

Nature Tourism as an Empowerment Tool

2010-1-PT1-LEO05-05165

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/project/view.htm?prj=7511>

Project Information

Title: Nature Tourism as an Empowerment Tool

Project Number: 2010-1-PT1-LEO05-05165

Year: 2010

Project Type: Transfer of Innovation

Status: completed

Country: PT-Portugal

Marketing Text: Tourism is a strategic economic sector in Europe, whose importance is likely to continue to increase in the coming years. Nature tourism (NT) relates with a responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people. The NATUR project aims to develop a B-Learning Tool for professional competencies' enhancing of local key actors (entrepreneurs, promoters, authorities and staff) in the nature tourism sector.

The NATUR project will promote bridges among different local key actors more aware of the potential of NT and of the powerfully opportunities to economic development to their region and will incentive to new job opportunities by developing the existing/emerging small business. A way to support the definition of policies and strategies according with NT objectives, view as a motor of local development in a sustainable form, preserving local nature and culture and promoting the nature conservation as well.

Summary: Tourism is a strategic economic activity in the Europe, whose importance in the economy is likely to continue to increase in the coming years. Employment growth in the tourism sector has been significantly higher than in the rest of the economy in recent years, making the sector a significant contributor to the Lisbon objective to create more and better jobs. Tourism is particularly important when it comes to offering job opportunities to young people, who represent twice as much of the labour force in tourism as in the rest of the economy. The main objective of NATUR project is to develop a B-Learning Tool that allows the participations to develop and improve the skills and competences necessities related to nature tourism activity sector in (1) Entrepreneurs or future entrepreneurs who wants to develop business; (2) local development promoters/agents, municipality technicians and stakeholders who, by the nature of their professionals activities, have to define policies and strategies connected to tourism sector; and (3) technicians and professionals of tourism sector who wants to develop or increase their know-how and skills in this scope. The consortium that will carry out the NATUR project have a relevant experience in developing transnational projects, the key persons involve have the know-how and expertise related with tourism sector, specifically in nature tourism scope, and also present highly competences in developing B-Learning products. The NATUR project will allow learners to continue living in the rural areas by increasing new opportunities of employability, developing the existing small business already installed and potentiate new ones to emerge; preserving local nature and culture and also promoting the nature conservation. The NATUR project will also raise awareness on relevant stakeholders and local development associations about tourism potential of their regions and will facilitate to define policies and strategies according with NT objectives as a motor of local development in a sustainable approach.

Description: In the 8th EUROPEAN TOURISM FORUM (2009), it was discussed the challenges that the tourism sector has to address, namely both competitiveness and sustainability in order to fight the 9% decline current position of tourism in Europe (2009) against the 7% registered in the worldwide tourism.

To Reinforce the EU tourism sector as a high quality service sector, in order to develop a "Brand Europe" initiative to better positioning of the EU as the 1st tourism destination in an increasingly competitive world market are two of the 6 challenges to EU pointed out in this Forum. This challenges are the remained that EU has to face out in order to make the most of tourism as great potential and contributing to the achievement of several major EU objectives, such as sustainable development,

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economic growth, employment as well as economic and social cohesion.

The EU tourism sector make more than 4% of the EU GDP, with about 2 M enterprises employing around 4% of the total labour force. When related sectors are taken into account, the estimated contribution of tourism to GDP creation is much higher - tourism indirectly generates about 11% of the EU GDP and provides about 12% of the labour force. The EU market for Nature Tourism (NT) has been growing in a sustainable way. In 2004, the main motivation for 22 M of tourist was to benefit from this kind of tourism, representing 9% of all travelling made by EU Tourists. In 2015 it is expected that this product will reach 43.3 M of tourist representing a 7% annual growth.

The main objective of NATUR project is to develop a blended training course that allows the participations to develop and improve the skills and competences necessities related to NT activity sector.

The NATUR project will allow learners to continue living in the rural areas by increasing new opportunities of employability, developing the existing small business and potentiate new ones; preserving local nature and culture background and also promoting the nature conservation.

The NATUR project will also raises awareness on relevant stakeholders and local development associations about tourism potential of their regions and will facilitate to define policies and strategies according with NT objectives as a motor of local development in a sustainable approach.

NT emerges as a viable response to implement touristic attractions in more deprived EU regions. Employment growth in the tourism sector has been significantly higher than in the rest of the economy in recent years, making the sector a significant contributor to the Lisbon objective to create more and better jobs. Tourism is particularly vital when it comes to offering job opportunities to young people, who represent twice as much of the labour force in tourism as in the rest of the economy.

The NATUR project will increase the local development through the creation of new business directly associated with NT, therefore numerous workplaces will be available and also a several other number of jobs indirectly connected with this economic industry. In order to maintain high quality services it is fundamental to develop the professional skills and competencies of the future workers for these new businesses.

Management skills are other range of essential competencies that will be strongly necessary in the implementation of NT business. Therefore NATUR project have a high contribute to develop new professional skills very important to guarantee the success of any business. The NATUR project will allow emerging the "silent knowledge" usually held by the senior citizens, concept related to the ancestral knowledge concerning surrounding nature and culture background that is transmitted orally through generations and introduce this highly relevant information available to tourism.

Themes: *** Labor market
 *** Sustainability
 *** ICT
 *** Lifelong learning
 *** Open and distance learning
 *** Enterprise, SME
 *** Continuous training

Sectors: *** Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities
 *** Education

Product Types: open and distance learning
 evaluation methods
 teaching material
 program or curricula
 website

Product information: The project produced:
 - Analysis Report, collecting all data produced during the research phase,
 - NATUR B-Learning Referential, with all relevant information to develop the course;
 - Skill Assessment Tool, with relevant questions/situations to assess learning needs;

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- Project Guide, for guiding learners on the course's project development;
- Manuals, for supporting learners on the learning process;
- NATUR Learning Platform online with all the relevant information about the NATUR course,
- NATUR Compendium, summarising the project major achievements

Projecthomepage: <http://www.naturproject.eu/>

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Products

- 1 NATUR Learning Platform

Product 'NATUR Learning Platform'

Title: NATUR Learning Platform

Product Type: open and distance learning

Marketing Text: the NATUR Platform is providing relevant online learning content on Nature Tourism and within a personalised, self-based and paced learning approach. The learning package created was defined by the learners involved into the piloting actions as “a far-reaching instrument within the European Community by virtue of addressing in an innovative way the nature tourism using the B-Learning teaching methodology”.

Description: The NATUR course aims at developing and improving knowledge and competences related to nature tourism activity sector. This way increasing new opportunities of employability, developing the existing small business already installed and potentiating new ones to emerge. This combined with preserving local nature and culture and also promoting the nature conservation.

Target group: Primary target groups: Entrepreneurs or future entrepreneurs who want to develop business in NT sector; Local development promoters/agents, municipality technicians and stakeholders who, by the specific nature of their professional activities, have to define policies and strategies connected to Tourism sector; Technicians and professionals of tourism sector who wants to develop or increase their know-how and skills in NT area.

Secondary target groups: Training providers, consultants, tutors and trainers in the field of nature tourism, which use the learning materials and platform for supporting the nature tourism learning actions.

Result: The NATUR learning tool includes:

- the Pedagogical Guidelines with the pedagogical and methodological issues;
- the Technical Guidance with instructions and assistance for working with the NATUR platform, specifically for tutors and for learners;
- the Skill Assessment Tool that allows a self-assessment of initial expertise of the learners and advice for an individual and personalized learning pathway.
- the NATUR Manual with the content of the eight courses/modules;
- Monitoring & Evaluating NATUR Course with relevant questionnaires, forms and other documents for feedback.

The learning model takes into account that learners want to continue living in the rural areas. The model provides a pedagogical framework, derived from a blended learning (self-paced e-learning and face-to-face training) and based on specific and identified specific needs of the target groups. The key elements of the NATUR learning model are: (1) self assessment tool that provides self-based and –paced learning, (2) online and face-to-face components (3) distance tutoring support and online peer-to-peer feedback possibilities and (4) practical result from cases based on nature tourism in e-portfolio. The self-diagnostic tool assesses the initial know-how (module by module) and gives recommendations about the modules that each learner is advised to undertake.

(The complete training plan is organised into 8 modules). Before learner start with the modules a self-diagnostic must be done. This test contains a number of questions for each of the modules, related to self-perception that the learner has about the degree of self-mastering over the content.

As a result of using this Tool, learner and tutor can determine which modules should be work on.

Area of application: Nature tourism field

Homepage: <http://naturlearning.eu/>

Product 'NATUR Learning Platform'

Product Languages: Turkish
Portuguese
Estonian
English
Dutch