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LEONARDO DA VINCI – ECO STANDS FOR –  
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HANDBOOK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR  
EUROPEAN ECO-COUNSELLORS

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Education and Culture

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## 1. AIM OF THIS HANDBOOK

The handbook is addressed particularly to training providers and training institutions, that like to offer the professional training course for Eco-Counsellors, which is an outcome of the project "Eco Stands For - Quality Standards of Vocational Training for European Eco Counselling". The reader will find recommendations and practical instructions regarding the implementation of the course. The handbook helps to get an overview about the available materials and to find the information of special interest more quickly.

The authors aimed to find answers to the most relevant questions concerning the implementation of the training. However, this handbook - like the other materials of the project - documents a certain stage of knowledge and experience. The authors are interested in continuous enhancements and improvements. Therefore your comments are very welcome and will be integrated into further developments and projects.

Please share your experiences with:

Eco Counselling Europe

<http://www.ecocounselling-europe.org>

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## 2. THE “ECO-COUNSELLING” VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSE BRIEFLY

- The training course on hand is a basic training for Eco-Counsellors, covering all relevant environmental topics and working fields, principles and skills, that are stated as a minimum standard for an Eco-Counsellors vocational training.
- The minimum standard is based on a Europe-wide expertise of professionally experienced Eco-Counsellors and the result of an international exchange between these experts. They focused on the European dimension and on the common understanding of the Eco-Counsellors profession.
- The training course on hand uses the concept of “blended learning”, a combination of technology-based materials and face-to-face sessions. Beyond, a hands-on-training will support the students with practical knowledge and experience.
- As the course uses an e-learning platform and has a modular structure, it allows the students an individually organized learning. Students are also invited to compile the course modules at different training providers in Europe and hereby get international experiences.

## 3. THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT OF THE TRAINING COURSE

The training course has been developed by the partners of the Leonardo da Vinci project “Eco Stands For - Quality Standards of Vocational Training for European Eco-Counselling”.

### 3.1 THE ANALYSIS – NEED FOR HARMONIZATION

An analysis of the demand and status of Eco-Counselling in Europe showed that there is a strong need for harmonization in the curricula of vocational training institutes<sup>1</sup>. Some countries actually have specialized trainings in Eco-Counselling (Austria, Belgium, France, Hungary). Some other countries had trainings in the past but not anymore (Germany and Czech Republic) and some countries don't have this kind of special training (Italy and Slovakia) at all. Despite these differences the ambitious objective of the project is to set up a common European educational concept for Eco-Counselling. Thus it aims to overcome the gaps among the different educational systems at national levels and enrich the existing ones with the European View.

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<sup>1</sup> Find detailed information in the European report of WP3-group: Analysis of Eco-Counselling networks, job profiles and vocational trainings in Europe, December 2005.

Download: [http://www.ecostands.org/pics/doku/ecostandsfor\\_demandanalysis\\_en.pdf](http://www.ecostands.org/pics/doku/ecostandsfor_demandanalysis_en.pdf)

### 3.2 DEFINING A EUROPEAN MINIMUM STANDARD FOR THE TRAINING

Based on the results of the analyzing phase a big effort was made to develop a Curriculum, which meets the requirements of the different countries: on the one hand a demand for a minimum standard especially in the countries that have no trainings at all - on the other hand the need for a European qualification in addition to the existing systems. These requirements are mainly achieved by means of a modular structure of the curriculum, by definition of some minimum requirements (frame of content and hours) and a European view within the study programme.

The training consists of 4 sections:

- Introduction
- Sectoral themes
- Cross-sectoral themes
- Social and communicative competences, competences in methods

### 4. STRUCTURE AND DURATION OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The structure of the curriculum mainly consists of 24 learning modules, 11 of which are face-to-face modules, 3 project modules (1 to choose from), and 10 e-learning modules implemented by the e-learning tool. In the e-learning modules, knowledge acquisition is the most important aspect. In the face-to-face course there should be a link between the different parts of the knowledge acquired and practical use. This leads to a project/internship where participants and future training institutes can choose a target group for their projects and can work with a company, a household or a public institution.

No.	Modules	Learning concept <sup>2)</sup>	Duration <sup>3)</sup>
1	<b>Introduction</b>		
	Introductory course	C	8 h
2	<b>Sector Themes incl. basic skills</b>		
	Waste incl. Chemistry	E	6 h
	Energy incl. Physics	E	6 h
	Food/Nutrition	E	6 h
	Agriculture incl. Biology	E	6 h
	Green Areas/Gardening incl. Ecology	E	6 h
	Building/Living incl. Regional planning	E	6 h
	Noise incl. Engineering	E	6 h
3	<b>Cross sectoral Themes</b>		
	Global environmental issues	E	8 h
	Environmental Policy and Institutions (national, international and EU level) + Eco-knowledge in general + Environmental law	E	8 h
	Sustainability/Sustainable Development	C	16 h
	Gender Training	C	16 h
	Working with households incl. Eco-consumption	P <sup>4)</sup>	36 h
	Working with companies incl. Eco-production, Eco-consumption	P <sup>4)</sup>	36 h
	Working with public institutions incl. Green public procurement	P <sup>4)</sup>	36 h
4	<b>Social and communicative competences, competences in methods</b>		
	Interpersonal and intercultural communication	C	[min] 4 h
	Media work, Presentations, Rhetoric	C	[min] 8 h
	Counselling incl. systemic analysis and advisory	C	[min] 8 h
	Eco-communication and marketing, Event management	C	[min] 8 h
	Change of Behaviour and organizations, Environmental Psychology, Adult education	C	[min] 8 h
	Mediation, Facilitation, Participation (e.g. Aarhus Convention, Local Agenda 21)	C	[min] 8 h
	Project Management; Leadership, Controlling, Quality management	C	[min] 8 h
	Time Management, Stress Management	C	[min] 4 h
	Management of Knowledge and Information incl. knowledge about databases and documentation	E	2 h
	<b>Total Duration of Vocational Training for European Eco-Counsellors</b>	C	[min] 96 h
	E	60 h	
	P	36 h	

<sup>2)</sup> E ... e-learning, C ... face-to-face training course (personal attendance), P ...project/hands-on-training

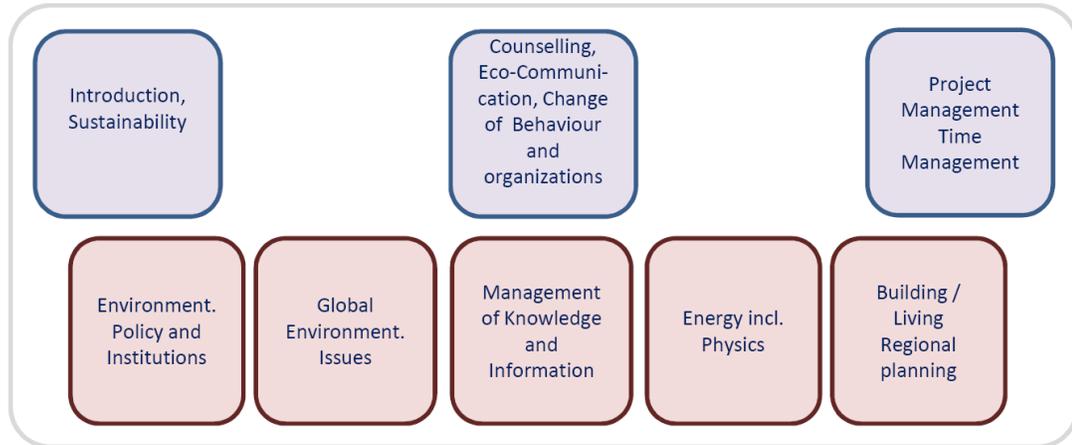
<sup>3)</sup> h... hours

<sup>4)</sup> One P to choose from

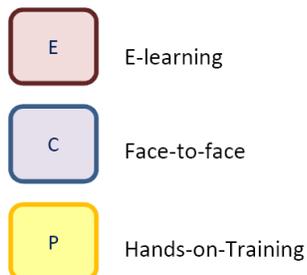
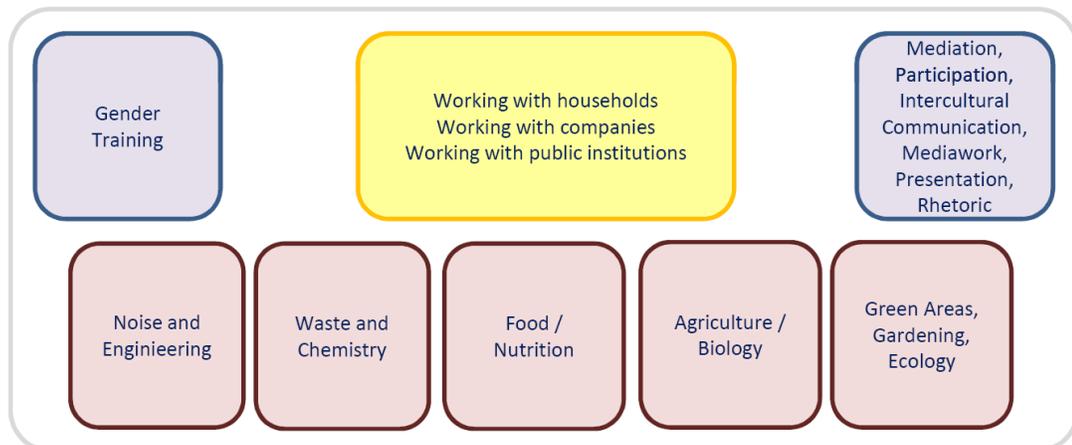
## 5. VOCATIONAL TRAINING-SEQUENCE

The graph shows the model of a 2-terms training-sequence. The suggested e-learning sequence isn't obligatory, but students should have the freedom of individually organized learning in parallel to the face-to-face courses and the hands-on-training.

term 1



term 2



## 6. PRECONDITIONS FOR THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING (QUALIFICATION)

The vocational training is made for two main target groups:

- Eco-Counsellors already working in the job, who want to extend their skills in terms of the European view.
- Newcomers working in related fields, who want to become Eco-Counsellors, e.g. experts of sectoral environmental fields (e.g. energy, building, ecology, nutrition, ...) or sustainability-experts;

The Curriculum does not cover the training of those, who are neither working in related fields nor in Eco-Counselling.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COURSE

### 7.1 TRAINING PROVIDERS – WHO CAN OFFER THE TRAINING?

The training course on hand is open for professional training institutes in the public, private or NGO sector, that are dealing with environmental topics.

3 steps to become a provider for the vocational training for European Eco-Counsellors

1. *Application for the vocational training materials*  
The application includes a brief description of the applicant (information about the organization and working fields).
2. *Acceptance or rejection of the application and advisory service*  
A committee of the Leonardo da Vinci project partners will deliberate and decide on the application. The aim is to secure the European Quality standard. All applicants will get a statement on the decision. Positive ones achieve also recommendations on how to establish adequate training conditions for the students.
3. *Agreement on rights of use and provision of the materials*  
The terms and rights of use will be regulated within a joint agreement between the training provider and the Leonardo da Vinci project partners.

## 7.2 ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE TRAINING PROVIDER

All training providers, who are planning to implement the course in their training programme, have to respect the following needs:

- The training provider has to establish an advisory council for the training. Members (minimum 3 persons):
  - 1 Eco-Counselling expert (representative of the National Eco-Counselling Association or of the European Association Eco Counselling Europe)
  - 1-2 specialists (communication expert, environmental specialist, ...)
  - 1 Coordinator [see 7.3]
- The role of the advisory council is to secure the intended European quality standard of the training. The council has to attend the implementation and execution of the course with their expertise. E.g. it is part of their business to ensure, that the contents of teaching are up to date and represent the European view.
- The members of the council meet at least one time per semester. Every year the council has to report on the ongoing activities, developments and the results of the evaluation to the organizations named in chapter 1.

## 7.3 COORDINATOR / COORDINATION OFFICE

The coordinator operates in coordination with the members of the advisory board. He/she manages all organizational matters, like

- organization of the trainers/trainers and e-learning tutors,
- introductory seminar for the trainers and tutors,
- coordination of the lectures,
- preparation of training materials,
- coordination with partner training institutes,
- providing seminar rooms and access to internet,
- adjusting e-learning accounts for students,
- organizational support to the students, especially to find adequate internships
- preparation of a time-framework, which considers a reasonable sequence of the several modules (the face-to-face modules should be planned in form of a block course or should take place at weekend-days),
- implementation of a quality management system to evaluate the contentment of the participants.

## 7.4 AVAILABLE MATERIALS AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIP

The teaching contents of the e-learning modules (sectoral and cross sectoral themes as well as a course about knowledge management, all marked with “E”) have been worked out within the Leonardo da Vinci project. A two-days gender training and a two-days introduction into sustainable development geared especially for Eco-Counsellors (cross sectoral themes marked with „C“) are also available.

Social and communicative competences as well as competences in methods (“C” modules no. 4) are open to be gained at external training providers. Just as for the other modules, these modules can be done abroad. Because of cultural diversities students should concern, that teaching contents vary from country to country. Especially the modules “Interpersonal and intercultural communication”, “Media work” and “Counselling” are recommended to do at a national institute. Students need to show certificates of approved training institutes (see also 7.1 Training Providers – Who can offer the training?). In the long run, it is planned to establish a network of partner institutes, where students can do their external education. Quality criteria and cooperation agreements for these partnerships have to be worked out within a follow up project.

The hands-on-training (P) is a substantial part of the course and can be done at one of the partner organizations of the European Eco Counselling network (see <http://www.ecocounselling-europe.org>) or at any other organization in the private, public or NGO sector. If some of the last named internships are of questionable adequacy, it is in the responsibility of the advisory council to decide, if it will be accepted or not.

## 7.5 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE E-LEARNING

For the operation of the e-learning platform the web-server has to satisfy the following minimum requirements: 1 GB RAM, 2 MHz processor, Apache-Server, MySQL-database, PHP, moodle-package (learning platform), operating system (e.g. Linux).

The hard disk drive should have at least 10 GB. Rule of thumb: 1GB RAM = 50 User.

## 8. EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL TRAINING NETWORK

In order to facilitate and stimulate a European cooperation and further exchange of experiences, the following suggestions need to be realized:

- Online course calendar with up-to-date information about all vocational training offers in Europe for Eco Counsellors (date, contact, costs, registration possibilities,...) e.g. on [www.ecostands.org](http://www.ecostands.org) or <http://www.ecomoodle.eu> will support students, who wish to gather international experiences.
- Online announcement of free internships in Europe.
- European pool of experts/trainers/trainers.

## 9. CERTIFICATE

The certificate of the training course will be approved at the partner organizations of the Leonardo da Vinci project and their members. The long-term aim is to achieve a European certification of the training course and the alumni. This goal needs further efforts and can be topic of a common follow-up project. At national level, Germany has already established a certification for Eco Counsellors, which can be starting point for further developments on European level. Find details about the German model on <http://www.umweltberatung.org/php/gueteanerkennung.php>.

## 10. GUIDELINES AND DETAILED INFORMATION

Guidelines and detailed information to specific topics can be found also in these documents:

- Curriculum
- Teachers Manual
- Students Manual
- Handbook on Quality Standards
- Handout for the Hands-On-Training

The following table provides an overview on particular sources of information.

TOPIC	DOCUMENT	
Certification	Curriculum	[5.13] Certificate
Coordination	Curriculum	[5.10] Ongoing coordination
	Teachers Manual	[2.1] Interface between coordination and teacher [2.2] preparation of the training modules
	Handout for the Hands-on-Training (Ecomoodle)	Organizational matters, training workflow, preparation, training report and administrative issues of the Hands-on-Training
Didactics	Teachers Manual	[3] Theory, practical lessons [4] Individual, group work [6] Teaching material
E-learning	Curriculum	[5.7.2] Proposed structure of e-learning modules, mistakes in web designing, user needs.
	Teachers Manual	[7] Structure of e-learning modules
	Students Manual	Technical instructions
Evaluation / learning evaluation	Curriculum	[5.12] Internal evaluation
	Teachers manual	[7.6] E-learning [9] Papers of these [10] Face-to-face course
	Handout for the Hands-on-Training (Ecomoodle)	[4] Training report
Face-to-face course	Curriculum	[5.7.1] Methods
	Teachers Manual	[3] Theory, practical lessons [4] Individual, group work [6] Teaching material
Hands-on-Training	Teachers Manual	[8] Teachers support during the project phase
	Handout for the Hands-on-Training (Ecomoodle)	[1] – [6] Working with the targets groups; Organizational

		matters, training workflow, preparation, training report and administrative issues of the Hands-on-Training
<b>Job profile Eco-Counselling</b>	Handbook Quality Standards	[1] Position of eco-counselling
<b>Language</b>	Teachers Manual	[5] National language / English
<b>Logistic requirements</b>	Curriculum	[5.11] Logistic requirements (rooms, computer etc.)
	Teachers manual	[6] Teaching material
<b>Methods and principles of Eco-Counselling</b>	Curriculum	[2.2] Principles [2.3] Methods [2.5] Systemic thinking
	Handbook Quality Standards	[3] Quality Standards for Eco-Counselling [4] Quality management systems at national level
<b>Pre-knowledge requirements for students</b>	Curriculum	[4] Target groups of the training; [5.8.2] and [5.8.3] Requirements for participants
	Teachers manual	[7.2] Pre-knowledge for e-learning
<b>Quality Standards for Eco-Counselling</b>	Handbook Quality Standards	[2] Introduction to Quality Management [3] Quality Standards for Eco-Counselling [4] Quality management systems at national level [5] Methods in examples
<b>Requirements for trainers</b>	Curriculum	[5.9] Skills, experience of the trainers
	Teachers Manual	[2.2] Preparation of the training modules
<b>Structure of the whole training course</b>	Curriculum	[5.3] Overview structure [5.5] Work flow

## 11. TEMPLATES

### 11.1 FOR TRAINERS / COORDINATORS

#### Planning of single modules

Module: (insert title of the module)
Learning objectives: to give students the basic knowledge on..... In particular with reference to the technical/theoretical aspects of the subject, the objective is to pass on the knowledge of..... As far as the participants' competences (for the face-to-face course) the module aims at achieving the following objectives: a) capacity to.... b) Capacity to..... c) .....
Contents of the module: insert detailed contents
Teaching methodologies: the teacher will prefer to use a practical and active approach ...by means of business games, etc..... The teaching of notions will be limited to the teaching of.....

#### Planning of the course

Day	Topic	Methodology	Logistic requirements

## 11.2 FOR PROVIDERS

### **Suggestions for the announcement of the course**

#### **Why should I gain European Eco-Counselling qualifications?**

You would like to work on the interface between environment and society, and support the process of sustainable development at the level of citizens, municipalities and small and medium enterprises. You want to upgrade your environmental knowledge with consulting competencies. You like to communicate and impart practical knowledge to customers and motivate people to environmentally friendly behavior.

#### **What is the characteristic of the Eco-Counsellors profession?**

On a general level, an Eco-Counsellor is a generalist. That means that she/he is able to provide basic information and consultancy on all topics, to communicate with clients, partners, and the media, to prepare seminars, workshops, etc. A generalist has an overview of basic information sources and skills in project management, fundraising and marketing. On the other hand, an Eco-Counsellor also needs to be a specialist. She/he provides general counselling as described above, but she/he needs to focus especially on counselling in a very specific field at expert level. A specialist develops, deepens and upgrades her/his specific field, prepares publication, works as a lecturer at seminars, cooperates on strategic and conceptual materials.

#### **What is the vocational training for “European Eco-Counsellors”?**

The course is a basic training for Eco-Counsellors, covering all relevant environmental themes and working fields, principles and skills, which are stated as a minimum standard for Eco-Counsellors. The course provides basic knowledge for Eco-Counsellors and focuses on the European dimension and the common understanding of the Eco-Counsellor’s profession in Europe.

#### **What are the preconditions for attending the training?**

The vocational training is made for two main target groups:

- Eco-Counsellors already working in the job, who want to enlarge their skills in terms of the European view.
- Newcomers working in neighbouring fields, who want to become Eco-Counsellors, e.g. experts of sectoral environmental fields (e.g. energy, building, ecology, nutrition, ...) or sustainability-experts;

#### **The training concept of “blended learning” allows an individual learning organization through**

- New e-learning platform “eco-moodle”
- Blocked and individual compiled Face-to-Face Seminars
- Practical Training

#### **When does the next training start? Where? Price? Etc.**