mentoring (EUTM)”

2013- 1- SK1- LEO05-06367

Prepared by **SC GROUP G4 PROMOTION SRL**
– **ACTIV TOURS&TRAVELS -**
Leader of **WP 2 – CONTEXT ANALYSIS**

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

PART C: Report on Best Practices

**Coordination* of the desk research studies has been organized by P2 – ACTIV TOURS&TRAVELS. The contacts of SC GROUP G4 PROMOTION SRL – ACTIV TOURS&TRAVELS staff responsible for the coordination of this task are provided in a table below.

Carmen Nicolescu	Cell. (+4)0740091802 Tel (+4)0348439132 Skype: carmen.nicolescu07 e-mail: carmen.nicolescu@activtours.ro ncarmen@yahoo.com	Quality control; contents and structure of the study Contract management, time schedule
Adrian Nicolescu	Skype: activtoursandtravels e-mail: adrian@activtours.ro	

Report on Best Practices in Romania, Slovakia & Lithuania

The overall objective of the report is to study the existing training offer in the field of developing mentoring techniques and skills at local, regional and national levels, from both a formal (academic) level and informal (VET) point of view. Particular attention will be paid to identifying teaching/training best practices to be used as reference points during other project activities.

In order to collect data partners from all four countries have applied the research method called desk-research. The data were collected and outlined in order to be comparable and measurable within the partnership as far as it was possible; however, not all statistics were possible to collect in a similar way in all partner countries so that they could be compared.

The report is part of the context analysis that has two main aims:

- To give a general overview of the tourism industry including data on tourism enterprises and the description of tourism mentoring context, and the prevailing practices in the country;
- To take an informed decision regarding the definition of the object of study – the business function and the tourism entrepreneurship transition process at the country level;

To do so, partners have studied as many relevant documents, articles and websites as possible:

- Community and country policy documents relating to tourism policy and tourism companies policy, their education and training, skills, the EU agenda and others;
- National legislation and policy documents;
- Previous studies and evaluations of tourism enterprises and mentoring in tourism.

The report has been prepared within the frames of the project within the international project EU Tourism Mentoring which connects five partners across Europe - Slovakia, the United Kingdom, Romania and Lithuania. It focuses on mentoring within tourism sector. The project is implemented under the Lifelong Learning Programme, namely the Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation and has been funded with support from the European Commission.

More information about the project is available on www.eumentoring.com.

Content

Country profile – Slovakia	4
Country profile – Romania	5
Country profile – Lithuania	7
Country profile – United Kingdom	8
Conclusions on BEST PRACTICES in Partners` countries	9

Country profile – Slovakia

Although additional professional training is considered necessary in the Slovak HLTT sector, little training is provided to employees in the sector, often on grounds of costs. According to existing data, large companies (4/5 star hotels) are more likely to provide development opportunities for their staff members. Considering the fact that more than 90 percent of the companies in the tourism sector are SMEs, this appears to be insufficient. Mentoring as a cost-effective means of professional development could be a very appropriate tool to meet the requirements of SMEs in the HLTT sector in the terms of their employee's further professional development.

The term “mentoring” is relatively newly established in Slovakia. When asked about mentoring, Slovak experts from HLTT sector talk about “paid consultancy” mainly. More established, and often mistaken for mentoring, is “coaching” which is represented by Slovak coach association – SAKO.

When speaking specifically about mentoring in the HLTT sector, there are very few initiatives. Among the good practices may be spotted:

- the project **ROUTES/European Guide Mentoring Programme (EGM)** of the private NGO Posonium, aimed on exploitation and utilization of great potential of rural areas by stimulation of their inhabitants through better access to learning and teaching materials;
- **Guardian Angels for Female Entrepreneurs** ran by SBA – project with the aim to promote and support women's entrepreneurship in Slovakia and in the EU, through creation of a network of mentors /mentees for start-up entrepreneurs, in which some of the mentors and mentees were from the HLTT sector; and
- one-year programme “**Entrepreneurship in Tourism**”, offered to young people (14-19 years old), certified by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic as a voluntary subject for the 8-9 classes of secondary schools.

A pilot action on the capacity building of potential mentors, free of charge, under the surveillance of the foreign experts appears to be a great initiative towards the accomplishment of the Strategy goals and exploitation of the full potential of Slovak tourism. Moreover the final output of the project – the mentoring toolkit for the enthusiasts / possible future mentors, specifically in the HLTT sector, available for a reasonable price could fill the information gap.

However, if the mentoring appears as a suitable tool to improve some of the aspects of the Slovak tourism, the establishment of the national, better structured and elaborated mentoring program for the businesses active in tourism would be recommended as a next step.

Country profile – Romania

As far as we know, until now, there are no mentoring programs in almost any field, but none in tourism. Unfortunately there is no one specific strategy in supplying education forms of national system of education (which includes studies specific in tourism industry, starting from VET institutions to superior economical studies, at university degree).

a. NGO - Young Skal Bucharest 2013 (<http://youngskal.ro/>): The main objectives of Young Skal are to offer total support for achieving the targets set by Skal Club Bucharest, attending as many projects in the tourism industry and related fields, knowledge and active involvement in promoting tourism phenomenon locally, nationally and internationally, and networking with other Young Skal Clubs in the world.

b. CAESAR (<http://www.caesar-romania.eu/>) - Access to Expertise Centre for Romanian Students and Alumni (CAESAR) is a laboratory of ideas that meet Romanian specialists in the country and abroad with high-level academic and remarkable results in their field.

The purpose of C.A.E.S.A.R. Romanian expert community is to set up a joint and long lasting, targeting sustainable development of Romania. C.A.E.S.A.R. is an assertion framework for young scientists, space recognition for Romanian specialists in the country and abroad, and a platform for knowledge in priority areas for the future of Romania.

c. There are some GUIDES published on entrepreneurship and mentoring in entrepreneurship, but not on TOURISM MENTORING specifically:

<http://www.adrnordest.ro/user/file/leader/manual-leadership-in-dezvoltare-regionala.pdf>

d. “My Mobility Mentor – an experiment for workers from Bulgaria and Romania going to other EU Member States” is a project funded by the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and implemented by ECAS in cooperation with other civil society organizations. The project aims to create a network of rights advisors who can mentor Bulgarian and Romanian workers moving to Belgium, Italy and the UK by providing them with information on moving to those countries to work, by mentoring them during their stay and by providing them with legal support should they need it. In addition to the five actively participating countries, existing sources of legal information are being monitored and assessed in Denmark and Ireland as well.

e. Cubitus project - One of the most important goals of the project, which is funded by the European Commission for Education in the framework of the Erasmus programme’s “Lifelong Learning Programme Erasmus Action” is the development of a “Curriculum for Sustainable Universtiy/Business Cooperation in the Tourism Sector.” For this purpose, a broad pool of stakeholders, among others, will be established with more than 300 international organizations from business, politics and public administration.

There are a lots of studies presented in different conferences, international conferences or EU cooperating projects that are underlining the necessity of giving examples and re-initiating/reinforcing the VET system in services education, to have a good and up-to-date with EU rules curricula¹. Things came to move in Romania – people are looking for improving the skills in

¹ <http://feaa.ucv.ro/AUCSSE/0036v2-017.pdf>

this sector, feeling the enormous potential of one multicultural environment in one free-borders Europe, with more & more freedom of mobility and appetite for intercultural exchanges.

Country profile – Lithuania

In Lithuania, the mentoring concept is yet very new, but a number of innovative projects already tackle professional development problems using mentoring tools. Among the most prominent could be mentioned VOCA and MENTOR projects, sponsored by the European Commission.

Project VOCA supported participants of e-courses in further training activities for developing e-mentor skills and profession, for e-mentoring the disabled people in integration to the working environment and to a new job. Thus, mentors used the knowledge, skills and qualifications gathered via VOCA e-courses both existing and in the new field and localized in new regions. VOCA also supported improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems targeting e-mentoring disabled people and further improve practices present in this field.

As many of the former communist countries today see the establishment of social enterprises as a possibility to fill the vacuum that has been left after the state rapidly withdrew its responsibility of the social sector after 1989, mentoring is rather gaining the interest as a form of social interaction, and is better understood as social mentoring that is based on volunteering. Throughout Lithuania, mentoring that (re-)integrate disadvantaged persons (so far there are only examples of women) into the labour market or provide work places for people with special needs (disabled, long-term unemployed etc.) seem to be the type of social enterprise that receives most attention by different education institutions.

Yet, there is lack of attention at policy-making level to include mentoring as a practice which could support learners in their professional development. None of universities or vocational schools have mentoring programmes, even more related to tourism and hospitality sector so far.

Country profile – United Kingdom

There is efficiency within the UK's mixed economy. The HLTT sector enjoys the support of many government initiatives, and all the private enjoys and benefits from the development of mentors, as new businesses are supported from start-up to sustainability.

There are dedicated coaching and mentoring courses offered by private companies – ILM and SFEDI; duration of these courses vary from 3 months to 1 year and participants receive a certificate. Mentoring and Befriending, a not-for-profit organisation is involved in adult training on mentoring in the community. Many public universities and colleges provide courses leading to ILM or CIPD recognised certificates. Private consultancies offer short courses on coaching and mentoring. Finally, some courses are held within corporate organisations by either the L&D department or by consultancy firms.

However, the completion of a training course does not necessarily reflect the attainment of the competences to be a mentor as described by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) Code of Ethics, as not all mentor development programmes aim to attain this. EMCC was established to promote best practice and ensure that the highest possible standards are maintained in the coach/mentoring relationship, whatever form that might take, so that the coach/mentoring environment provides the greatest opportunity for learning and development

Further learning opportunities include 'Get Mentoring' initiative (Free training for 15,000 plus enterprise mentors) and courses specific for HLTT sector. Some are organised by People 1st (sector skills council for HLTT). Both SMEs and large companies utilise the services of mentoring specialists.

It is notable that new enterprise mentoring training has been launched, placing a further demand upon the mentor – how to develop and manage an enterprise.

Organisations have been identified that could be a role model for the widening or spreading for mentoring in HLTT sector. The following examples are specified:

- USA model
- "CoachingCloud" and "Mentorsme" (UK)
- Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development (Spain)
- People1st (UK)
- European Vocation Tourism Education (EVOCATE)
- European Network for Sustainable Tourism Development (ECOTRANS)
- European Mentoring & Coaching Council
- Hospitality Training Institute (CZ)
- National Mentoring Month (USA)

Conclusions on BEST PRACTICES in Partners` countries

In the UK, mentoring has long been recognised as a cost-effective means of developing standards in staff, and of developing careers. There are many training courses available in the UK including formal (certificated) and non-formal (un-certificated) training. Mentoring courses are on offer as part of university degree programmes, at Further Education colleges, and through private training providers. There have been three areas identified where mentoring can be successful as a development intervention. They are: Career guidance; Business development for start ups and SMEs and Personal/Professional Development.

The most effective learning path for mentors, irrespective of sector, is a combination of training (both online and offline), peer learning and supervision for feedback purposes. Training for Mentors can take from a minimum of half a day to two days. One day training would be the most appropriate as long as it is followed by regular peer learning support and, where available, supervision by a senior mentor/coach or mentoring co-ordinator. It would be advisable to choose a mentoring course leading to certification as this will invariably require testing mentors' skills and attributes.

The 3 European countries, Slovakia, Lithuania and Romania are definitely not so familiar with the mentorship, mostly in the tourism field, and there are some timid beginnings in initiatives like EU cooperation in one-theme projects or mobilities in the field, for better exchanging knowledge and improving skills. Some of the tools that could be used for spreading or widening mentoring in the HLTT sector include different types of training (Seminars; Workshops; Projects, Mentoring Programmes; Mentoring Software) and also showing the best practices from foreign countries or awareness raising tools. The methodology of mentoring already tested in the UK may serve as a standard yet to be achieved by the other partner countries.