



Dissemination and exploitation plan

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Project overview

The main goal of the ETHIT project is to contribute to the better understanding and improvement of the non-formal and informal learning processes within vocational and continuing training in the field of tourism in Europe. This is to be done by means of the transference and adaptation of the Tourism Knowledge Network (www.thinkintourism.com), already developed as a private project in Spain, and allowing exchange of knowledge and networking between both students and workers in the field of tourism. The ETHIT Knowledge Network to be created in the project will help to bring closer the vocational education and training (VET) systems and the realities of employment within the sector. It will allow the interaction, within the same space, of students and experienced workers who will be able to undertake informal learning processes to improve their qualification level and knowledge in a market more and more influenced by Web 2.0.

The tourism industry is a core sector in Europe with the potential to be an economic driver and generate employment. This can be a key step for overcoming the socio-economic crisis many European countries have been undergoing in recent years. In all of the countries represented in the project consortium: Spain, Italy, Portugal, Hungary, Iceland, United Kingdom, Iceland and Germany, tourism is a leading industry to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore, qualification of the human resources in the sector is of key importance in all these countries.

Vocational training systems are continually adapting to the labour market needs. Despite that, the changes in field are so rapid, especially with reference to the key role of the Internet and social networks, that training programmes struggle to cover the knowledge necessary for ensuring individual competitiveness for employees within the tourism sector. Informal learning processes are essential to generate knowledge to be shared among tourism professionals and students. In this respect, a tool such as the Tourism Knowledge Network can be useful for channelling processes of informal learning, if provided with the international dimension required by globalization and by the inherent nature of an industry like tourism.

The tool needs to be transferred to all of the participating countries, translated to individual languages and ensured a critical mass of users who provide basis for sufficient generation of useful knowledge and contents to the vocational and continuous training community all around Europe. The participation in the consortium of vocational training institutions and entities representing companies in the sector ensures that the project will reach workers and students within the field and therefore it will have an impact on various target groups.

1. Scope of project

In OECD countries, tourism is big business, directly accounting for 4.7% of GDP, 6% of employment and 21% of exports of services. International tourist arrivals surpassed 1 billion in 2012 and are forecast to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. OECD countries play a leading role in global tourism, accounting for around 57% of international tourist arrivals and growing by 3.6% in 2012¹. According to the ETC Dashboard, growth in Europe 2013 was comparable to the general growth in tourism and travel worldwide, 5,2% compared to 5,3%². However, the growth has been unevenly distributed. For instance, tourist arrivals to Iceland increased by 20,1 % in 2013 and by 5,6% in Spain³.

Most countries within Europe are established destinations, and as such need to compete more on the quality scale than the quantity scale, i.e. provide quality services and develop add-on revenue possibilities based on sustainability and professionalism, rather than compete in pricing with newer, less developed destinations in other continents. Large growth rates such as in Iceland in recent years may lead to growing pains, not least within the scope of this project, the professionalism, training and education of workers within the industry.

Tourism is an industry heavily dependent on human resources. Indeed tourism is an industry based on interaction and individual experiences. Coupled with that is the inherent seasonality of the industry, which leads to its dependence on seasonal, migrant workers, often lacking basic training. Coinciding with this are the current circumstances in individual countries, with unemployment levels significantly higher than average among young people and those with least education. Studies show that re-introduction of these individuals to the job market can be problematic and must be adapted to various needs and circumstances.

Tourism can indeed play an important role in job creation for e.g. those risking long-term unemployment. In order to do so, and in order to create opportunities for diminishing the seasonality challenge and creating year-round, attractive job opportunities, vocational training opportunities, informal as well as formal educational opportunities need to be developed and tuned to the needs of the industry. This is also essential for the future development of Europe as a destination for seasoned travellers.

The project we are embarking upon is based on the web portal thinkintourism.com, an innovation project initiated on behalf of Spanish tourism by Formation Digital in Spain. The projects main aims are to better understand and improve the non-formal and informal learning processes in vocational and continuous training in the field of Tourism in Europe by means of the further development of the ETHIT – European Tourism Knowledge Network. Thus all participating countries will benefit from the results of the project, Spain as well as other partners.

¹ OECD Tourism Trends and Policies, OECD 2014, pp. 11

² ETC Dashboard: dashboard.etc.org

³ ETC Dashboard: dashboard.etc.org

Specific goals include in-depth analysis of user's needs in each participating country: Spain, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, United Kingdom and Iceland; transfer and adaptation of the Tourism Knowledge Network to user's needs; developing a methodological approach to informal learning processes that visualise their impact on the industry. Also, we aim to pilot and validate the ETHIT Network and its potential use as an informal learning tool complementing any other formal or non-formal training action in the field of tourism; widely disseminate the network in every partner country, engaging students and professionals from all these countries, and; design strategies for the sustainability of the ETHIT Network.

To develop relevant learning contents and knowledge that can attract users and enrich their informal learning experience, the project has been divided into eight work packages:

Work packages within the ETHIT project

WP1. MANAGEMENT, COORDINATION AND EVALUATION

- Act. 1.1. Launch meeting.– Milan
- Act. 1.2. 2nd coordination meeting.– Budapest
- Act. 1.3. 3rd coordination meeting. Sheffield
- Act. 1.4. Project closure meeting. - Malaga
- Act. 1.5. Communication and control of the project
- Act. 1.6. External Evaluation.

WP2. RESEARCH AND USER'S NEEDS ANALYSIS IN THE PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

- Act. 2.1. Development of research tools.
- Act. 2.2. Diagnosis of the Training & Tourism fields in the partnership countries.
- Act. 2.3. Analysis of the level and collaborative networking between Tourism Industry professionals.
- Act. 2.4. Analysis of the final user's training needs
- Act. 2.5. Final Report: A Comparative Study on Training & Tourism in Germany, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Hungary, United Kingdom and Iceland.

WP3. TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NETWORK

- Act. 3.1. Preliminary analysis and documentation of the design of the network.
- Act.3.2. Technical design and programming.
- Act. 3.3. Development and integration of contents.
- Act. 3.4. Translation of the Network into the different partner's languages

WP4. METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Act. 4.1 Analysis of the informal learning processes happening within the network.
- Act. 4.2 Definition of different Learning Scenarios within the Knowledge network
- Act. 4.3 Definition of an Informal Learning Methodology of reference for the pedagogical use of the platform.

WP5. LEARNING CONTENTS DEVELOPMENT

- Act. 5.1. Definition of the most useful learning contents categories.
 - Act. 5.2. Development of learning materials by all partners.
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Work packages within the ETHIT project

Act. 5.3. Uploading of learning contents and materials

WP6. PILOT TESTING AND VALIDATION OF THE ETHIT NETWORK

Act. 6.1. Development of a Network administrator-user Guide.

Act. 6.2. Pedagogical advisory for the proper use of the website.

Act. 6.3. Dynamisation of contents in English

Act. 6.4. Development of evaluation / validation tools

Act. 6.4. Evaluation and validation of the network by the final users.

WP7.- QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROJECT RESULTS

Act. 7.1 – Definition of quality standards

Act. 7.2 – Definition of a quality assurance plan

Act. 7.3 – Definition of tools to measure and validate quality.

WP 8 DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE PROJECT

Act.8.1. Development of dissemination and exploitation plan

Act. 8.2 Development of project branding and logo

Act. 8.3 Development of the project website (within the project platform)

Act.8.4. Social media campaign for gaining users

Act. 8.5. Other project communication/dissemination activities

Act. 8.6. National Events for the dissemination of the Project results: ETHIT Network

Act.8.7. Online marketing and dissemination campaign, targeted at final users and different Institutions concerning Training & Tourism within the EU Framework

Act 8.8. Final Conference

The tools developed will be practical providers of information, knowledge and skills transfer and a bridge between the informal and formal sectors of education within the tourism sector. They can provide important opportunities for newcomers to the industry, as well as established workers within the industry, training tools for employers, information, data and networks for students in various fields of tourism education, as well as being a source of guidance for all those wishing to keep up with developments in European tourism (as described below).

2. Objectives of the dissemination and exploitation plan

A dissemination and exploitation strategy is aimed at defining and developing ways to spread the word about the project activities and results as wide as possible, so as to inform and engage the target groups of the project. It is a crucial factor of the project, since it is imperative that target groups experience benefits from the implementation of the tools developed within the project and that those tools are sustainable and utilised in the long term, after the completion of the project.

General objectives of the D&E plan include:

- Raising awareness of the project objectives and products within tourism's educational, training and research community.
- Involving representatives of the different target groups in the overall final design of the web-tool, in order to ensure its applicability.
- Promoting ownership and involvement of the tool after the project's completion, to ensure its future utilisation and sustainability.

Therefore, we will adopt a multi-dimensional dissemination approach, using different strategies and tools adapted to our different target groups.

According to the project description, the specific dissemination aims are:

1. Development of dissemination and exploitation plan. Developed by the WP leader, this will be the point of reference for the dissemination activities to be undertaken by the partners
2. Development of project branding and logo for use in promotional activities
3. Development of the project website (within the project platform). This specific website will contain information about the project itself such as objectives, results, etc..
4. Awareness raising social media campaign for building interest and gaining users
5. Involving all potential stakeholders in the further development and utilisation of the platform
6. Ensuring ownership and maintenance after the project.
7. Developing reciprocal gateways between individual partner counties, defining site-specific material and feeds to ensure participation in the common platform
8. Embarking on national Events for the dissemination of the Project results: ETHIT Network.

3. Target groups

One of the characteristics of tourism as an industry is the prevalence and importance of SME's within it. Thus, many pioneers have started from scratch on the basis of an idea; employ a minimum of staff; and lack experience, resources and gateways to further training and education within the company, not only among their employees, but also among themselves.

It is also a widespread industry, i.e. it encompasses very many industry sectors and fields of employment, often on a seasonal basis as previously described. Ongoing informal and formal training opportunities, where beneficiaries can utilise options according to needs and individualised time-frames, can be imperative for upholding standards and boosting innovation among current and future employees and pioneers. Therefore, the impact of gateways promoting the many forms of educational material, exchange of experience and networking can serve as an enhancer for positive HR development in each participating country.

In the wake of the global recession in 2008 many people have turned to tourism for employment, not least in countries such as Iceland, where tourism has been the main economic driver for the past half-decade. The speed in which the industry is developing could and has led to a myriad of growing pains, and in many instances the cure for those pains lies in training and skills acquiring. Many indicators point to a lack of and need for support and training on all levels, without the scope and formality become inhibitory to people lacking formal training and education in the first place. However, perceived needs can vary wildly among different players within the sector. In order to define these needs and hone our working tool accordingly, a web-based survey developed and sent through an on-line survey provider to relevant stakeholders in each partner country. It is foreseen that the tools developed within the project will be of use to e.g.:

1. Recent as well as established workers in the field of tourism

Focusing on the various fields within the tourism industry is necessary to establish the wishes of employees regarding training and further education. We intend to cast a wide net to gather representative data from all fields of tourism.

2. Job seekers

Tourism has been valuable in addressing unemployment issues in the aftermath of the recent recession. Strengthening skills and providing tools for job seekers for self-empowerment can be instrumental in ensuring their fruitful return to the job market. However, the needs of these individuals may very well differ from those of those currently employed.

3. Employers

Employers are very aware of the importance of consistency and quality in tourism services. Small and medium sized enterprises can however lack the necessary resources to embark upon such endeavours. They are an integral part of our survey pool.

4. Students in various levels and in various fields of tourism, both vocational and academic

Often, a gap exists between those doing tourism studies of some sort, be they vocational or academic. This gap needs to be bridged for the mutual benefit of both groups.

5. Researchers/teachers

As one of the aims of developing the tool is to open up a dialogue between researchers and workers in the field of tourism, researchers are one of the target groups of the project.

6. Representatives of associations of businessmen and workers in the field of tourism

Associations of businessmen and workers could simplify the involvement of the other target groups (e.g. employers, professionals)

Channels need to be opened in order to ensure the reach of the ETHIT platform to members of all target groups. To this aim, it is important that project partners establish connections with representative actors:

- Dissemination to students and academia through University and vocational training institutions
- Dissemination to current employees and job seekers through unions and vocational associations, as well as lifelong learning and adult educational centres
- Dissemination to SME's as well as large business through national and regional tourism enterprise associations, as well as relevant public national and regional institutions

4. Dissemination channels/Tools for dissemination

For a project such as this, it is imperative to ensure the participation of a large body of diverse stakeholders. To build a solid foundation for this, we aim to utilise modern web-based dissemination tools, as well as implanting exploitation plan suited to each partner's specific needs and realities (see Table 1):

1. The **web platform** is the main product of this project, as well as its main dissemination tool. It is currently being developed and will be promoted through the channels described below.
2. A **survey** among stakeholders has been conducted and the results are being analysed. They will be published and promoted in the participating countries; this should raise the general awareness of the project itself.
3. Project **branding and logo**: the project logo has been designed and approved. It will be disseminated through the other dissemination channels.
4. Development of an informational **project website** (within the project platform). This will raise users awareness of the platforms aims and ambitions.
5. Design of **gateways** in each participating country. The first entryway for participants is crucial, since it will be the focus point for further interest and utilisation of the common platform. Its design therefore needs to be coordinated with the realities in each country and to feed in an effective manner from each participating country into the common platform. The reciprocity of the gateways and platform needs to be ensured.
6. Design and publication of **administration and user guides**. These guides will be published on the platforms web sites, and in individual languages at the gateways.
7. **Social media campaigns** (see Table 2 for social media campaign activities) will be designed to gain interest and attention. The relevant social media will be utilised, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter (others?) Among other activities, The goal will be to publicize and disseminate the network through viral mode to capture users. It will develop a common strategy for a unified message and broadcast channels. A fan page on FB will be created and a twitter account to move the project globally, enabling shared management of the profiles by the partners. In the case of twitter, a hashtag will be created to channel the conversation about the Network, as well as a Google adwords campaign. The Network is a broadcast platform, and each member can invite other members through an automated system.
8. **Networking** within participating countries will be the responsibility of each individual partner, through e.g. participation in seminars and workshops, introductions to stakeholders at events and gatherings and personal engagement and networking events.

9. Information and news will be published in relevant **newsletters** in individual participating countries. **Leaflets** will be published as needed.
10. An online **marketing and dissemination campaign** will targeted at different Institutions concerning Training & Tourism within the **EU**. This activity will be specifically subcontracted to specialist in online communication in order to assure the real impact of the campaign
11. **Events on national level** will be organized by each partner.
12. A **final conference** will be held in Malaga, at which the final projects results will be presented and the final design of the platform revealed.

Table 1: Tools for dissemination, responsible partners and time frame of actions.

Activity	When	Where	Who
The web platform	Ongoing	Virtual	All partners
A survey	2014	Virtual	All partners
Project branding and logo	May-Jul 2014	Virtual	FD
Informational project web site	Ongoing	Virtual	All partners
Design of gateways in each participating country	Nov-Dec 2015	Virtual	All partners
Design and publication of administration and user guides			
Social media campaigns	Jun-Jul 2015	Virtual	All partners
Networking within participating countries	Ongoing	Virtual	All partners
Information and newsletter	From Jul 2015	Virtual	All partners
Marketing and dissemination campaign	Dec 2015	Virtual	All partners
Events on national level	Jan-Feb 2016	In each country	All Partners
A final conference	Feb 2016	Malaga	All Partners

Table 2: Social media campaigns

Social Network	Actions to take	When/How frequently
FACEBOOK	Development of project Facebook account	As soon as logo is ready
	All partners to click on I like button using their institutional and personal accounts	One time at the beginning of the project
	To share the page with all your facebook contacts	One time at the beginning Ongoing when new contacts added.
	To post announcements when most relevant documents/products are ready	Ongoing When docs/products available
	To post some comment reporting about project activities and with ideas / concerns regarding the project	At least once a month

Social Network	Actions to take	When/How frequently
	To share interesting articles, videos, etc. related to the project	At least once a month
	To share with your contacts all the relevant publications in the facebook page	At least once a month
	To upload pictures of the different project events	Ongoing When pictures available
	To answer questions and comment any post that project users may write through the page	Ongoing
	To connect with the pages of other relevant projects and institutions by clicking I like buttons as “Thinkintourism- project”	Ongoing
	To share the link to the main website when it is available	Once the website will be available
LINKEDIN	All partners to join the LinkedIn group using their institutional / personal (optional) LinkedIn accounts	One time at the beginning of the project
	To invite your contacts to join the group.	One time at the beginning Ongoing when new contacts added.
	To publish in post the job opportunities that may be introduced on the ETHIT-website	Ongoing When opportunities available
TWITTER Hashtag #thinkintourism	All partners to tweet the official launching of the project website	Once the website will be public.
	All partners to invite their contacts to join the Facebook and LinkedIn pages of the project.	Ongoing
	All partners including the project hashtag when posting tweets with information relevant for the project	Ongoing
	All partners including the project hashtag when retweeting information / news relevant for the project	Ongoing
	All partner to tweet about the completion of project activities /organisation of project events / publication of documents	Ongoing
	All partners to tweet the official launching of the website	Once the website will be available
	To answer questions / comments that final users may do via twitter	Ongoing
YOUTUBE	Creating a YouTube channel for uploading the webinars produced by the partners as well as any other	Once the webinars will be ready

Social Network	Actions to take	When/How frequently
	All partners disseminating the link to the YouTube project videos as wider as possible	

5. Dissemination strategy

The aforementioned tools of dissemination will be the responsibility of each project partner within their country, as well as the coordinated single endeavours described. Additionally, all partners will participate in the following activities:

Online dissemination:

- To participate in the social networks pages of the project, writing comments and sharing articles / news of interest, in order to keep them alive during the project lifespan.
- To include a project description and a link in every partners' website.
- To send an email with the first newsletter to all the people in the partners' contact lists who may be potentially interested in the project results.

Offline Dissemination

- Publication of articles about the project in specialised and general magazines or publications, based on general guidelines provided by Formacion Digital
- Development of a list of institutions/professionals/associations etc. that may be interested in the project results.
- Cooperation with similar / related national or EU projects, looking for potential synergies and collaboration opportunities
- Presentation of the project in national / EU conferences or events in which the partners are taking part.

6. Individual partners exploitation plans⁴

	Newsletter	Presentation to key stakeholders	Local websites	Local networks and affiliates	Use of local social networks	Link to other learning platforms	E-mail databanks	Seminars / Events
P0 FD			X					
P1 CIO								
P2 KATE	X		X	X	X	X	X	
P3 STUD								
P4 SSCTSP	X	X	X	X				
P5 ITB		X	X	X	X		X	X
P6 COOP	X	X	X		X	X	X	
P7 SHEFF								

Germany

- Information about the ETHIT-Project in the Newsletter of TourCert (non-profit organisation for certification in tourism, it awards the 'CSR-TOURISM' label to tourism companies)
- Dissemination of the survey via the address-data-bank of the TourCert Newsletter (travel agencies, tour operators, accommodations, other people working in the tourism sector)
- Dissemination of the survey in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences in Eberswalde, Faculty Sustainable Tourism (Current and former students)
- Integration of /Link to the platform on our own online-learning platform of the kate academy
- Integration of /Link to the platform on the online-learning platform of the TourCert academy
- Facebook and Twitter
- Dissemination via the kate-website and the TourCert website
- Dissemination through the partner network of the Leonardo da Vinci-project TransCSR (project lead kate).

⁴ Apart from the activities proposed by every partner, ITB as coordinator of the WP is entitled to established all the common activities for all the partners that you consider necessary to achieve the dissemination goals and to comply with the commitments in the application form

Iceland

- As special ETHIT introduction page will be made as a part of the Icelandic Tourist Board's official website.
- Mapping of the existing tourism education opportunities in Iceland and identify gaps that need to be filled. The result from this research will be published to media and interested parties in September 2014. The introduction of the result will be used as an opportunity to introduce the ETHIT project, where the project will be highlighted as an effective tool to map out and identify need and gaps in tourism education opportunities, both vocational and continuing training.
- As a follow up an introduction e-mail will be sent to all target groups, utilising channels such as the regional marketing offices, various organised interest groups, educational institutions etc. This e-mail will contain a short description of the project, highlighting the survey and the importance of good survey participation.
- Another e-mail will be sent to draw attention to the ETHIT platform when ready.
- Result of the survey will be introduced at the Icelandic ETHIT website and an introduction e-mail with summaries and highlights will be sent to interested parties.
- Material fed from large actors
 - E.g. training videos on basic services
 - PPT material
 - Informative/relevant articles and research results
- Feed from ITB (seminars, conference broadcasts etc.)
- Cooperation with Tourism cluster
- Real skills accreditation, basics and material
- Networks for various sectors/fields
- Forums for other EU participation projects
- Dissemination among national and regional tourism associations
- Co-hosting with tourism cluster (with aims of further development connected)

- Facebook sites (ITB, various tourism groups etc.)
- Introductory seminars

Italy

- Dissemination among national and regional tourism associations
- Dissemination among national and regional associations of businessmen and workers in the field of tourism - **target:** employers, employees, representatives of associations of businessmen and workers in the field of tourism
- News on “Unione Informa” (monthly magazine printed from Unione Confcommercio – entrepreneurial association) - **target:** employers, employees, representatives of associations of businessmen and workers in the field of tourism; at least 3 issues: introduction to the project; update; output
- News on institutional websites (Scuola Superiore Commercio TSP, associations of company in the field of tourism) – **target:** job seekers, employers and employees
- News on institutional websites of the schools (secondary education and vocational training) – target: students and teachers
- Final event to present the network - **target:** employers, employees, representatives of associations of businessmen and workers in the field of tourism, students and teachers

Spain

- Permanent link to the project website and Network in the websites of formación digital, GDTur Tourism Innovation and Ciomijas
- Dissemination of the survey to the contact database of both Formación Digital and Ciomijas, including students and teachers of tourism related vocational training studies, SMEs in the field of tourism and stakeholders in the field of tourism
- Dissemination of the survey through social media, in all pages related to tourism.
- Promotion of the project in the social media accounts of Formación Digital and Ciomijas. Facebook and Twitter
- Information about ETHIT project delivered in all the promotional activities of Formación Digital as for example the participation in fairs, seminars, etc.

- Presentation of the project to different key stakeholders at regional and national level like for example:
 - Regional authorities in the field of tourism: Consejería de Turismo de la Junta de Andalucía. Delegaciones provinciales de turismo
 - National authorities in the field of tourism. Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism. Tunespaña.
 - Different regional tourism cluster: Cluster turismo Madrid, Cluster turismo Extremadura, Cluster turismo Canarias, etc.
 - Spanish Association of Tourism professionals

The presentation will be done by email or by means of bilateral meetings, depending on the case and possibilities of contacting every institution.

- Information about the project and the new European network to the current members of the network Thinkintourism
- Presentation of the project in any event in which we have the possibility to attend and present it.

Portugal

- Permanent link to the project on ETAP webpage: www.etap.pt;
- Creation of a specific newsletter to publicize the activities of the project;
- Permanent link to the project on ANESPO webpage – ANESPO is the National Association of Private Professional Schools which integrate the Professional Schools of Hospitality;
- Request the dissemination of the project to AHRESP - Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Similar of Portugal;
- Request the dissemination of the project to the Confederation of Tourism of Portugal;
- Dissemination of project activities through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn;
- Dissemination project to the Confederation of Tourism of Portugal;
- Dissemination of project activities through Portuguese Hospitality associations;

- Dissemination of project activities through the Association of Hotels and Tourism Projects in Portugal;
- Request the dissemination of the project to Hospitality Schools guardianship by the Ministry of Economy;
- Request the dissemination of the project to Hospitality Schools guardianship by the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training;
- Dissemination of project activities to all the Portuguese Professional Private Schools of Hospitality;
- Presentation of the project in any event in which we have the possibility to attend and present it.
- News on ETAP web page, local and regional media.