



**LLP PROJECT - INTEPA
LEONARDO DA VINCI – TRANSFER OF INNOVATION**

Pilot course organised in Latvia

Final report

- **Dates of the pilot course and number of hours**

The course was organized during 5 days, from 12th March until 16th March 2012. Together 25 hours of theory and 5 hours of practical activities were split in 5 days (every day 6 hours of training) and additionally there were given homework tasks from practical lessons.

- **Information about the participants (number, gender, level of knowledge....)**

There were participating 15 people in the course - 14 women and 1 man. Most of the participants had previous experience with heritage interpretation, but they weren't professional guides and didn't have any formal education in this field. The participants were people living in countryside, who are interested in their region as well as proud of showing the cultural heritage from surrounding to other visitors from Latvia or even abroad. Some of them are in free time active in collaboration with local associations, local museums or local municipality.

- **Classes (trainers, distribution of lessons and activities...)**

There were 2 trainers leading the lessons. The lessons were distributed from Monday to Friday, each day 6 hours. There were theoretical lessons and

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practical lessons. Immediately after the theoretical lesson about a Module, lesson continued with practical activities, supporting the understanding of the Module.

During the theoretical lessons the trainers explained more about each Module with additional information from the real cases. During theoretical lessons, there were organized small activities to make theoretical lessons more interactive - students had to imagine a situation and to solve this particular situation.

After the theoretical part practical lessons started. Students had to prepare a “Concept map” recording their personal skills and abilities. In another activity students had the possibility to try to solve conflicts in a group and to prepare a tactic plan for doing it. In third activity students learned how to be flexible and to adapt to changing conditions. The last practical activity was the most extensive one, because the students had to do their district analysis in groups and prepare a plan how to improve weak points, taking into account all aspects - when this improvement could be done, by whom it should be done, which resources will be needed, how they personally could participate in this process and how it could help to the region. As this activity requires more time, students were preparing the presentation partly as a homework and during the classes were presenting the results.

- **Evaluation** (Opinion of trainers and students...)

All participants evaluated, as seen in the questionnaires, the training material either excellent or almost excellent. The same result was under question – training material in terms of knowledge. Almost all participants confirmed that the training material contains enough knowledge and that students and trainer don't need to acquire much more knowledge to become a successful interpreter and to be ready to develop the tasks approached within

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this pilot course. That is very good sign that modules are very well done with full education required for Heritage Interpretation.

In case of difficulty level of each module, according to the questionnaires, participants gathered the materials easy to read and easy to understand. Very few students found out the text a bit difficult to read because of the language and that was reason of slower learning process during the course, compare to others. But it was minimum participants and only one level lower then excellent. The reason was complicated language. That is also the reason why the learning process of participants was 'only' almost excellent.

Except one student, everyone considered that the material was useful and everyone used website of the project.

In case of practical examples, students evaluated it as excellent. During practical activities, from beginning students were shy and it was a bit hard for them to feel confident. But in the end the result was that everyone liked it, because they found the activities as very useful experience for future.

The result of the pilot course is that students and trainer are ready to develop the tasks approached.

In addition, below are placed the comments of trainer and students filled in questionnaires. The result of the pilot course was very good and very welcome. There are placed only suggestions and appreciations to the modules in terms of knowledge.

Trainer's comments:

"I like all the modules developed. From the Module I is clearly understood what the interpretation is about. Module II also includes contents, among others, which are very significant to realize. I appreciate that Module IV is deeply describing the local identity and that diversity of a territory is understood as a value. In Module V is clearly said who could become an

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interpreter and what are his/her competences. I like history of heritage mentioned and measurements in different countries included in module VI, which are important for a comparison.

What I found out very useful is the Glossary for easier explanation.

I miss better illustrative picture about communication process. Because of that the process is not clear and then the communication is not effective and misunderstandings might appear. I also would prefer easier language used.”

Student’ s comments (6 students):

- “All Modules were well structured and the topics well described. Sometimes I only miss summarization of the particular topics, for example done by table, illustration or short conclusion. In some cases I also found difficult language, not really understandable.”
- “In Module I Planning phases should have been described more detailed. It is very important to know how the phases work and what we can imagine under them. Then I also don’t like the pictures so much in Module I, especially Interpretive programming process => Question if it is working or not should be based on some hypothesis or experiment, if we don’t have practical experience. Definitely there shouldn’t be the question. It is unreliable.

I found interesting the topic about Interpretive message in Module III and Competencies in terms of knowledge and skills for the Interpreter in Module V.”

- “I think all Modules are well prepared and I find them useful regarding Heritage Interpretation.”
- “I really didn’t understand the Communication Process in Module III. I would need deeper explanation and better illustration.”

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- “I like very much Module IV because there is told about support of local economy, for rural aspect and local environment needed. When reading the Modules and Glossary, language seemed a bit difficult to me. But the Glossary was very useful for me.”
- “I evaluated the Modules very good. But for example in Module II in chapter ‘When and where not to do interpretation’, there is not clearly said the main meaning. There could be some table presented where it would be summarized. Also I would prefer better language used.”

- **Final considerations** (Usefulness of the pilot course, adaptations, improvements, considerations for the future...)

The course stressed on the statement that Interpreters are an important bridge between visitors and exhibits. Evaluation is the essential part of the process for improving easier transfer and adaptation of trainers, interpreters and visitors in the Heritage Interpretation area.

An interpreters’ ability heavily depends on training, supervision and evaluation. The ways in which brochures and training materials are written or designed have a strong impact on its effectiveness. Therefore, the final consideration of the pilot course is that there was strongly supported the development of Heritage Interpretation in the project and that the Didactic guide was successfully demonstrated and appreciated by the students and trainer.

The professional competencies of interpreters greatly impact the quality of interpretation and visitors experiences, as well as influencing their desire to revisit the sites in the future. Evidence of the prior statement is that all participants evaluated practical examples described in the modules and activities either almost excellent or excellent.

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