

**LEONARDO DA VINCI, TRANSFER OF INNOVATION PROJECT**

**PROJECT NUMBER 2011-1-ESI-LE005-35905**



**HERITAGE & NATURAL RESOURCES FOR GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**Quality Assurance and Evaluation Plan**

January 2012

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## Project Partners



Lawton School S. L. SP, Spain. **(Co-ordinator)**.



Oatridge College, United Kingdom



Chamber of Commerce and Industry Bistrita, Romania.



Alytaus College, Lithuania.



Castlereagh Enterprises Ltd, Northern Ireland.



Assist Net EOOD, Bulgaria.



Tarsus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Turkey.



Ayuntamiento de Carrreño, Spain.

## **Project Background & Context**

The HENGE Project proposes to contribute to rural entrepreneurship education by geographically exporting innovative training solutions to encourage youth, women and older people in rural areas across Europe to evaluate and best exploit the potential of their built, cultural and natural heritage for alternative enterprise and agri-tourism, whilst ensuring sustainability of these resources. Existing training solutions will undergo development work and be adapted to the new geographically identified markets. The project will improve the skills development of adults in the labour market, specifically targeting residents in rural areas who may have few or no formal qualifications and face socio-economic disadvantage.

The HENGE Project aims to adapt and transfer an innovative methodology and curriculum for resource evaluation and rural entrepreneurship and transfer them to new geographic markets via the partners in the consortium reaching from Spain to Turkey. The product will be hosted on an e-learning management system to ensure access after the lifespan of the funded project.

The partnership brings together a diverse range of organisations across Europe all with a common interest in resource evaluation and rural entrepreneurship. The countries represented are Spain, Romania, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Turkey and Lithuania.

The HENGE transfer project envisages the creation of a Virtual Training Programme based on results of the Grundtvig partnership project Panorama (ref no: 2008-1-RO1-GRU06-00119).

The HENGE project is a geographical transfer project transferring best practices in rural development predominantly from Western Europe countries (UK and Spain) to Eastern EU countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania) and Turkey which at the moment lack solutions and training programmes to combat de-skilling and unemployment in rural areas as well as implementation and utilisation support for the labour market and for vocational education and training.

The product of the project is a training manual to aid those in rural areas to evaluate and best exploit the potential of their built, natural and cultural resources in order to set up a micro-company or agro-tourism business, thus aiding and encouraging them to consider self employment as a viable source of stable employment.

## **Introduction**

The Quality and Evaluation Plan is an important document concerning all partners and reflects their willingness to maintain the high quality of all outputs throughout the project life.

This plan will be used to monitor the progress of work carried out to date and the evaluation of both processes and products. Since evaluation has a continuous character, all results of the evaluation will be used to improve the quality of the project and its outputs. If there are problems or areas in which there could be improvement, this will be discussed immediately, therefore improving the overall project quality. The quality and evaluation work package will guarantee the quality of outputs during the project

implementation and concentrate on the prevention of problems through the continuous improvement of all processes.

The main function of Castlereagh Enterprises Ltd (CEL) in this work package is to ensure that the implementation of the project activities is in accordance with the approved project proposal and the agreed deadlines, which will ensure the quality of the outcomes. We will monitor internally each phase of the project development process in order to guarantee that the activities are being developed accordingly, that any problems have been solved in a timely fashion and measures have been undertaken to minimise or prevent all possible risks.

The Project Partners have also identified the need to carry out an independent external evaluation of the programme. An external evaluator will be appointed to provide an impartial view on the project. Castlereagh Enterprises will work closely with the external evaluator, ensuring thorough monitoring of the project, but also to ensure that there is no duplication in evaluation activities.

### **Activities in the Quality and Evaluation Plan**

There will be several activities which should be analysed and evaluated on a continual basis to keep both a high standard of quality of project outputs and efficient co-operation amongst all partners. A mixture of quantitative (figures) and qualitative (text) evaluation methods will be used and it is essential that we get feedback and thoughts from all partners. This will ensure consistently smooth project implementation in all participating countries.

Areas to be evaluated by CEL include:

- Implementation of all project activities (work packages) undertaken by each partner.
- Project partner meetings.
- On-going communication between partners.
- Products and results from project implementation.
- Problem tracking and reporting along with measures for improvement.
- Collection and analysis of necessary data at pilot tests.
- Target group involvement.

It is important to remember that evaluation and quality have an impact on each other. All evaluation results will be used to improve the quality of the overall project and its results. It is therefore important not to separate the two and to consider both. The work packages and partner meetings will be monitored and progress reported to ensure that all activities are on track. We must also evaluate how the partners are working together and whether the target group is involved at a sufficient level.

We need to evaluate continuously during our two-year project to ensure we deliver a high quality consistent programme, efficient co-operation amongst all partners, smooth implementation and to make sure that all project aims are met.

Tools for evaluation and quality assurance methods of measurement:

- Questionnaires
- Survey Monkey
- Reports
- Document analysis
- Website analysis
- Minutes from partner meetings
- Presentations

Outputs of this work package include:

- Quality and evaluation plan.
- Short report on project progress after evaluation of the three remaining partner meetings.
- Interim quality and evaluation report.
- Final quality and evaluation report.

These documents aim to present and verify the results of all evaluation and quality assurance processes that have taken place throughout the project implementation and to ensure that the activities have been carefully implemented, monitored and controlled, measures for improvement undertaken etc.

### **Continuous evaluation**

There are a number of specific areas which will need to be evaluated in terms of quality on a continual basis throughout the project's two-year life span. These areas include the three remaining project partner meetings, the 7 remaining work packages, the partnership, the target group and the final training materials.

### **Work Packages**

The work packages are core to the project so it is essential to evaluate the quality of the work being delivered, to review progress being made against targets set and the extent to which the project aims and objectives established have been achieved.

The delivery of the Project has been divided into eight Work Packages as follows:

<b>Work Package</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Led by</b>
1	Project Management	Lawton School
2	Quality Management	CEL
3	Research and Needs Analysis	CCIBN
4	Adaptation of educational products and activities	Oatridge College
5	Pilot testing	Chamber of Commerce Tarsus
6	Dissemination, Valorisation and promotion	Assist Net
7	E-learning Platform	Lawton School
8	Implementation	Alytus College

## Work package 1 – Project Management

The Project Management work package includes activity planning, co-ordination of partner meetings, administrative and financial management of the entire project and management of the communication between all partners.

The co-ordinator is also responsible for the creation and management of a project website as a tool for sharing information and reporting and ensuring the implementation of dissemination and valorisation. A PB Wiki site should also be set up to ensure effective internal project management. An interim and final report will also be produced for the National Agency. All of these activities will be reported on in order to evaluate the effectiveness of project coordination.

The kick-off partner meeting was held in Gijón in October 2011. This was extremely well planned with a clear agenda and activities. All partners were encouraged to discuss their work package by presenting their ideas for implementation. The co-ordinator encouraged group discussion at all stages so that all partners were involved in the decision making process. The next stages of the project were clearly identified and agreed and minutes were circulated in a timely fashion. Skype and email addresses of the group were circulated, to be used to develop a mailing list to ensure all partners are kept in the loop and all partners were involved in a lengthy discussion on the definition of green entrepreneurship.

Quality recommendations in this area for all partners:

- Use the financial reporting templates provided by the co-ordinator and submit along with supporting documentation every quarter.
- Should there be any queries, contact co-ordinator immediately.
- All financial documents must be retained by all partners for **seven** years from the date they receive the final payment.
- All deadlines set by the co-ordinator should be strictly adhered to. If there are any delays this should be discussed with the co-ordinator.
- All project outputs including reports, plans and dissemination materials should include the logo and disclaimer. All dissemination material, both paper and electronic, must carry the EU logo and disclaimer, and the exact wording must be used. All partners must use the following links to find the logo and disclaimer in their language:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/publ/graphics/identity\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/graphics/identity_en.html)

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/publ/graphics/agencies/use-translation.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/graphics/agencies/use-translation.pdf)

- All project presentations and reports completed should follow a common template. The partners agreed that all project publications, forms and reports should carry the same look and feel in line with the project logo and image. The quality team suggests that this template should be provided by the partner responsible for the dissemination work package.
- Use partner contact details provided by the co-ordinator to create a project email group so no one is left out of group communications.
- All documents created should be concise and to the point in order to ensure minimal time and money are spent on translation.
- A graphic designer should be used to ensure a professional logo and layout of all project materials.

- All documents sent by partners must be clearly labelled and dated in the title and in word document format.
- All partners send emails to the whole group but the email should be clearly titled so that they can see if they wish to read or not. All communications should be short and to the point.
- All partners should be conscious of data protection and copyright issues clearly referencing any sources they are using when preparing materials for the project. The quality and evaluation co-ordinator suggests sending communication to stakeholders using Mailchimp, as this will give the receiver the opportunity to opt out of future mailings.
- Website analytics will be used to measure hits to the project website and Mailchimp will provide statistics for mailing campaigns which will be useful for dissemination reports.

### **Work package 2 – Quality Management**

The Quality Management work package aims at assuring the quality of project processes and outputs. Project quality assurance will be managed in cooperation with an external quality assurance organization in order to receive an objective external evaluation of the project processes and results. The roles of internal and external evaluators will be clearly defined and they must work independently of each other whilst ensuring no duplication.

Outputs to be expected in this work package include:

- Quality and evaluation plan.
- A report after the next three partner meetings using a standardised questionnaire. Responses will be collected via survey monkey, which partners can complete when they return to the office giving them an opportunity to think of recommendations. A report will be produced on the project progress and circulated to all partners with recommendations on how improvements can be made.
- Interim quality report.
- Final quality report.

Quality recommendations in this work package include:

- It is essential for all partners to be careful in terms of copyright, ensuring that any resources they use are clearly referenced.
- For sending out correspondence to project stakeholders or the target group Mail Chimp should be used. This gives the receiver an opportunity to opt out and stop receiving emails, and will avoid any data protection issues. Mail Chimp will also identify which emails are being opened and show which are being sent to incorrect email addresses, thus improving the quality of communication with stakeholders and the target group.
- A representative from each partner organisation should respond honestly to the survey monkey questionnaire within set timeframes. Open and honest feedback will provide an opportunity for the next partner meeting and on-going project activities to be improved.
- All partners should read reports produced in all work packages including the quality and evaluation work package and give feedback and any suggested improvements, therefore increasing the quality of all project outputs.

### **Work package 3 – Research and needs analysis**

**WP 3 provides field research and analysis to identify existing knowledge on rural enterprise and resource evaluation needs. This research will help to redefine the existing contents and ensure that they are transferred appropriately to meet the needs of the new partner countries, or innovation-**

**importing country. Outputs in this work package will include methodology definition, questionnaire templates, focus groups, collation of results, report on best practice examples.**

Quality recommendations in this particular work package include:

- The term Green Entrepreneurship has been defined for our purposes by the partnership as "skills for sustainability, the technical skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed in the workforce to develop and support sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes in business, industry and the community". Partners should always refer back to this definition and remember the ethos and aim of the project.
- It was agreed that in order to progress with this work package it is essential to have a clear definition of the target group. This has been clearly defined as "Disadvantaged people with little or no formal education who live in a rural environment, independent of gender or age." This will ensure that we are seeking feedback from the relevant people, clearly identifying their needs and wants and tailoring the training materials accordingly to suit the correct people. This will ensure acceptance and sustainability of the training materials after the project duration.
- A structured questionnaire will be used to collect feedback for the needs analysis. This can be completed using the internet or face to face in a focus group environment.
- From a quality point of view it is recommended that all partners send more than the required 25 questionnaires to ensure enough responses to reach the target of 25 per partner country. This will give a large enough sample and a true representation of the target group across Europe.
- We have to ensure that the responses are collated in a timely fashion and the results are circulated amongst all partners. This is an important area to evaluate as the findings of this needs analysis will be used to develop the training materials and curriculum for the four pilot training test courses. It is essential that all partners adhere to deadlines in this work package, as a delay in the needs analysis will delay the development of the entire training material work package. This will also add to the quality of the needs analysis work package and in turn the training materials if all partners involve the target group and stakeholders from early in the project and talk to opinion leaders in rural areas.

#### **Workpackage 4 – Adaptation of educational products and activities**

The development of the training materials is an important area of the project. It was agreed at the first partner meeting that the development must include stakeholder consultation, review of needs analysis, exchange of best practice between partners and stakeholders. The Panorama training materials will be used as a foundation for course development. Oatridge College will use its experience, skills and knowledge of supplying vocational training and education at further and higher education levels, particularly in addressing issues facing rural communities and businesses. This partner choice will allow for a higher quality of final training materials.

The training programme will have 8 modules online. The programme will be accessible in six languages: Spanish, Romanian, Bulgarian, Turkish, Lithuanian and English. Case studies from each partner country will be an important element of the training package to illustrate content clearly.

Quality recommendations in this work package include:

- The content should be simple and straightforward and be supported by case study examples. The HENGE training programme must be designed to be clear, concise and easy to understand – the key word is accessible.

- Use Panorama materials as an example of good practice – the current language needs to be simplified, resources easier to access, the technical language removed and lots of examples and case studies given which are representative of all the partner countries.
- Care should be taken to ensure that both written material and images do not infringe intellectual copyright. All sources used should be clearly referenced.
- All partners should give some input regarding the development of the training materials; this will bring a wealth of experience from partners with differing skills and cultures.
- Deadlines in this work package must be strictly adhered to as any delays will impact on the entire project.
- All sections should be clear and concise to reduce translation costs.
- To give the training materials added quality and credibility the English version should be accredited and certified. This should be explored in greater detail to ensure sustainability of the training materials after the end of the project duration by the work package leader.

### **WP 5 – Pilot testing**

The training materials developed will be tested with the target group in a real training situation. There will be four tests, one each in Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, to reflect cultural diversity. This will allow partners to tailor and fine-tune training materials to suit the target group's needs most closely.

The aim of the tests is to establish whether the modules and e-learning platform are easy to use for the target beneficiaries as well as ensuring there were no glitches in the platform.

The pilot test courses will be evaluated via questionnaires by the work package co-ordinator. The aspects to be evaluated include course content, organizational aspects, trainers' performance, methods used during the training etc., in order to get a realistic trainees' and trainers' view on the course and suggestions on how to improve it.

It is essential that we get good feedback from each of these courses so that we can improve the final training materials and course to the highest possible standard.

Quality recommendations in this area include:

- Standardised questionnaire used to collect feedback and report produced along with recommendations by the work package leader.
- A clear standardised approach to implementing a pilot test should be provided by the work package leader.
- Feedback should be sought from both the trainers and trainees.
- The number of participants will be limited to a maximum of 12.
- It was decided to use two approaches: pilot groups in a blank environment without a trainer and a blended learning approach.
- Feedback from these pilot tests should be carefully analysed and changes to the training materials should be made as a result. This will add value to the training materials and increase the quality of the content.
- All partners should give their suggestions and input regarding this work package.

### **WP 6: Dissemination, valorisation and promotion**

The purpose of this work package is to disseminate information about project outcomes to the widest possible audience and to inform all suitable target groups about the results of the project. It develops a detailed dissemination and exploitation plan and implements the measures to publicise the project and its funding. It provides information to the target audience and relevant stakeholders and ensures transfer of basic information on project implementation. It includes a comprehensive information campaign aimed at the target group and vocational education and training institutions to achieve sustainable utilisation of the project results in the partner countries and beyond.

Outputs include the creation of project logo and image, development of a dissemination strategy on a local, national and European level to include measurable achievements, press conferences, a project leaflet and a dissemination event per country. The effectiveness of the methods of communication and dissemination established and used throughout the process will also be measured.

Recommendations in this work package include:

- Each partner should develop a list of 100 contacts per country. This will be used to create a mailing list to ensure involvement of relevant stakeholders, obtain their expertise and best practice examples, send newsletters to keep the target group up to date with project activities and encourage people to attend pilot tests and the final conference.
- Emails sent should include a mechanism to unsubscribe from the list to comply with data protection issues. In terms of quality, Mail Chimp is recommended. It is important to tell people why they are receiving the emails but also to give them the opportunity to opt out. Mailchimp will also measure how many emails bounce back, how many people click through and how many unsubscribe. This will be useful information for the dissemination reports.
- A social media strategy should also be developed by the work package co-ordinator.
- All dissemination should be recorded in a standardised template provided by the work package leader as and when it is done; evidence should be kept and reported for interim and final reports.
- All partners should put a link on their organisational websites to the HENGE project website.
- It was decided to base the logo on the same concept as the Panorama project on all material produced. The same graphic designer should be used to ensure a professional feel.
- Facebook will be used and all partners will have administration rights to ensure that it is kept updated with relevant interesting information.
- Each partner should clearly follow dissemination instructions and meet deadlines.
- Partners should seek the involvement of policy makers and the media from the outset of the project.

### **WP7 – E-Learning Platform**

To ensure the training material is available after the lifespan of the project and available for future re-use by the target market, it is proposed that the training material will be developed in e-learning format using multimedia technologies and will also be published on the project Learning Management System, in all partner languages.

The Learning Management System will be pilot tested by users in partner countries to ensure the product is evaluated and is a successful tool in terms of accessing the HENGE project.

The main objective in this work package is that the e-learning platform must be user friendly, available in all partner languages and be interactive to encourage people to use it.

At the kick off partner meeting the co-ordinator demonstrated the benefits of both Moodle and Dokeos. It was decided by the group that Dokeos would be the chosen E-learning platform for the project. The co-ordinator will keep the partnership up to date on the progress with this work package.

### **WP8 – Implementation**

To complete the innovation transfer, the final work package includes the implementation of the adapted results and products in the new target countries. The partner organizations of these countries will deliver the results to at least 10 vocational training institutions in each country and produce a report on the success of the implementation.

The partner responsible for this work package did not attend the kick off meeting so no further information on this work package is available. This will be discussed in greater detail at the next partner meeting and the partner responsible should prepare a presentation / strategy on how this work package will progress.

### **Project meetings**

It is essential that we evaluate and monitor each of the three planned project meetings. Each project meeting is crucial in ensuring further cooperation amongst partners and for agreeing the next steps to take the project to the next stage. We only have three more partner meetings in the duration of the project so it is essential that we get the most out of each. If there are any problems during a meeting or suggestions on how we can work together more effectively then this will be used to improve the quality of the next meeting.

The following meetings have been planned:

- Gijon – Kick off meeting – October 2011
- Scotland – May 2012
- Turkey
- Bulgaria

There will also be a final partner meeting which will coincide with the final conference in Romania.

The monitoring and evaluation of the meetings will be done by circulating a questionnaire after each meeting which will focus on the following areas:

- Expectations for the meeting
- Agenda preparation and content
- Supporting material
- Communication and participation of all partners
- Organisational aspects
- Were next steps made clear and understood?
- Suggestions to improve the next meeting.

Questionnaires will be sent to all partners after each project meeting via Survey Monkey; the questionnaire must be completed by at least one representative from each partner organization. Survey Monkey will allow the partners to have time to reflect on the project meeting and give feedback from the comfort of their own office. A summary of each meeting evaluation will be sent to all partners with

findings and recommendations for improvements and will be included in the interim and final evaluation reports. It is important that each partner gives open and honest feedback in required deadlines.

### **Partnership**

There are seven partners involved in this project: Spain as co-coordinator in collaboration with another 6 partners from the United Kingdom, Romania, Lithuania, Northern Ireland, Bulgaria and Turkey, each one responsible for implementation of a work package. The partners include several Chambers of Commerce, an NGO, the City Council of Carreño in Asturias, a University, a Vocational Centre and training centre for students with special educational needs. The partnership brings together a wide range of skills and experience and cultures. The City Council of Carreño will act as a silent partner. All partners introduced themselves and their organisations at the kick off meeting, which was useful for partners who have not worked together before. All partners have experience in transnational projects and there is a mixture of public and private bodies.

We need to ensure that all partners are making an equal contribution to the project and are fulfilling their proposed roles and completing work as required and by agreed timescales. Communication is key at each meeting but is also essential throughout the project lifespan, for example keeping in touch via emails or Skype.

Overall we must ensure that all partners are communicating accurately with each other on a regular basis. If any problems are identified they need to be solved immediately. The quality and evaluation manager will observe the workings of the partnership as a whole, including the effectiveness of the partnership in achieving the stated outcomes. It is critical that all partners provide input and feedback and give opinions on project activities.

The partners from Spain, Northern Ireland and Lithuania were involved in the original Panorama project, bringing their experience for the transfer of innovation, which will be invaluable in the development of the HENGE project.

Quality recommendations in this area include:

- It is essential that a representative from each partner organisation should attend each partner meeting to ensure smooth implementation of project. The representatives of the Town Council in Carreño who are silent partners in the project were unable to attend the kick off meeting, as were the Lithuanian partners. This should be avoided in the future as input from all partners is essential.
- Each partner must enforce the deadlines in their own work package but also respect deadlines set by other work package leaders.
- All partners should regularly communicate with other partners and provide their input and feedback when requested.

### **Target group**

Involvement of the target group will be monitored continually making sure we are aiming our project at the right people. We will evaluate the target group involvement in the needs analysis questionnaire, the four pilot courses and the final conference.

The following definition of the target group has been agreed on by all members of the partnership and it is essential that we continue to interact with this sector: "Disadvantaged people with little or no formal

education who live in a rural environment, independent of gender or age.” Involvement of the target groups from the outset of the project is essential as is the need to talk to opinion leaders in rural areas. It is also important to remember that this target group may have no access to the internet as they may live in rural areas with no connection so an alternative method of communication may be required in these cases.

### **POST Evaluation**

Post evaluation will be done on completion of the two-year project; the main reason for post evaluation is to find out if all the partners’ expectations, overall aims and objectives were met. We need to ensure that all partners feel the outcomes are of a high quality standard. Overall did we achieve what we set out to do?

Post evaluation will be done through a simple questionnaire to be circulated to all partners after the final conference in Romania. The results will be collated and distributed to all partners.

This report will give us the whole picture of what has happened during the project and will be incorporated into the final report and will cover:

- To what extent have the project goals been fulfilled – work packages.
- Did any problems occur and how have these been solved.
- Evaluation of communication, partner meetings and partnership.
- Evaluation of results achieved and activities carried out.

### **Conclusion**

Quality of the project outputs will be measured by continual monitoring of all activities within the particular work packages during the project life. Each variation from the planned activities must be noted and explained. If there are any improvements or changes required this should be explained in the quality and evaluation reports. It is essential that the project outputs are of the highest possible standard and that all partners are committed to this.

The partnership wishes to ensure that the results of the project are available after the lifespan of the project and envisages mainstreaming and multiplication of the training programme at national level in each partner country. The consortium will transfer the materials to an e-learning management system to be hosted by Lawton School S.L. This will ensure that access can be gained to the materials after September 2013. The partners will also investigate the possibility of certifying or accrediting the course through Oatridge College in the English version to ensure training course sustainability.