



Executive Agency, Education, Audiovisual and Culture



Innoguide: Innovation in LLL Tourist Guide Training Tourist guides as partners for a sustainable, diverse and exciting Europe!

Final Report

Public Part

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Executive Summary

The European project Innoguide has focused on the role tourist guides play in today's society. In an ever evolving and globalizing world tourist guides have to keep up. They are faced with challenges in terms of intercultural encounters, requests for sustainable tours and demands to be more innovative and creative (including use of new technologies) in guiding their groups. The Innoguide project supports guides in this task by having gathered and developed teaching materials on the following three topics: interculturality, sustainability and experiential guiding. These materials, represented in three modules, are now easily accessible online for everyone to consult for free.

At the basis of this project is a comparative study of the training programmes for tourist guides in the partner countries that provided insight into the organisation and content of the different tourist guide training programmes of the project partners. These programmes were compared on level, duration and content. This study showed a clear need for more teaching materials on these three topics.

Using the research report as an important point of reference an online teaching platform (moodle) was developed around these three topics and the result can be consulted at: <http://learning.viaviatourismacademy.com/innoguide/>.

The project's results are primarily intended for organizations providing vocational training for tourist guides and for guides but the tools developed are also useful for tourist guide associations, local authorities with responsibility for tourism, Lifelong Learning Program national agencies, public and private tourism institutions, vocational schools and universities. Content is also provided free of charge.

The project partners come from different countries (Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain) with different backgrounds ranging from training centres for tourist guides to governmental tourist bodies, schools and universities that have tourism courses, and private non-profit organisations with expertise in tourism education and lifelong learning projects.

This project brings a clear European added value to the table as it brings together European countries with very different backgrounds who jointly undertake research and work on new didactic materials for guides' training. Secondly, it contributes to the professionalization of guides which in return supports and stimulates the intercultural dialogue between tourists and guides. Moreover, the quality of training programmes across Europe will improve as the project focuses on innovative ways of tackling sustainability, interculturality and creation of authentic experiences. By developing a trainer's instructions for each module the development of pedagogical skills of trainers is also assured.

From a long-term perspective the goal is to create a changed mind-set on how people think about guide training and, second, to see the three modules integrated in the teaching programmes of the participating partner countries and potentially beyond. Moreover, the aim is to set up train-the-trainer workshops in the nearby future to get people across Europe more acquainted with the materials.

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1. Project Objectives

With this project, aimed at reinforcing guide training programmes throughout Europe, Innoguide stimulates guide trainers to reflect on three innovative topics in guide training. The three following objectives were central to the project:

- To gain insight into the organisation and content of current partner's tourist guide training programmes by conducting comparative research in the partner countries. These programmes are compared on level, duration and content. The outcomes served as a basis for the development of new training modules.
- To develop teaching materials for three innovative training modules in English for teachers of tourist guides in particular. Anyone interested in these topics, however, can access the platform. The modules deal with sustainability, interculturality and experiential guiding.
- To establish a platform for sharing experiences to ensure active continuation of the project. The e-learning platform will ensure a flexible lifelong learning strategy.

Innoguide raises awareness among guide trainers about the importance and relevance of sustainability, interculturality and experiential guiding for guides in today's society. Moreover, this project targets training institutions and wants to stimulate a European mind-set with regard to guides' training. The goal is to let relevant stakeholders reflect on the role and development of a guide as an important representative of European ideals and principles. He/she can create a European dimension in the guided tours, highlighting common history, common narratives, presenting a European identity in- and outside of Europe.

2. Project Approach

The main goal of this project was to develop three modules that can easily be used in guide training programmes throughout Europe. To provide for a solid basis for these modules research was conducted comparing the tourist guide training programmes in the project partner countries/regions. Data for the research was collected in several ways, hence the research method applied was a multi-method approach. The design included use of documents on guides' training from the participating countries, as well as focus group interviews from four of those countries.

1. Methodology of the empirical study

Information on guide training programmes

All partners collected information through desk research and interviews with experts on the structure and organisation of the guide training initiatives in their respective countries. Initially, the intention was to acquire complete guide training curricula from the participating countries to provide information on:

- the educational purpose of the programme
- what educational experiences were provided under the programme
- how the educational experiences were organised
- how attainment of the purpose or the value of the experiences were evaluated.

However, the supplied examples of guide-training programmes were more like 'sets of intended learnings' and none of them could be classified as complete curriculum descriptions.

This final sample of programmes may not be regarded as a random sample of guide training programmes across Europe, but generalisations of findings must be made with caution. However, the sample is adequate to assess the possible presence of the Innoguide topics, as well as to inform the reader about the pluralism and complexities of training programmes and their structures across Europe.

Focus groups

Four focus groups were established at the following locations: Barcelona, Valletta, Budapest and Stavanger. The groups consisted of participants with expert knowledge on tourist guiding and training in their region. Participants were prepared to share their experiences and opinions about tourist guiding, especially regarding the following:

- 1) Selection, training, and quality assurance of training programmes
- 2) The types of experiences they facilitate for tourists
- 3) How potential controversial issues are handled
- 4) The role of new technologies in relation to guiding
- 5) Needs for innovation in guiding
- 6) Challenges in the guiding business and profession

The details from this part of the research are reported in a separate document and the conclusions are integrated in the research report

Comparing programmes on level, duration and content

For the purpose of comparing the several different programmes, the researchers relied on two major documents regulating the professional domain in question:

- 'Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning' published on April 23, 2008.
- the 2007 recommendation of the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) entitled 'Tourism Services – Requirements for the provision of professional tourist guide training and qualification programmes' (EN 15565:2007)

The Innoguide research concerning the comparison of the training programmes used the following aspects for its analysis:

- Types of training (compatibility with the EQF levels and CEN)
- Recognition of the degree within the country
- Structure: units of the training, timeframe
- Target group for the training, entrance requirements

Content analysis

The content analysis part of the Innoguide project was primarily concerned with the areas of sustainability, interculturality and experiential guiding in tourist guide training programmes. Consequently, the analytical focus was on the possible descriptions of these dimensions. To evaluate current tourist guide-training programme curricula, and to develop teaching modules that include sustainability concepts and skills in both interculturality and experiential guiding, it was necessary to select *criteria* and *indicators*. Sustainability criteria and indicators were based on sustainable tourism literature and the review of European Commission documentation. Interculturality and experiential guiding criteria and indicators were selected at a group meeting in Brussels. The group established criteria to assess the performance level of the different curricula in the general area of sustainability, with more specific criteria in the areas of interculturality and experiential guiding.

This research report's results were the basic building blocks for module development. The dissemination of this report, as part of a top-down phase of the project, has been

done via the website and via the project partners to raise awareness among interested and relevant stakeholders. It should be noted that all partners have been encouraged to widely distribute the outcomes of this project to their local branches and individual members via newsletters, websites, etc.

2. Module development

In a next phase of the project the module development, based on the results of the report, started. The project hired Educonsult to give advice on the methodology for module development. Different phases in module development were defined:

Step 1 – Preparatory stage:

Analysing student needs, teacher needs, institutional needs and professional body needs. This was done in the first phase related to the research part.

Step 2 – Module design: summarized in blueprint

- defining module rationale
- defining module aims/learning objectives
- drafting learning outcomes
- making an inventory of already existing material
- defining level (s) of the module: 4 and 5 of EQF
- defining subject content / subject title
- defining assessment strategies

These steps were used as an overall guideline for the three work package leaders of the three topics to develop their particular module. In a meeting in Brussels (2012) the suggested learning outcomes, as the building blocks of each module, were defined. This was done in cooperation with external experts (guide trainers). Based on these learning outcomes content was further refined and developed.

At the end of 2012, beginning of 2013 the teaching materials, presented in different modules were put on an online platform (moodle). This allowed for a wider dissemination of the results and, more importantly in that stage of the project, for feedback from our target audience. The first version of our moodle can be found on: <http://innoguide.kodolanyi.hu/>. Via online evaluation sheets their valuable feedback was used to redesign and further improve the online platform. This new platform can be found here: <http://learning.viaviatourismacademy.com/innoguide/>. For this final platform two short videos were made. An introductory video to explain the broader outline of the project and an instruction video showing the users how to go through the online platform and explore the materials.

The different steps of this project can also be found on the general Innoguide website which ensures a continuous and updated information stream to both the partners involved as the wider public.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

There are five major project outcomes and results of this project.

- 1) Our first major result and the basis of our online teaching platform (moodle) is the Innoguide research report of which an online version can be consulted at: http://www.innoguidetourism.eu/files/innoguide_research_report.pdf. This report describes the current partners' tourist guide training programmes and explores how our three central topics (interculturality, sustainability and experiential guiding) are addressed in each training programme.
- 2) Because the research report clearly illustrated that the topics interculturality, sustainability and experiential guiding do not have a guaranteed spot in today's guide training curricula the Innoguide project developed an online teaching platform where guide trainers or anyone interested in these topics can find extensive information and materials related to these themes which can be used in a teaching context. The platform can be consulted at: <http://learning.viaviatourismacademy.com/innoguide/>
- 3) A more general website on Innoguide and its outlines and results has been developed for the general public. Via <http://www.innoguidetourism.eu/> anyone can find more information on the project.
- 4) Several dissemination activities have taken place over the course of the project to, in an earlier phase, receive feedback from our target audience, and, in the final stages of the project, to communicate about the teaching platform. Dissemination activities that have taken place include: brochures and newsletters, articles in academic and non-academic magazines, meeting events, Facebook page, presentations at tourism fairs (Milan and London), consulting events with experts and a final closing two-day conference in Brussels.
- 5) Quality management is done on the one hand by an internal evaluation of the project activities and on the other hand by an external evaluation conducted by Educonsult, an independent organization. A quality plan for the first period of this project has been made that includes the strategy and the results of the internal evaluation. The second quality plan for the second part of the project has been conducted and the results of this evaluation is part of the confidential part of this final report.
- 6) One of the objectives of the project was to stimulate and promote mobility of trainers and students. There was, however, after developing the other project results (research report/moodle) not much time and budget left to adequately fulfill this role. At our final conference there were guide trainers present from different countries who participated in the train-the-trainer workshops. This is a modest example of mobility but it is the intention of several project partners to develop train-the-trainer courses on our modules for guide trainers around Europe which will stimulate teacher mobility.

4. Partnerships

The project partners come from different backgrounds ranging from training centres for tourist guides to governmental tourist bodies, schools and universities that have tourism courses, and private non-profit organisations with expertise in tourism education and Lifelong Learning projects. It is precisely this mix of expertise that provides for interesting and enriching points of view on our project. More specifically, the organisations participating in the project, directly or indirectly are:

Partners:

- Public administrations: Toerisme Vlaanderen (Belgium), Generalitat de Catalunya Direccio general de Turisme (Spain)
- Universities/higher education institutions/vocational training: The Norwegian School of Hotel Management (Norway), Kodolanyi Janos University of Applied Sciences (Hungary), Turismo Sant Ignasi (ESADI-Universitat Ramon Llull, Spain), Institute of Tourism Studies (Malta), Stichting NHTV Internationale Hogeschool Breda (the Netherlands)
- Research centres: Centro di ricerche economiche e sociali (CERES, Italy)
- Non-profit organisations: ViaVia Tourism Academy (Belgium), Centre de Culture Européenne (France)

External adviser

- Educonsult (Belgium)

Associated partners

Vienna tourist guides (Austria), The Federation of Tourist Guides Associations in Flanders (Belgium), The Federation of Tourist Guides Associations (Italy).

Role of the partners:

The tasks are divided in a balanced matter, based on the expertise of each partner. Tourism Flanders is the overall coordinator with support from CERES. CERES is also in charge of the internal evaluation, Innoguide's website and of stimulating the dissemination and exploitation activities.

Tasks are divided as follows:

- Management and quality plan: Tourism Flanders, CERES
- Research: The Norwegian School of Hotel Management, Kodolanyi Janos University of Applied Sciences (KJU)
- Module development coordinators:

- Sustainability: ViaVia Tourism Academy
- Interculturality: Turismo Sant Ignasi
- Experiential guiding: NHTV
- Module development supporting the coordinators:
 - Sustainability: The Norwegian School of Hotel Management, NHTV
 - Interculturality: Institute of Tourism Studies, Centre de Culture Européenne, Generalitat de Catalunya Direccio general de Turisme
 - Experiential guiding : Via Via Tourism Academy
 - Technical partners : Kodolanyi Janos University of Applied Sciences (KJU) took up the technical coordination of web-based module development
- External contributors:
 - The creation of an external cooperators' network was established. These people, mostly guide trainers themselves, were consulted and asked for feedback during the process of module_ and website development. Their input was used to make necessary adjustments to the material and the website.
- Subcontractors:
 - A few partners used subcontractors to assist them in their work. Educonsult, subcontracted by Toerisme Vlaanderen, gave advice on module development and organized the external evaluation of the project. CERES subcontracted graphic designers to help them develop a logo, a web design and dissemination material and ViaVia Tourism Academy subcontracted someone who gave extra input for the sustainability module.

5. Plans for the Future

Many dissemination activities have taken place over the course of the project but to make sure the project stays alive even after the project's ending the project partners have set out three main courses of action:

- 1) Different training programmes in Europe have integrated (parts of) the online teaching platform (moodle) (i.e. in the Netherlands through the NHTV; Kodolanyi university will create a specific course for tourist guides based on the moodle; the institute of tourism studies in Malta is going to use parts of the moodle to attract more guide students; in Italy different training courses for tourists guides organized at local level will use it; in Belgium train-the-trainer courses will be organized for guide trainers)
- 2) The new Erasmus+ program provides many options to organise international/European train-the-trainer courses on the moodle. The majority of project partners is open to the idea of a follow-up European project. As the guidelines of the new Erasmus+ program have just recently been made available, more concrete details of project outline have to be decided on.
- 3) The Innoguide online platform is an extensive overview of innovative materials. This platform has to be regularly updated to stay innovative. Moreover, based on user-reviews, further improvements to the user-friendliness of the moodle can still be made. During the final project meeting the following decisions were made:
 - ViaVia Tourism Academy hosts the online platform after the project has ended and will ensure a continued functioning of the platform. This partner will take the lead on integrating and implementing the feedback and tips received during the final conference on the moodle. These tips included but are not limited to the following aspects: to produce more videos to show practical examples, to include a section of good practices useful to be transferred, more animation and voice over and to create a glossary.
 - This will happen in close cooperation with an *editorial committee* of project partners with membership on a voluntary basis who will decide which content can be added/adjusted on the platform. This editorial committee is led by Toerisme Vlaanderen.

6. Contribution to EU policies

Innoguide is involved in the objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme because it contributes to the improvement of the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of lifelong learning opportunities available within member states.

Even though each EU member state is responsible for its own education and training system and EU-level policies in this domain are designed to complement and not to replace national actions, a joint response to common challenges like lifelong learning is definitely an added value. Innoguide contributes to this by:

- Enhancing the quality of competences and qualifications of guides
- Integrating European key competences for lifelong learning in the training programmes for guides
- Enhancing the transparency of the qualifications for guides by analysing the different guide training programmes in relation to the CEN standards and to the EQF
- Stimulating a sense of European citizenship and a common goal among project partners and others involved in the project
- Supporting the Europe 2020 strategy to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy

Moreover, the comparative study of tourist guide training programmes, allows to benchmark its own training programme to the EQF, to the national qualification framework and to the tourist guide training programmes of other European countries. Consequently, this study creates a frame of reference for tourist guide training programmes in Europe which is useful for all EU-members and this might potentially even have a positive effect on the free movement of guides around Europe.

Furthermore, by developing e-learning modules the quality of the tourist guide training programmes in the partner countries will improve. There has been a big focus on disseminating the results of this project and many stakeholders working in the field of tourist guiding have been reached out to over the course of this project. This will only enhance a European perspective on how to train guides.

7. Extra Heading/Section

