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Low Qualified Adult Learners Ready for Work

IO1 Draft

Resource Guide for Adult Trainers. Situational Profiles of Jobs in the Tourism Sector

Developed by  **BEST**

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1. Introduction

The project “Enterprised – Low Qualified Adults Ready for Work” emphasises on extending and developing the competences of educators and other personnel in effective teaching of low-qualified adults. By equipping adult trainers with the adequate methodological framework and resources on effective teaching (i.e. literacy, numeracy, language competences, digital skills, entrepreneurship, etc.) in line with current on-the-job realities, Enterprised aims at increasing the quality of training provided and respectively the prospects for learners to be successfully employed in long-term perspective - particularly in the tourism sector, which is important to all of the participating partner countries: Iceland, Austria, Spain, Norway.

To support trainers to get a clear understanding of the work specifics for low-skilled workers in the tourism sector and provide a rich repository of real life situations, which can be integrated in their training work with low-qualified learners, working conditions and training needs were identified, focusing on frontline staff in a broad sense, i.e. dealing directly with service users (tourists), frontline staff showing potential/ambition to becoming team leaders, Staff in tourism being confronted with new trends in the labor market, e.g. eco-friendly tourism, cultural tourism, entrepreneurial awareness/business understanding etc.

Respective main results shall be presented in this Intellectual Output of the project, i.e. the Enterprised Resource Guide for Adult Trainers.

Our initial focus group meetings (and major following development activities from which this Resource Guide was established) were held several weeks before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the tourism sector is the one commercially most affected, bringing world-wide travel restrictions along with decreased willingness and opportunities to travel. This will change perspectives in tourism and bring new challenges to be faced, perhaps also in medium- or even long-time terms. We cannot yet exactly say what the new reality will lead to, but it will be essential for adult education and VET trainers, as well as employees and employers in tourism, to adequately respond to new requirements arising from this new situation and considerably changed conditions.



2. Current and new trends in the tourism sector

2.1. Commercial trends

The tourism industry has become one of the largest in the world. It is reshaping entire regions and also influences societies. Important trends such as mobility, individualization and ecological aspects articulate the needs and desires of travelers worldwide.

Globalization and increasing connectivity also present locations with major challenges in terms of their self-image and marketing strategies - not only in local travel markets, but also in the tourism markets of the entire world. As a diverse sector with multiple needs; tourism in general requires targeted support at all levels to remain competitive with increased competition also from destinations outside the EU.

Climate change has also a big effect which will value more a tourist service with respect of nature and environment, sustainability and more ecological aspects. Increasing health consciousness and high quality awareness of accommodations, food and beverage show very similar challenges to provide hospitality on a high level.

Especially growth rates for travelers over 65 years have been increasing over the years - and are even higher than those of other age groups. Almost half of this target group is prepared to spend "rather more" money on traveling, and they have high expectations and demands. In addition, new technologies are changing all marketing models and processes in tourism sector.

Tourists from upper price segments usually expect individual service and offers on a high level to get unique experiences while traveling. Trips are very often accurately planned in advance and tourists generally well informed by internet etc.

In the focus groups of the project partners, concentrating on front staff serving clients directly, these trends have been identified, although in different ways, depending on geographical features, key aspects of tourism and visitors' countries of origin – travelers coming from own country and closer abroad or from far away destinations.

Looking at different types of tourism in Iceland, Norway, Spain and Austria such as rural, urban, nature tourism it is obvious that there are many challenges in common, regarding the demand for greater specialization in adult education.

However, due to COVID-19, trends in the field of tourism are likely to change and need a re-thinking. As an example, we can mention the well-known Austrian winter tourist resort of St. Anton am Arlberg, one of the biggest COVID-19-hotspots in Europe, where tourists from all over the world used to gather in big groups and have parties. After a complete lock-down of several weeks, local experts have stated that the touristic focus will shift to less quantitative, more individual and responsible tourism in that area from now on.



2.2. Employment trends

The success of tourism companies depends not only on the high quality of integrated services offered, but also, to a high degree, on professionalism of staff working for these companies in different positions.

According to this, there is an increasing demand of employees able to cope with the manifold requirements created by current and new trends in tourism sector. These requirements are contrasted by a significant lack of employees' professionalism in some sectors which often leads to short retention times in jobs and low satisfaction on all sides, travelers, companies and employees.

Tourism employment is often considered as a transition to other jobs with less seasonality and better, more regular working conditions. This is especially attractive for immigrants. It was pointed out by all focus groups that a large number of employees, especially low-skilled ones, have migration backgrounds or come to seasonal work from abroad.

So employment needs at the most basic levels, where fewer qualifications are required, are covered by immigrants who need more training and integration into the social and work environment and who often are unexperienced with working in the field of tourism. This often leads to significant deficiencies in the qualification of front staff jobs, for example in speaking national languages on a minimum B1-level.

Regarding differences between urban and rural working environments, where more seasonal employees are needed, there is also a lack of mobility among low-skilled employees which again leads to a high turnover rate; this makes it difficult to develop talents over a longer period and professionalize the sector.

Often the reasons are insufficient basic resp. personal skills and background knowledge. Low-skilled workers starting to work in the field of tourism often are not prepared to match the requirements; this creates wrong expectations and perceptions. They also find it difficult to understand the requirements in real work life without practical experience, gained also through work-based training.

Facing new challenges in tourism because of COVID-19, these basic and personal skills will be even more important, together with additional skills which are related to new legal regulations, guidelines and different commercial trends. Travelers are particularly affected, as are people working in tourism, so the focus will be even more on personal skills and, in addition, sufficient knowledge about new working conditions like hygienic standards or distance rules among tourists and staff and how to handle these in daily working life.



3. Specific characteristics of the work environments

3.1. Region-specific characteristics

According to the differences between urban and rural resp. country-specific job requirements and job types, there is a variety of special features of employees needed.

A general lack of workers, specialists and low-skilled, especially in rural tourist centers where seasonal workers are needed, is a typical issue. Domestic citizens often don't want to work in rural areas unless in more high-skilled positions, so these jobs have to be covered by low-skilled workers who very often are unexperienced and don't have concrete ideas as which working performances are expected from them. In rural areas staff may have to take over a greater variety of tasks than in urban tourism. Therefore, they need to be highly adjustable, also to high seasonal workloads.

There are also special challenges depending on geographical characteristics, like working in the far away fjords of Iceland or in winter tourist centers where employees work and live at the same place.

In contrary to this, in capital areas many low-qualified workers are seeking for jobs in the field of tourism. This imbalance is also a result of a lack of mobility and personal flexibility of employees.

Apart from Iceland, Spain and Italy, in Norway 81% of tourists are Norwegian, and most of the remaining tourists coming from Scandinavian neighboring or other close countries.

3.2. Job-specific characteristics

Working in the tourism sector means that it is essential to have a complete understanding of the business and the related requirements as not only a service or product is sold but a total experience. Employees who lack this understanding of the whole are less likely to be long-term employed.

Practical knowledge and interpersonal skills are essential to add value to the service offered. There is a significant lack of professionalism in some sectors as it is difficult to cover jobs with a high turnover of staff. In front staff jobs, it is obvious that there are considerable deficiencies in the qualification for workers need more preparation as these jobs are often covered by immigrants with little professional qualification.

Knowledge of national and other languages, English in any way, but also additional languages like German, Russian or Arab, is one aspect of worker's personal skills in many touristic environments, especially in urban tourism sector. Language skills should be on a level that allows front staff to communicate with clients in an appropriate way to satisfy their needs.



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For every job there is a job description, but companies' expectations are usually higher as there are additional basic requirements low-skilled and unexperienced workers often are not aware of before starting into employment. This may cover appropriate appearance and body language when working in front staff, showing motivation, commitment and interest for the work tasks, but also for background knowledge and information as well as self-organization. To show all-over hospitality to every guest, no matter if s-/he is easy or difficult to satisfy, means to match their requirements, even if they are not directly related to worker's basic tasks.

To match these requirements, it is necessary to be able to provide service or information, also on local, historical or cultural backgrounds. Therefore it is important for these workers to be prepared to these situations to avoid a feeling of uncertainty or insufficiency.

Other challenges to be met, especially for employees with migration backgrounds, could be to work in a multi-cultural environment, regarding guests and co-workers from different cultures, but also, for example in case of seasonal work in smaller communities, residents who are not treating them friendly.

Specific characteristics of different working environments are likely to change due to COVID-19, too. New or changed legal regulations and guidelines, as well as an extended awareness of hygienic standards and security measures, will require respectively increased responsibility and flexibility from employees working as front staff – e.g. wearing masks in the workplace, keeping distance rules, hygienic standards etc.



4. Training needs/gaps identified

With the shifting of trends in the tourism sector there is also the need for employees to get prepared for any kind of interaction with clients in a clear and accurate way and to focus on service- and customer-orientation. To identify and match these needs and demands, low-skilled workers have to be well for the requirements in their working environment to avoid the feeling of being overstrained.

High quality awareness and demands of tourists require serving staff coping with these very needs and the different topics that might arise. Practical knowledge and interpersonal skills are essential, in order to add value to the service offered. Even higher qualified workers, however, are not always well prepared when it comes to show multi-skilled features to satisfy the client's different needs in every way.

Working in direct contact to clients, good communication skills, in national as well as in foreign languages, are essential, together with intercultural skills and competences and background knowledge of the field they are working in. Therefore, teaching of languages especially for front staff in tourism sector has to be oriented to customer service, but the preparation for acquiring greater communicative competence is lacking. This also includes handling of complaints in a polite and goal-oriented way. "The client is king", therefore it is important in case of complaints to listen carefully and not get into discussions or argumentations.

Technology changes and using of new technologies are also a challenge that needs to be addressed so that employees do not become insecure, anxious and challenged and find they cannot do the job and leave. ICT/digital skills are an important aspect of front staff work as booking systems, digital order acceptance, invoicing and payment etc. is part of today's tourism business. Employees with basic skills in this field often don't have enough understanding or knowledge to transfer it into daily working life.

It could be included as soft skills and practical knowledge something related to occupational health and first aid to solve sudden situations of serious risk for clients such as Cardio Recovery Pulmonary with the use of Automatic External Defibrillator, Heimlich Maneuver and deep cuts. This aspect completes the skills of the worker who is in direct contact with the clients, despite the fact that it hardly occurs every day but that they are essential in a critical moment, as part of the philosophy of customer-oriented satisfaction in sector tourism.

Low-skilled employees are often expected to be professionals regarding the offers of the company they are working in. This may lead to uncertainties and a feeling of not being skilled enough to cover the job sufficiently. Sometimes there may be a cultural difference in how much follow up and supervision employees expect or need. If there is not a formal plan for training of new employees during the first six months, it can be difficult for them to hang on to the job.

To match increasing requirements of different tourism sectors, there is a strong demand of soft and interpersonal skills. Included are organizational skills to handle also situations not planned



or foreseen in a professional way. Entrepreneurial thinking should be familiar for all staff members, although sometimes it seems to be difficult for low-skilled employees to make a connection between their workplace and economical aspects of companies. This also refers to additional skills regarding retail (sale of souvenirs or typical products) or knowledge of marketing and sales techniques.

Other important aspects strongly related to successful long-term integration in workplaces are team spirit, self-responsibility and reliability. These are important competence but not always covered well, not even by more experienced and/or skilled employees. Staff members without team spirit or lack of reliability have strong impacts on the working atmosphere and on motivation of co-workers.

There is often a lack of professionalism regarding self-presentation, behavior towards clients and co-workers, bringing private matters into work places or keeping work schedules correctly. This requires an increase of awareness of employers' expectations and how to match them in an adequate way.

Changed conditions of tourism in times of COVID-19 - and perhaps still after the pandemic is over - will even increase these demands, as it is essential for employees to cope with the consequences arising from it. They will have to meet new requirements like understanding and following new, changed rules and guidelines at their work place, communicating with clients about this topic in a proper way and convey a sense of security to them.

To cover all these training needs and close the existing gaps, there has to be an over-all training approach. VET training elements are one thing, but basic skills and soft skills like language skills, problem-solving strategies, communicative skills, team working aspects and entrepreneurial awareness should be in focus, providing practical work-based training.

Competence-oriented learning and learning by doing will provide more self-identification of learners with the needs they are to face in their daily work life. Designing of trainings better meeting the practical requirements of low-skilled workers in tourism sector is an important contribution to further development of this field.

Insight into ones own strengths and abilities

A person with little or no formal competence may never have made an inventory of their own knowledge and competence. They may have skills and strengths that have not been recognized because this is not formalized through education. And if they struggle with low self-esteem in connection with the job search, they will find it difficult to make themselves attractive to a future employer and get their potential activated.

If trainers can assist learners with this process of self-knowledge, where the adult learners themselves realize that they have strengths and attributes needed in the tourism sector, they will apply for jobs that match their skills, more specifically. This, together with more



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professionalism regarding self-presentation, will be useful, concrete and expedient to focus on. The learners will have confidence and more faith in their own abilities, having received necessary tools and guidance to get a clear picture of their own strengths (and shortcomings).

The probability of mastering the job satisfactorily will obviously increase. So will the interest and motivation of the employee. Thus, the chances of long-term employment are more likely.

Someone who can describe themselves as outgoing, a good story teller and interested in history might apply for a job as a tour guide. If he gets the job, it won't matter so much if he knows the specific local history of the place immediately. He would be interested in learning this local history and finding joy in communicating it and sharing it with people.

We may think that this "luxury" of choosing is not available to the low qualified adults. That they are in a situation that requires "work, no matter what, I must have a job!" There are many applicants for the same jobs. This is exactly why it is important to be aware of your own strengths and to be able to convince that you have something valuable to contribute to a business. A job seeker with little or no formal competence, but with a clear idea of what they have to contribute, stands much stronger in the job search process than a person with no self-understanding of their own value in the job market.



5. Specific Cases and Challenges - Situational Job Profiles

From the focus groups in partner countries (bringing together experts from the tourism sector with pedagogic staff), the following typical situational job profiles have been collected:

A new employee (young male), fluent in several languages was taught how to work the system and booking. He was very nervous for months because he felt that he did not have sufficient knowledge to answer questions from customers about the area and surroundings – what tourists could see and do around the hotel. He constantly feared that he would be asked a question he could not answer. He quit his job after a few months, because he was afraid that his knowledge was inadequate for the job.

One of the employers has several times tried to use immigrant employees for phone calls and bookings, unfortunately with somewhat different feedback. As the young tourists often use internet and do bookings themselves, the older part of the tourists will make use of telephone contact. These can be poor hearing, and on several occasions the caller has ended the conversation as they did not understand the language of the recipient.

We have had some issues with lack of professionalism, people sometime behave as they were not at the job but more like acting as they were at home, engaging in their private matters or showing their like or dislike openly towards fellow employees. Maybe stricter dress codes or uniforms for all categories could mark the profession better.

One example is where an employee spoke Chinese which seemed to have the effect that visitors from that country, who were otherwise nice, treated that employee differently and not as nicely. The employee gave up on the job. In one company all employees have a badge showing flags of the languages he/she speaks.

A part of the problem is that good employees are often promoted to a management/supervising positions, but do not fully grasp what is expected of them. Sometimes they think that they themselves have to change their personality.



What we need to do is to change the culture and maintain the spark. That is why the role of managers/supervisors is so big – they are the ones that decide what happens. Company values can be important, but it is up to how managers react to behavior that really counts. It is easy to tell people to think outside of the box and find solutions, but not follow through on that as a manager/supervisor. We have too many managers/supervisors that are not sufficiently trained or are not equipped for the job. That is where we need to start. The job needs respect – it should be cool to work in a reception, fronting a hotel. The maids need to be attended to as well, but first the frontline desk jobs and then distribute to other jobs.

Catering staff member giving information on a traditional Viennese dish (Wiener Schnitzel)

The staff member needs the skills to explain in English how the dish is prepared traditionally; the correct vocabulary is needed, also regarding preparation and ingredients, as well as correct expressions and phrases. It is also important to know what kind of meat is used due to cultural aspects.

Tour operator explaining history of Austrian monarchy

A tourist has booked an operated tour in the surroundings of Vienna, focused on Austrian Imperial period. He is shown many attractions related to this period and wants to have additional information from the guide. He needs knowledge of this period to make the tourist familiar with some historical facts, together with the correct terms to use.

Member of service staff has to handle a complaint about expensive local dishes

A foreign tourist in a traditional restaurant in the Vienna city states that the dishes are very expensive. The waiter needs to be empathic and show hospitality explaining in English that in this restaurant only local biological ingredients of high quality are used for the dishes, so the tourist can be assured that ordering one of the dishes is worth the price.

On a tour to the famous Wachau Valley a tourist loses his way when ascending a hillside

Included in the tour is a visit of an old castle up on a hillside. During ascent on the hill, one of the tourists goes astray and doesn't reach the castle together with the rest of the group. The tour guide has to stay calm, tell the others to stay together and calm them down, because there is no danger for the missing person. Then he has to go searching for the tourist. It is important that he knows the local conditions and surroundings and, when the missing tourist is back again, the guide stays calm and doesn't make accusations. He should also convey a sense of security to the entire group.



A waiter of a small tavern explaining the way

An Asian tourist asks for the way to one of the famous Viennese Christmas Markets and about the background of such a market. The waiter, with high hospitality, has to be able to explain the way, giving with additional recommendations for interesting points on the way and also referring to traditional backgrounds and customs related to Christmas Markets. Therefore he not only needs local and background knowledge but also good English communication skills, answering different questions.

Booking agent gets a complaint because of a reservation gone wrong

A catering for a group of business guests was booked by a company for the next evening but there was no confirmation sent. A member of the company's staff calls and complains as it is not clear if the catering will take place. The booking agent has to show understanding and empathy, apologize in a polite way for the mistake and at the same time clarify the situation immediately and reassure the client that everything will be alright.

Explanation by a waiter of a typical Spanish dish, for example paella:

Know how to communicate in another language the ingredients that paella has (rice, vegetables, crayfish, chicken, snails, mussels, etc ...). For this it is necessary not only to know vocabulary, but to know how to express oneself correctly. Explain also how it has been cooked and know the culture of the tourist, for example if it is Muslim to know that they do not eat pork or drink alcohol.

Person who works in a small rural hotel that has to explain how to reach a rural road to see the nature of the place:

A foreign tourist asks for information about the area and how to get to a certain rural road that is nearby to make a march. It is necessary to know how to communicate and explain with the utmost hospitality not only getting but offer help and give explanations about the weather, nature, wildlife, etc ...



Concierge of a small hotel:

Tourist in the hotel looking for an ideal accommodation. The client's complaint is due to the fact that the room assigned to them does not respond to their tastes or desires. Not because it is in bad condition, no. It has to be facing the sea, with a terrace of specific conditions, with furniture and some reliable spaces and with a luxurious, comfortable and fail-safe bathroom.

How to solve this situation through customer service techniques.

Tourist guide who is in a situation of a heart attack of one of the tourists in his group.

He has to keep calm to call an ambulance. It is a stress situation in which he must handle the situation to avoid panic among the other components of the group.

To cope with this situation it is also important to have planned this possibility, so he must have the phone numbers of the medical services and hospitals in the area.

Waiter of a tourist restaurant that has to deal with a complaint about a bad service, especially the slowness, since there are many customers in this moment.

The waiter has to communicate with empathy, thank the complaint and give an explanation about the causes of bad service.

Hotel waitress or cleaner who has to contact the client (in another language) to meet any need related to the cleaning of his room: room that has not been cleaned yet, lack of towels, sheet, toilet paper.

She has to communicate correctly, with sympathy and hospitality to meet the client's need.

A waiter in a local restaurant has to make sure that all Covid 19 guidelines and legal regulations are matched by his himself/herself, his/her colleagues and clients. There might arise a challenging situation that he/she has to cope with, as (e.g.) a client doesn't follow these rules and (e.g.) refuses to wear a mask or keep distance to others.

The waiter has to communicate friendly, correctly but in a determined way to remind the client to follow existing rules or, if the client is not cooperative, needs to tell him/her to leave the place.



6. Methodological Approaches: some suggestions

The methodology in adult education / vocational training / educational work for trainers, coaches, teachers, the frontline staff in the tourism industry, gastronomy, system gastronomy, hotel business as "art" or "teaching" from the paths to the goals is an essential factor that decides on the success of the educational offers and the learning success of the low qualified people who want and should work in this industry. In the tourism industry, gastronomy, system gastronomy, hotel business there are a multitude of jobs and fields of activity which are often not sufficiently known to the people who want to work in this industry: Food & Beverage, eating and drinking, kitchen, restaurant, event area, marketing and sales, technology, building services, maintenance, administration, wellness and spa, rooms, rooms division, cleaning etc.

<https://www.karriere-im-hotel.at/de/hotelberufe-von-abisz.html>

<https://www.beruflexikon.at/>

<https://www.bic.at/berufsinformation>

<https://www.wko.at/branchen/tourismus-freizeitwirtschaft/gastronomie>

In the following we present three methodological approaches to ensure success in vocational training work for both teachers and learners.

Multidimensional learning

Multidimensional learning characterises a method of adult education in which, on the one hand, several learning dimensions of the learners are activated and, on the other hand, several learning paths are linked together in a goal-oriented manner. Thus, cognitive, sensory, motor, manual and other talents of the participants are used side by side and with each other during the processing or development of the teaching content and enable each participant to learn individually.

This way of teaching and learning is a further development of holistic learning, which uses the different potentials of the learners in learning processes. This methodical approach is demanding, challenging and particularly suitable for complex learning goals and can be used for example in project-oriented learning.

But also for more simply structured learning objectives, multidimensional learning can



generate better learning efficiency. A further advantage of this method is that learners and teachers establish more intensive contact with each other, as the different learning requirements and learning methods of the participants are also taken into account.

The learning objectives can therefore be achieved in many different ways. The learning process is varied and increases the sustainability of the learning content. However, this varied and multidimensional approach requires a broad repertoire of methods as well as sound knowledge of methodology and didactics on the part of the teachers. Therefore, it is important and valuable to start with the training and further education of the teachers so that they are optimally prepared for the challenges of multidimensional learning.

Programmed learning

Programmed learning means the method of learning which is aimed at the most independent acquisition of the learning material by the participants. For this purpose, tasks are given which are to be completed in small steps and at an individual learning pace.

After each learning step, a learning objectives check or learning progress check provides the learners with feedback on their learning success to date and thus enables them to take the next learning step or, if necessary, adapt the learning process. Digital learning tools and e-learning programmes, as they are increasingly used in adult education, also support this process.

Project work

Project work or project-oriented learning offers the possibility to offer methodically demanding and complex cross-topic learning processes. A project is carried out in a certain period of time, whereby the start date and end date are fixed. Projects deal with topics or activities that make high methodological and organisational demands.

In order to carry out a project, a structured organization is required that is geared to achieving the project goal. The project is carried out by a project group, in which a project management is defined at the beginning of the project work, which guides the way to the sub-goals and the division of tasks.

In addition to the work on content, this methodical approach also enables a parallel social and interactive learning process in which the participants also learn, try out and experience a great



deal about team building, teamwork, cooperation, organisation of work processes, structured thinking and acting, optimal use of talents, strengths, competencies, communication, conflict management and much more of the individual project group members.

Criteria for the choice of methods

1. Institutional framework
2. Objectives and contents
3. Participants
4. Teachers, trainers

1. The institutional framework offers learners the most conducive learning environment possible, in which everyone feels comfortable, opens up, and can overcome resistance to learning. At the same time, they also offer security about the learning goals that have to be achieved, about responsibilities, they convey clarity, activate self-responsibility and ideally enable the learner to engage in learning without stress.

2. Goals must be clearly recognisable and should make learners aware of where the "learning journey" is going, why this or that content should be worked on or compiled, why which methods are used. A particularly important aspect in this context is the practical relevance. Participants should understand how they can, for example, put acquired knowledge into practice, but also that today it is very important to get involved in an ongoing learning process.

3. Participating learners should be given the opportunity to get to know and try out a variety of learning methods in order to be able to use the most ideal method for them in self-study phases, to expand their repertoire of learning methods and to experience that learning with a variety of learning methods is not only more fun, but also more efficient and sustainable.

4. Teachers in adult education today primarily design competence-oriented learning processes that enable learners not only to acquire qualifications, knowledge and skills, but also to successfully implement and apply them in the respective work or life context (transfer of practice) from which they come. This clearly also includes the strengthening of self-learning competence and competence-oriented learning, approaches that have become indispensable for a successful working life.



Possible forms of learning

A multitude and variety of learning forms enables both teachers and learners to make the learning processes more varied, exciting, efficient and sustainable. The use of diverse forms of learning is clearly moving away from classic knowledge transfer towards competence-oriented learning. Here is a list of possible forms of learning.

1. Dialogical learning
2. Differentiated learning
3. Explorative learning
4. Multidimensional learning
5. Holistic learning
6. Action-oriented learning
7. Inclusive learning
8. Cooperative learning
9. Learning by teaching
10. Goal-oriented learning
11. Process oriented learning
12. Solution-oriented learning
13. Self-determined learning
14. Self-organised learning
15. Independent learning

A competency-based, participant-centred approach focuses on the learning outcomes, but also on the practical relevance and relevance for the learners. Competences create the link between knowledge and skills, enable problem solving and include the willingness to use these skills independently.

In order to meet the requirements of the learners, we recommend the following five principles:

1. Orientation towards the learning outcomes: Learners should have demonstrable competence to act. The output of the learning process is important. This means first and



foremost the successful mastering of professional challenges, moving away from the mere transfer of knowledge towards the learners' ability to act, so that they are up to the required professional competences in the world of work.

2. The action orientation ensures the transfer into practice. Knowledge, skills should be able to be applied in context, work context. Therefore it is important to "learn" knowledge already in the application context.

3. Professional situations / activities usually require not only professional knowledge and skills but also personal and socio-cultural competences. Therefore, interdisciplinarity and wholeness play an important role in learning. Learners learn how to apply not only specialist knowledge and skills, but also social skills (e.g. openness, socio-cultural background) and personal skills such as resilience, in accordance with their individual abilities and based on their socio-cultural background.

4. Learning orientation focuses on the planning, organisation and support of learning processes Teachers play different roles. They are e.g. moderators, coaches, consultants, guides, navigators, facilitators, mentors, they provide information and tools, ask questions, give tips, lead reflection processes, give feedback, enable different learning stations and forms of learning such as group work, learning tandems, interactive learning etc.

5. In the sense of participant centricity, learners recognise themselves what they already know and can apply, they take responsibility for their learning process, the progress of learning, they are able to recognise and solve problems, they are able to support and help shape reflection processes The learners are active, they are interested in their own individual learning process, their learning progress. The personal motivation to learn arises from the development of situational interest. ("I am interested in this topic, I know how to apply this knowledge, I have a sense of achievement, I get positive feedback and am therefore more motivated to learn even more"). Ideally, there are more and more self-directed learning phases, which are supported by corresponding learning progress. Systematic and well-timed introduction of learners to self-directed learning means a step-by-step path from teacher-centred methods to learner-centred methods.

The most important factor of the competence-oriented approach is the orientation towards the learning outcomes that learners can and should acquire. Having competences means being equipped with the ability to act, i.e. to behave appropriately in certain situations, to cope with them and to act on one's own responsibility. In our context, this primarily includes vocational



action competences, occupational competences and competences relevant to the profession, which should enable the target group to enter working life in an independent, self-reliant and sustainable way. We count the following four competencies among these.

Professional competence is the knowledge of facts as well as job-specific knowledge & skills. Learners acquire specialist knowledge that they can apply in their professional life.

Methodical competence is the ability to acquire the corresponding knowledge, to approach a problem systematically, to recognize connections and to proceed in a structured and effective way. The primary aim is to challenge and encourage learners and to expand their skills accordingly.

Nowadays, methodological competence definitely also includes **digital media and methodological competence**. More and more people use their smartphones, tablets, laptops, personal computers to get information about all kinds of topics on the internet, they read newspapers online, listen to digital radio, watch digital television, stream, do their banking online, shop online, check appointments in virtual offices, book holidays online, communicate with each other via social media platforms, search for new job opportunities online, apply online and much more. Even the driving licence and driving test can only be taken online in Austria.

It is therefore obvious that this development must also be extended to vocational education and training, initial and further vocational training, so that workers in the tourism industry can remain competitive and can meet the challenges of the labour market competently and securely. Access to digital learning is provided by teachers, educators, trainers, etc., all those people who make a significant contribution to improving the opportunities of the workforce.

Personal competence describes the ability to manage oneself, i.e. to deal with oneself competently and to be able to motivate oneself. The ability for self-reflection/motivation should therefore be promoted throughout the entire learning process.

Social competence covers the spectrum of abilities and skills that support and guide social interactions (e.g. ability to work in a team, ability to deal with conflicts and communication skills).



7. Annex

Methodology for conducting focus groups

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Low Qualified Adult Learners Ready for Work

IO1 Resource Guide for Adult Trainers. Situational Profiles of Jobs in the Tourism Sector.

Internal document

Developed by 

October 2019



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1. Purpose of the Document

The herewith suggested **methodology for conducting focus groups** in each partner country of the KA2 project “Enterprised – Low Qualified Adult Learners Ready for Work“ is part of project activities belonging to IO1 and shall thereby feed into development work for the project output **Resource Guide for Adult Trainers. Situational Profiles of Jobs in the Tourism Sector.**

2. Main elements, objectives and expected impact of IO1

Provide up-to-date inventory of typical work situations taking place in the tourism sector, especially with focus on the first 6 months from entering given job

in order to

- support trainers to get a clear understanding of the work specifics in the given job in the tourism sector
- provide a rich repository of real life situations, which can be integrated in their training work with low-qualified learners

3. Two main emphases

The guide will provide situational profiles for a defined set of jobs in tourism, which are accessible for low-qualified workers.

The guide will provide an outline of the specific characteristics of the work environment, conditions, mindset, values within the Tourism sector in general.

In terms of didactics, this guide can be considered the source of KNOWLEDGE.



4. General focus group methodology

Each Enterprised partner shall select and invite relevant participants for the focus group. The initial plan is to organise a focus group with min. 12 participants (recommended: 6 representatives of the tourism industry and 6 from adult education).

Each partner shall at least convey two focus group meetings in this initial phase of IO1 development work.

The minutes from the focus group meetings in each partner country shall be sent to P2, BEST/Austria for consolidation.

BEST will collect respective information from partners' focus group meetings and will, on the basis of this, draft a sample structure of the guide to be distributed among partners for comments and proposals.

On the basis of partners' feedback, BEST will then draft the guide (with contributions of the partnership). The draft version will be sent to participants in focus groups for review and feedback.

The methodology is meant as a general suggestion, taking into account that actual conditions for conducting focus groups, as well as detailed approaches, may – for various reasons - differ among partner countries.

Partners are therefore advised to plan for individual variations, adaptations and flexible approaches, according to their context.

In general, the focus group in each country shall **involve**

- representatives of the **tourism industry** as well as
- representatives from **adult education**, i.e. adult trainers

During the project's kick-off meeting, partners have agreed on the following general approach:

Since *Enterprised* is an adult education project, the focus shall *not* be on specified/technical VET course/training elements, but much rather on basic skills and soft skills (e.g. solving communicative situations, team aspects).

Sets of tourism jobs to be focused on:



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- Frontline staff in a broad sense, i.e. dealing directly with service users (tourists)
- Frontline staff showing potential/ambition to becoming team leaders
- Staff in tourism being confronted with new trends in the labour market, e.g. eco-friendly tourism, cultural tourism, entrepreneurial awareness/business understanding etc.

First ideas on who shall be in the focus groups of each partner country (agreed upon during the kick-off meeting):

Iceland: experienced trainers, managers/HR managers from tourism companies

Austria: adult education trainers, job coaches/mediators (“Betriebskontakter”), tourism service providers (owners/managers/staff), labour market (agency) specialists/employment service representatives

Spain: training providers and small companies related to tourism

Norway: leaders of culture (tourism) association, restaurant managers, hotel managers, tourism association from Telemark region, NAV (employment service)

In the focus group meetings, each partner shall open up substantial discussions on which concrete jobs and job aspects/job situations to deal with (according to relevance expressed) and which concrete needs are identified and need to be met.

Important:

The **target group** of the IO1 product are **adult trainers**. The product, in the end, shall support trainers to prepare low-qualified learners for concrete jobs in the tourism industry and to improve customer services in this selected sector.

5. Concrete Questions

to be asked/discussed/answered/documented

The **aim** of the focus groups shall be to map a relevant list of working situations and sector-specific information (to be integrated within the IO1 guide to be developed as a next step).



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As a main first element of the methodology, we suggest the following core questions to be raised, discussed and documented (in terms of answers and findings) **in a narrative form** during the focus group meetings.

In order to stimulate a fruitful discussion bringing in different perspectives and in order to establish mutual exchange, we have indicated questions rather directed at tourism enterprise representatives in **orange colour**, whereas questions rather asked to adult education experts (trainers) are marked in **blue**.



1. Which main challenges are your staff/colleagues currently confronted with – for which (frontline) jobs in your organisation?

ICELAND

A new employee (young male), fluent in several languages was taught how to work the system and booking. He was very nervous for months because he felt that he did not have sufficient knowledge to answer questions from customers about the area and surroundings – what tourists could see and do around the hotel. He constantly feared that he would be asked a question he could not answer. He quit his job after a few months, because he was afraid that his knowledge was inadequate for the job.

For us it is mainly frontline staff at the service desk and back service. Booking systems are complicated and contracts on insurance and rental are thorough. Staff needs to be knowledgeable in these areas in addition to knowing how their job affects other jobs in the company to be able to answer questions that are in coherence with other processes. If they do not have an answer they need to seek them from a more experienced employee. Service orientation is of high importance, being friendly and transparent in process work. Competences are mostly related to services, sales and tackling difficult issues.

Frontline staff at the desk service and maids can be a vulnerable group in this regard. Sometimes many employees leave the company at the same time which can create a straining situation in the workplace where many new employees need training at the same point in time. Older employees may then need to work more – take on an extra load. There is a need to find time to work with each employee in getting past the feeling of insecurity which comes with being in a new job.

Employees also have different personalities and there is a need to find a balance in the dynamic among them. Basic information needs to be given time to sink in, it is information and training happening at the same time – with time.

Iceland is a bit special with regards to the difference between the Capital area and rural areas. There are far more challenges in the rural areas. It is for example difficult to get educational providers on board servicing companies in the far away fjords. It costs more time and money – travelling and such. These places are also not open all year round. There needs to be a fine line in fast delivery of training and training taking place through conducting the tasks at hand



– performing the job. This line can also be very individual. It is often up to the manager/supervisor to figure that out, since he/she is closest to the employees. There cannot be a specific training plan for each individual, we cannot go that far in scope. The main issue is the training delivered following recruitment and then there needs to be efficient training for managers/supervisors to follow it through with employees and continue/follow-up with the input.

There is also a need for a sound needs assessment and prioritization within it. That is work that the manager needs to conduct.

In rural areas staff may need to attend to more variable tasks than in the Capital area. Therefore, they need to be highly adjustable. Another factor is the possible isolation factor in faraway fjords and to be a part of a staff community, where people need to socialize after work, which can bring along various challenges.

Work in rural areas is seasonal, and some employees work hard for a while to save money and then go back to their home country. Some of them return. Those employees do not need as much training. Learning the national language is also one major issue and to make Iceland an attractive alternative for residence. Some communities meet those employees from abroad in an inviting way, so they want to stay and live in that community. In some areas there is a close cooperation with a branch from the lifelong learning centers whereas it is possible to offer training in Icelandic on-place.

For example, that employers in the sector are not being kind to foreign workers. Icelanders themselves will not attend a job in rural areas unless they get a manager job. Probably just about 5% of employees in the tourism sector in rural areas are Icelanders. With regards to meeting the competence needs in rural areas the Skills center for Tourism is doing a good job.

The basic skills needed are service-orientation, adjustability and behaving professionally. It is expected that you are a professional in regards with what the hotel has to offer. Safety coming first and respect. We need to build up the image of the job and broaden the base that it is founded on.



AUSTRIA

- In Austria, especially in Vienna, the tourism sector is growing steadily, also in the field of congress tourism. Along with tourists from Europe, Russia and USA, there is an increasing number of tourists coming from “new countries” (e.g. Asian destinations or Arabic countries) who have high and maybe different expectations and demands.
- Tourists from the higher price segment expect individual service on a high level and offers to get a unique experience, sometimes at thematic trips like “Vienna at advent time” or “Viennese festival weeks”. Correspondingly, front staff have to be well prepared to provide additional information or advice on relevant activities or background information in a polite, attentive and efficient way.
- Current new trends in tourism, like sustainability and ecological aspects, health consciousness and high quality awareness of food and beverage also require serving staff coping with these very needs and the different topics that might arise. Practical knowledge and interpersonal skills are essential, in order to add value to the service offered.
- The success of tourism companies like catering and tour guides depends on the high quality of integrated services offered, but also, to a high degree, on the front staff working with the clients directly. To cope with this, employees need to have at least relevant basic knowledge related to their working environment (e.g. hygiene measures, legal regulatory).
- Knowledge of different languages, English in any way, and an additional language like Russian or Arab, is one aspect of worker’s personal skills. Language skills should be on a level that allows them to communicate with clients in an appropriate way to satisfy their needs.
- It is important to communicate not only in foreign languages, but also in a polite and serviced-oriented way. Even higher qualified workers, however, are not always well prepared when it comes to show multi-skilled features to satisfy the client’s different needs in every way, e.g service-orientation, intercultural skills or understanding of the whole business..
- There is a general lack of workforce - specialists as well as more low-skilled - in Austrian tourism, especially in the western, rural tourist centers where seasonal workers are needed. In Vienna, many low-qualified workers are seeking a job in the field of tourism. This imbalance



is also a result of a lack of mobility and personal flexibility of workers. Also when catering is ordered or a tour booked outside of Vienna, it might come to a lack of mobility.

- A high turnover of employees in the tourism field in Vienna is often a matter of wrong expectations, perceptions and lack of professionalism. Employees find it difficult to understand the requirements in real work life without practical experience, gained also through work-based training. This often leads to short retention times in jobs and low satisfaction on both sides, company and employees.

SPAIN

- The tourism served by workers in the sector comes mainly from outside Spain, so the main challenge they face is knowing and mastering different languages, mainly English, French, German and Russian.

- Regarding the work of a tour guide, there is a very bureaucratic regulation in Spain that demands more and more knowledge and preparation. Also the requirements are different in each Autonomous Community. On the other hand they find the competition offered by free tours.

- A greater increase in tourism is expected in Spain, so employees in the sector will have to be increasingly qualified.

- There is a significant lack of professionalism in some sectors, especially in hotels, as there are difficulties in filling jobs with a high turnover of staff. The job of a waiter or a chef requires more preparation and is covered by immigrants with little professional qualification. Therefore, we can conclude that there are important deficiencies in the qualification of certain jobs that directly serve the client.

- Growth of a new type of non-urban tourism, but of a rural type, more linked to new trends in ecotourism, cultural tourism, gastronomy. The staff of the establishments that serve the tourists are not as well prepared as the workers of the coastal areas.

- The tourist client is increasingly informed and is, therefore, more demanding. The trip is organized more, it is more independent, it is reported online, it spends less time at the destination, it uses low cost airlines.



- Travel agencies have to specialize more and more, since they have to add value to their clients.
- The high seasonality of tourism activity in Spain affects the management of human resources, which makes it difficult to retain talent and professionalize the sector.
- Tourism employment is seen as a transition to other jobs with less seasonality. This is especially appreciated with immigrants.
- The lack of coverage of employment needs at the most basic levels, where they require less qualification, are covered by immigrants who need more training and integration into the social and work environment.
- The tourism sector is not attractive precisely because of the lack of stability and working conditions.
- Inadequate management of new technologies and innovation.

NORWAY

Most challenging experiences are especially focused on both written and oral skills and language understanding. In the tourism industry 81% of tourists are Norwegian, and most of the remaining tourists are from Scandinavia and other close countries, such as Germany, the Netherlands etc. Because of this, it is essential that the employees in the tourism industry have a good understanding of the Norwegian language.

The group also discuss experiences in connection with the arrivals of employees at the right time at the start of duty. This is mainly not mentioned as a challenge, though several employers probably spend a little more time on this than what would be the norm in a standardized working relationship. Here, it is emphasized that the employer is clear about their expectations.

From the taxi industry, experience shows that it can be challenging to be alone in the job performance, as workers are in this industry. They have no other options than to call and ask for a colleague's opinion in need of assistance. The threshold for asking for help is thus high,



and mistakes are made. There is also no one to rely on if complaints come, as the driver is alone in the car with the customer.

Many customers are concerned about the driver's views and attitudes, being that they originally come from a different country and culture. The policy is that these subjects should not be talked about. But it can be easily tempting to discuss delicate topics. Especially if the customer is a bit drunk. It is easy to feel offended, especially if the customers claim that the driver is intolerant, hostile to women etc.



2. Where exactly (particularly in which situations in customer service) do you see gaps and needs not sufficiently met by your staff/colleagues?

ICELAND

- Service-orientation is a key element. It is important that educational providers become familiar with the culture and service emphasis within the company before they train the employees. There is a need for introducing these elements to them and how for example service-orientation as a skill should be presented in the job at hand.
- Managers and supervisors need to know more psychology. How do set up a conversation, following up on ethical issues and other factors that need to be reviewed in the context of the job at hand. It is often beneficial to spend time to train key employees, for through them others can learn. It is best when the knowledge and competences have become a part of the workplace culture – among employees.
- Professionalism is number one, two and three. Understanding the customer as well as the needs of other staff in their roles. The difference between a good employee and an excellent one is that the excellent employee facilitates the work of his/her colleagues. The training needs to contain factors that lower all „unnecessary crap“.
- Sometimes there may be a cultural difference in how much follow up and supervision employees expect. There may be a mismatch in expectations between managers/supervisors and employees regarding how much follow up is needed/expected.
It is soft skills that need to be trained, not processes – the workplaces can take care of that. A focus on a growth mindset, where employees are looking at how to grow in their job, where a good reputation is a key – and being able to show warmth and that extra touch.
- Soft skills and focus on management/supervisor training seem to be a core in addition to image raising of jobs in the sector.



AUSTRIA

- Members of catering staff (booking employees, waiters and waitresses) in direct contact with clients who wish additional information on production and ingredients of traditional dishes.

To match these requirements it is necessary to be interested and motivated to gain background knowledge also on own responsibility.

- Working in tour operations, clients have to be advised in the beginning which tour to book to meet their interests; during tours in or around Vienna, featuring “inside” knowledge and “tips” for visiting special places of Vienna and surroundings also related to history, special customs and other points of interest.

- Organizational skills to handle also situations not planned or foreseen in a professional way.

- Employees having direct contact to clients should be aware of different forms of tourism, including “new” ones like ecological, gastro or culture tourism, and the needs related.

- There often is a lack of interpersonal and intercultural skills when it comes to serve clients from different countries.

Employees should be aware that there are different cultural and traditional approaches of clients and respond in an appropriate way, so clients feel welcome and well served.

- Featuring ICT/digital skills

Booking systems, digital order acceptance, invoicing and payment is part of today’s tourism business. Employees with basic skills in this field often don’t have enough understanding or knowledge to transfer it into daily working life.

- Team working and

These are important competence but not always covered well. A staff member being no team worker or not reliable has an impact on the working atmosphere and motivation of co-workers.

- Handling of complaints in a polite and goal-oriented way



“The client is king”, therefore it is important in case of complaints to listen carefully and not get into discussions or argumentations.

SPAIN

- In the hospitality sector there is a lack of professionalism in aspects such as serving a table, protocol aspects, serving the client correctly ...

Especially with respect to the position of waiter that would require greater professional qualification. Thus, there are very important aspects in customer service such as how to deal with a complaint.

- Another need is related to the knowledge of languages, and more specifically, in everything related to customer service (explanation of the dishes, knowing how to give directions, interacting with the customer, ...).

- There is also a lack of initiative and creativity to handle different organizational situations.

- Lack of intercultural skills. More and more tourists have to be attended more personally from different countries and cultures (Japan, China, Arab countries, Russia, USA, ...).

- A greater knowledge of new forms of tourism, new tastes related to ecotourism, rural tourism, sports tourism or nautical ...

- Lack of knowledge and skills related to entrepreneurship. Many workers in the sector have experience and could create their own companies, but they don't know how to make a business plan or aspects related to financing or how to design a consolidation strategy. They would also need to know the new tourist trends such as ecotourism or more sustainable blue tourism, of great importance for a country like Spain.

- There are jobs that are highly professionalized, such as chefs and cooks, event organization staff, hotel managers, etc ..., which nevertheless show lacks in multi-skilling needs, related to care to the client, hospitality, creativity, etc ...

- In the works related to rural tourism, there are many gaps and needs of all kinds, mainly those related to the use of new technologies. Also in terms of customer service and aspects related to management.



ENTERPRISED

- In different jobs in the sector there are also needs related to interpersonal skills, teamwork, work planning, ...
- Related to the needs to improve customer service are those of oral, written expression and ability to observe and listen. This is essential to use the language of customers. And this is where deficiencies are observed.
- With regard to retail (sale of souvenirs or typical products) there are also deficiencies in the knowledge of marketing and sales techniques.



3. Which concrete skills (basic skills/soft skills) do your staff/colleagues lack?

Therefore, in what concrete areas and situations do they need improvement?

Which concrete things would you/your staff/colleagues need to learn/train/practise?

ICELAND

- Yes, depending on the guest you have. One example is where an employee spoke Chinese which seemed to have the effect that visitors from that country, who were otherwise nice, treated that employee differently and not as nicely. The employee gave up on the job. In one company all employees have a badge showing flags of the languages he/she speaks.

- There is a need for cultural understanding. Technology changes are also a challenge that needs to be addressed so that employees do not become insecure, anxious and challenged so that they find they cannot do the job and leave. If there is not a formal plan for training of new employees during the first six months, it can be difficult for them to hang on to the job.

- Employers in rural areas often turn to employers in the Capital area to find staff. Quite often, staff comes from the Capital area and has to live at the hotel, which is their workplace as well. Then the one who is leaving must do so immediately for the room to be available, and therefore does not take part in training the new employee. When is there then a good time to train when everything needs to be attended to? This is the most expensive part – to find out when to train and to deliver training. Then there is more workload on other staff.

- One can say that we are a bit hooked on titles – every title now ends with „manager“ even though that may not be the core of the job and may also be misunderstood by those who receive it – maybe taking it too seriously or thinking it is something else than it is in regards to behaviour. It is the content and aim of the job that needs to be clear and follow through. To see oneself as a tool, but not a title – what is the content one is supposed to attend to?

- What we need to do is to change the culture and maintain the spark. That is why the role of managers/supervisors is so big – they are the ones that decide what happens. Company values can be important, but it is up to how managers react to behavior that really counts. It is easy to tell people to think outside of the box and find solutions, but not follow through on that as a manager/supervisor. We have too many managers/supervisors that are not sufficiently trained or are not equipped for the job. That is where we need to start. The job



needs respect – it should be cool to work in a reception, fronting a hotel. The maids need to be attended to as well, but first the frontline desk jobs and then distribute to other jobs.

AUSTRIA

Lacks:

- Communication skills in general and intercultural communication skills
- Appropriate appearance and body language when working in front staff
- Service-orientation
- Team work
- Reliability
- Self-responsibility
- Communicating in foreign languages, basically in English
- Entrepreneurial thinking/approach
- ICT/digital skills

Areas and situations where Improvement is needed and concrete things to be learned/trained/practised

- Appropriate behavior when working in direct contact to clients (dress code, body language)
- Serving at catering (knowledge about serving standards, taking orders, give additional information on dishes or beverages...).
- Giving Background information on particular topics significant for clients (local history, customs, dishes, restaurants, geography...) and related recommendations.
- Handling of CRM (complaints about delays, not satisfactory service, dishes, beverages, reservations...)
- Intercultural characteristics, including gender & diversity management and knowledge/awareness of different cultures, customs and approaches to certain situations



- Personal initiative for improving workplace-related knowledge on different aspects of tourism branch and current trends
- Awareness of entrepreneurial aspects and how to contribute to them
- Practising English and/or other foreign languages related to work-environments
- Team work - co-working with other employees is not only a matter of getting along with them well
- Getting familiar with digitalization in working environment

SPAIN

Professional profiles (basic skills/soft skills) missing:

- In the hospitality sector (restaurants, bars, pubs):

Customer service and resolution of complaints and claims.

Communication in other languages (basically in English).

Therefore the areas and situations in which these improvements are needed are:

Customer service (how to treat it at the table, take the command, explain the ingredients of the dishes, learn about the culture and country of the tourist, know how to make recommendations, observe the rules of protocol at the table and hospitality).

Attention and resolution of complaints and claims for errors, lateness or badly cooked dishes or that do not satisfy the customer.

What these workers should learn would be:

Communication in the client's language (or English) orally and in writing.

Customer Support.

Knowledge of other cultures and customs.

Knowledge and correct use of protocol standards.



- In rural tourism (rural houses, rural campsites, tourist guides, restaurants, trade in typical products):

Serve the client, organization, innovation, communication ...

Areas and situations where improvements are needed:

Direct treatment with the client, since it must be very personalized and characterized by closeness and hospitality.

Communication with the tourist: to explain the geography, history and customs of the place. Also to give directions and information of the area.

What these workers should learn is:

Knowledge of the itineraries of the area (history, geography, nature).

Knowledge of other cultures and customs to know the characteristics of customers.

Communication capacity development (especially in other languages such as English or French).

Notions of customer service and group psychology.

Interpersonal skills.

NORWAY

One of the employers has several times tried to use immigrant employees for phone calls and bookings, unfortunately with somewhat different feedback. As the young tourists often use internet and do bookings themselves, the older part of the tourists will make use of telephone contact. These can be poor hearing, and on several occasions the caller has ended the conversation as they did not understand the language of the recipient. Their experiences sum up to that they now mainly use immigrant workers as chefs, warehousing, cleaning etc, and not in direct customer care(front-line).

There is also feedback from the group that there is a difference between the language taught in the introductory program and adult education, and the “everyday language” used in society and at the workplace.



ENTERPRISED

The same experiences are evident from the taxi industry, as well as shortcomings of winter driving and not enough driving experience.



4. Based on the three main elements above (challenges – gaps – concrete skills to be applied), can you please describe at least 6 concrete situations of particular relevance in your business/at your workplace?

ICELAND

- as in 1.) A new employee (young male), fluent in several languages was taught how to work the system and booking. He was very nervous for months because he felt that he did not have sufficient knowledge to answer questions from customers about the area and surroundings – what tourists could see and do around the hotel. He constantly feared that he would be asked a question he could not answer. He quit his job after a few months, because he was afraid that his knowledge was inadequate for the job.

- We have had some issues with lack of professionalism, people sometime behave as they were not at the job but more like acting as they were at home, engaging in their private matters or showing their like or dislike openly towards fellow employees. Maybe stricter dress codes or uniforms for all categories could mark the profession better.

- Yes, depending on the guest you have. One example is where an employee spoke Chinese which seemed to have the effect that visitors from that country, who were otherwise nice, treated that employee differently and not as nicely. The employee gave up on the job. In one company all employees have a badge showing flags of the languages he/she speaks.

- A part of the problem is that good employees are often promoted to a management/supervising positions, but do not fully grasp what is expected of them. Sometimes they think that they themselves have to change their personality.

- as in 3.) What we need to do is to change the culture and maintain the spark. That is why the role of managers/supervisors is so big – they are the ones that decide what happens. Company values can be important, but it is up to how managers react to behavior that really counts. It is easy to tell people to think outside of the box and find solutions, but not follow through on that as a manager/supervisor. We have too many managers/supervisors that are not sufficiently trained or are not equipped for the job. That is where we need to start. The job needs respect – it should be cool to work in a reception, fronting a hotel. The maids need to be attended to as well, but first the frontline desk jobs and then distribute to other jobs.



AUSTRIA

- Catering staff member giving information on a traditional Viennese dish (Wiener Schnitzel)

The staff member needs the skills to explain in English how the dish is prepared traditionally; the correct vocabulary is needed, also regarding preparation and ingredients, as well as correct expressions and phrases. It is also important to know what kind of meat is used due to cultural aspects.

- Tour operator explaining history of Austrian monarchy

A tourist has booked an operated tour in the surroundings of Vienna, focused on Austrian Imperial period. He is shown many attractions related to this period and wants to have additional information from the guide. He needs knowledge of this period to make the tourist familiar with some historical facts, together with the correct terms to use.

- Member of service staff has to handle a complaint about expensive local dishes

A foreign tourist in a traditional restaurant in the Vienna city states that the dishes are very expensive. The waiter needs to be empathic and show hospitality explaining in English that in this restaurant only local biological ingredients of high quality are used for the dishes, so the tourist can be assured that ordering one of the dishes is worth the price.

- On a tour to famous Wachau Valley a tourists loses his way when ascending a hillside

Included in the tour is a visit of an old castle up on a hillside. During ascent on the hill, one of the tourists goes astray and doesn't reach the castle together with the rest of the group. The tour guide has to stay calm, tell the others to stay together and calm them down, because there is no danger for the missing person. Then he has to go searching for the tourist. It is important that he knows the local conditions and surroundings and, when the missing tourist is back again, the guide stays calm and doesn't make accusations. He should also convey a sense of security to the entire group.

A waiter of a small tavern explaining the way

An Asian tourist asks for the way to one of the famous Viennese Christmas Markets and about the background of such a market. The waiter, with high hospitality, has to be able to explain the way, giving with additional recommendations for interesting points on the way and also



referring to traditional backgrounds and customs related to Christmas Markets. Therefore he not only needs local and background knowledge but also good English communication skills, answering different questions.

Booking agent gets a complaint because of a reservation gone wrong

A catering for a group of business guests was booked by a company for the next evening but there was no confirmation sent. A member of the company's staff calls and complains as it is not clear if the catering will take place. The booking agent has to show understanding and empathy, apologize in a polite way for the mistake and at the same time clarify the situation immediately and reassure the client that everything will be alright.

SPAIN

Situation 1:

Explanation by a waiter of a typical Spanish dish, for example paella:

Know how to communicate in another language the ingredients that paella has (rice, vegetables, crayfish, chicken, snails, mussels, etc ...). For this it is necessary not only to know vocabulary, but to know how to express oneself correctly. Explain also how it has been cooked and know the culture of the tourist, for example if it is Muslim to know that they do not eat pork or drink alcohol.

Situation 2:

Person who works in a small rural hotel that has to explain how to reach a rural road to see the nature of the place:

A foreign tourist asks for information about the area and how to get to a certain rural road that is nearby to make a march. It is necessary to know how to communicate and explain with the utmost hospitality not only getting but offer help and give explanations about the weather, nature, wildlife, etc ...

Situation 3:

Concierge of a small hotel:



Tourist in the hotel looking for an ideal accommodation. The client's complaint is due to the fact that the room assigned to them does not respond to their tastes or desires. Not because it is in bad condition, no. It has to be facing the sea, with a terrace of specific conditions, with furniture and some reliable spaces and with a luxurious, comfortable and fail-safe bathroom.

How to solve this situation through customer service techniques.

Situation 4:

Tourist guide who is in a situation of a heart attack of one of the tourists in his group.

He has to keep calm to call an ambulance. It is a stress situation in which he must handle the situation to avoid panic among the other components of the group.

To cope with this situation it is also important to have planned this possibility, so he must have the phone numbers of the medical services and hospitals in the area.

Situation 5:

Waiter of a tourist restaurant that has to deal with a complaint about a bad service, especially the slowness, since there are many customers in this moment.

The waiter has to communicate with empathy, thank the complaint and give an explanation about the causes of bad service.

Situation 6:

Hotel waitress or cleaner who has to contact the client (in another language) to meet any need related to the cleaning of his room: room that has not been cleaned yet, lack of towels, sheet, toilet paper.

She has to communicate correctly, with sympathy and hospitality to meet the client's need.



5. Which current trends in your business and sector do you see? Where, to your mind does adult education (particularly in customer care) not adequately train and prepare staff?

ICELAND

- Technology is advancing and „autohotels“ will be a trend and the prices according to what is offered. Ability to work computer systems is on the rise and also from that that perspective, services taking a shorter time. Not everyone will choose that, but rather more services and other kind of experiences where the human touch is of importance. How to approach customers will be a focus. Moving in front of the desk, getting closer, adjusting to new tasks etc. Sort of a „service experience“. Professionalism will depend on how one reads the customer and the atmosphere among employees to be able to respond.

- Long distance travellers, like from the USA, are often tired when they arrive after a long flight and even a long drive in addition to a rural area. Then it is important to have that information about their trip in advance to be able to respond to their needs – offer them something extra when they arrive for a comfortable arrival. They can be demanding, that is why specialization and reading a group is of importance, adjusting to customers is of importance. More emphasis will be on possessing competences in human insights and reading of needs. Finding employees with high service orientation to develop these competences will become important in the future.

AUSTRIA

- Also in urban tourism, there is a shift to new trends like sustainability and ecological aspects, and also to individual traveling. Tourists usually don't stay in a city more than a few days, so they have full programs for sightseeing and getting to know the special traditions and features.

- Trips are usually accurately planned in advance and tourists generally well informed by internet etc. Even if there is only a short time spent in the city, members of the higher price segment expect individual service on a high level and offers to get an unique experience during their stay..



- To identify and match these needs and demands, low-skilled workers have to be well prepared for the requirements in this working environment, especially regarding basic/soft skills and language skills. Having direct contact to clients, good communication skills, also in foreign languages, are essential, as well as intercultural skills and competences and background knowledge of the field they are working in.
- With the shifting of trends in tourism sector there is also the need to get prepared to interact with clients in a clear and accurate way and to focus on service- and customer-orientation.
- In adult education with a more theoretical approach, the skills needed are generally not provided efficiently enough. According to competence-oriented learning and learning by doing, work-place based learning should have more significance in education of low-skilled workers.
- Tourist's rising awareness of ecological aspects and environmental protection also creates a new demand of business development in the tourism sector. These shifting concepts, together with the demand of using new technologies and keeping up with the world of digitalization, should create a different educational approach with focus on practical experience for low-skilled workers.

SPAIN

- New type of clients:

The current tourist, compared to the traditional one, no longer travels in a group, with organized trips, but travels by free (independently).

Before starting a trip he prepares the destination himself. He is more informed because he uses internet to search for cheap flights, hotels, transportation, etc.

When traveling for free, he establishes a greater relationship with the natives. In short, people working in the tourism sector have a much closer relationship with tourists than before.

The consequence is that workers in the sector have to be more prepared to interrelate with the tourist, so there will be positions of little qualification that require greater preparation



than before in language skills and soft skills such as communication, knowledge of other cultures and customs, empathy, interpersonal skills, etc ...

Regarding communication, adult education does not prepare well enough to acquire a communicative competence.

Communication with the client must be effective in identifying and meeting their needs. So it is necessary to train for the worker to communicate clearly and accurately the message, even using body language. The teaching of languages for tourism must be oriented to customer service, but the preparation for acquiring greater communicative competence is lacking.

Learning a language like English is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve the communicative objective.

- Environmental trends:

Climate change is also producing a change in the mentality of the tourist, which will value more a tourist service that is respectful of the environment and sustainability. Thus, an ecological tourism of respect and enjoyment of nature is emerging, through activities such as hiking, the use of bicycles or nautical sports activities.

This is how a new tourism business niche appears that demands greater specialization in adult education. There is therefore a lack of entrepreneurial training but adapted to these business models in which it is very important to develop skills related to innovation and creativity.

- New technologies are changing all marketing models in the tourism sector and adult education also shows a lack of adequate training in this area but adequate to management models of small rural tourism establishments that have to compete in this technological environment.

NORWAY

Here the group is active and comes up with specific suggestions for internships in hotel receptions, within local ferry companies, and other places that combine local knowledge with training language skills. Mette from Visit Telemark also inform us about the opportunity to



review the “Host Course” for groups, and e-learning course in Norwegian for the tourism sector, with transfer value also to sales and service professions.

For some immigrants a testimonial from volunteering at a festival and other activities in culture area can have a positive impact on the CV when looking for a job. To work to give the immigrants a greater understanding that a separate commitment is needed to be integrated into the country one comes to, by among other things, inform about volunteering, “dugnad”, and the importance of social contact. In many cultures it is not normal to do “dugnad” on a regular basis. It can be challenging to motivate for something that for many will be both unusual and meaningless. But everyday integration can consist of building networks by raking the football field in the condominium, over a gathering at children’s soccer teams or so on. The social skills and cultural rules that apply to these leisure arenas have direct transfer value to the working world.

From the taxi industry, it is specified to have good language skills and pronouncing of names and place names correctly. Many immigrant job seekers often have a good understanding of language, but they might need a lot of training in work situations where it is a college guidance to a to a greater extent than what is possible as a taxi driver.

In addition, job seekers should have completed language tests and passed Level B1 before applying for job as a taxi driver. It is also important to be prepared for customers to have prejudices and to face criticism that seems unfair. Training to think not to be angry, hurt or feel inferior, but to be proud of who they are and have positive self-image. As a result, one is likely to be more robust to these expressed prejudices, and one may also be better in expressing own thoughts and meaning, as one is more secure in oneself.



6. Are the challenges, gaps, typical situations described by tourism providers known to you, as adult education experts/trainers?

How would you comment on these? Do you see further/other aspects?

ICELAND

Based on personal experience from working in the sector, it is difficult to be put in front of different groups of individuals having to read their needs and respond appropriately. Most companies are asking for skills in reading needs and meeting them. Also, on how to organize work, time management and process management.

Top skills revolve around soft skills, less on technical aspects. The pace is high and turn-over as well, so it is sometimes no time to train. How can you endlessly take on new employees. It is also a question of how to train the managers/supervisors.

Based on personal experience from the sector – it is usually intense work and many tasks conducted at the same time, responding. There are seasonal highs in the summertime and little time to learn or review processes. Soft skills are needed and also learning how to deal with different cultures of customers and coworkers. It is beneficial to have an overview of the job and its main tasks – that helps in training. Difficult communication is also an issue that often comes up.

Difficult clients are an issue. The young people can also have to take on difficult conversations which they are not trained for, that can be burdensome and make them even quit the job. When customers are angry and express it to youngsters, it can be difficult to digest. Icelanders also need to improve their attitude towards other nations, there are different norms that need to be respected.

- Question: Lack of time to set up organized training is an issue, maybe better to focus on the managers/supervisors?

No, then it will not be done – they never have time. But of course if we would get to do that, all the other training would be so much easier.

- Question: What do you think managers/supervisors need?



It is about soft skills – leadership and management are not the same. They need to be able to adjust to different employees. It can be beneficial to turn the hierarchy around and look at management as the foundation for topping employees that come on top and work frontline.

Which comes first, the finance or competent staff?

How to make managers/supervisors leaders in their company and see to that they then mediate leadership skills through training so that everyone works in the same direction – based on service leadership.

Short information sessions can be beneficial, for example through cases from real work situations. It is easy for managers/supervisors to work with them and grasp. They can be set up by an expert (adult trainer) in cooperation with staff and then they are presented as tools. Staff need to find solutions to solving problems/challenges presented in the cases and work together on them for example through role playing. Can take 15-20 minutes.

- Question: What else comes to mind?

Cases are a very good way to learn, it is an experience – not an excel sheet. It may not suite everyone, but they are brilliant in the way that you can have an opinion on things, but it may change when you have to tackle the problem and find solutions. It functions as a simulator and does not take much time. Young people like dealing with cases. It is important that the trainer starts with building trust and assist staff with getting into role play. It is actually “learning through play”.

You learn so much more through performing the task and then receive feedback from others. Confucius said: Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I will understand.

- Question: What about company culture – can you sense if a company is receptive to learning and what needs to be done to get them going?

Will and interest are contagious. There are companies that offer training for new employees, but nobody shows up. Could be offered through the internet and through that be more accessible – we will see how that works. Then there are companies that reach peoples’ interests.



The middle managers are key persons. They need to let people go off shift to go to training. There is a need to form steering groups where employees take part and build training groups around them, then people will participate for they have taken part in shaping the content.

“Training Planner to help” is a project where this method is used with companies. Sometimes, in a group of five (steering group in a company training development in that project), one person can turn the others toward interest in training. The presentation of it needs to be clear. In some cases it can be more effective when an outsider presents the training (educational provider f.ex.). But it is the company culture that matters and that there is a leader within the company that ignites the interest of others – that is something the middle managers needs to put work into. He/she is in a way the main “gatekeeper”.

AUSTRIA

-In Austria, many of the institutes providing basic skills training for low-skilled workers are aware of the gaps mentioned. Trainers have often experienced that training will be more successful when there is more practical experience included. However, respective programmes still need to be enlarged and also improved. Also, train-the-trainer initiatives, as well as qualification offers do not adequately respond to the need of teaching and training staff being “enterprised” in terms of needed knowledge and skills.

- Competence-oriented learning and learning by doing will provide more self-identification of learners with the needs they are to face in their daily work life. Designing of trainings better meeting the practical requirements of low-skilled workers in tourism sector is an important contribution to further development of this field..

- Basic skills trainings and work-based trainings, however, have to be designed for specific target groups, as tourism is a very large business sector with a variety of different jobs and requirements.

The typical situations described is the lack of efficient basic and communication skills to meet requirements of tourists very well. Furthermore, entrepreneurial thinking and self-responsibility of low-skilled workers, also in learning context, are well known training needs.



SPAIN

All the gaps indicated and the situations described are known in part by the trainers as there are many studies of training needs, in addition to the relationship that is maintained with professionals in the tourism sector through their professional activity. But it is true that there are usually disagreements between the results of surveys, studies and meetings with experts and professionals in the sector.

Perhaps the reason is the different characteristics of the subsectors covering tourism (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, organization of tourist services groups, maintenance of tourist facilities, retail, etc ...). The companies that usually participate in these investigations are also very different, so the results are then different.

The trainers have found the contribution of the companies in the sector to be of great interest and consider it essential to maintain this communication to adapt the training to the real training needs of these companies.

NORWAY**1. Complete Experience**

If you work in the tourism sector, an understanding of the whole is important. You don't only sell a service or product, you sell a total experience. Employees who lack this understanding of the whole are less likely to stay employed long term.

Potential solutions:

The way a frontline employee interacts with a customer can be the difference between success and failure. It is management who should ensure that employees are engaged and motivated to bring their passion to work on a daily basis, which in turn will motivate them to take good care of their customers.

But an understanding of a complete experience can come into place earlier, before the employment relationship starts. In a teaching situation, the following question can be raised for debate: "Who is the real boss at work"? (the answer is, of course, the customer).



This is particularly important in terms of long-term employment. Smiles, personal hygiene, proper lighting, tidy rooms, small-talk, volume of music and so on are crucial factors in addition to the product or service. Those who have a natural eye for the whole also have a greater opportunity to climb the career ladder.

2. Public administration language can be incomprehensible

Restaurant and serving industry in Norway (and maybe in some of the other partner countries?) is carefully regulated, with a lot of supervision and rules. This is to avoid social dumping. It is difficult to navigate and understand all these rules. Especially since the language is so formal.

Potential solutions:

There are one-day courses, online courses and short qualification programs that are sought after by employers in the tourism sector in general and the restaurant and nightlife industry in particular. Those who are unskilled will be considerably more in demand if they can document that they have one or more of these courses.

Trainers should make themselves familiar with these programs and further make them available to learners. As of today, these tests/programs are only available in Norwegian. We (the focus group) have sent a request to local authorities that these tests be made available in several languages, at least English.

3. Attitude towards working life and workplace

A lot of absenteeism at work is a challenge in parts of the tourism sector.

Potential solutions:

Being reliable and having a good work ethic is essential to being employed long-term. It is important to invite business owners and managers with staff responsibilities into the classroom. They have a «real life» impact that teachers can't provide. He/she must be clear on the attitudes and characteristics they are looking for in potential employees. If you are ill / in poor shape one day, it is much better that you meet at work and be sent home than you call

in sick. Attitudes such as flexibility, loyalty to the workplace, presence and the like are crucial to staying in the job long term.

4. Exploiting welfare benefits

Some learners are more concerned with rights than duties. Coming to Norway from other countries may be perceived by some as coming to a welfare buffet. It is tempting to help yourself to sick days, unemployment benefits and other welfare benefits.

Potential solution:

Learners need to become familiar with the history of the welfare state. In addition to this «history lesson», adult education must focus on the attitudes that must be in place in each individual. The welfare system is based on trust. For it to work, you must only use benefits if you have a real need. And you should be mostly concerned with how you can contribute to maintaining the social security net that is currently available to all Norwegian citizens.

Current Trends and Challenges in the Tourism Sector – Millennials in the Workforce

As the millennial workforce grows in the tourism sector and individuals rise through the leadership ranks, understanding how these employees want to be managed (and how they manage others) can be a challenge for companies confined to traditional ways of working.

There is some frustration and misunderstandings expressed by senior managers when it comes to millennials.

Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) sometimes believe Millennials (born 1981-1995) are entitled and lazy, but this is far from the truth.

Millennials have entered a professional world where their realities are wildly different from the ones Boomers knew. They prioritize things that don't make sense to Boomers because their environment has different demands.

Boomers are used to working hard for a company in exchange for long-term investment in skills development and for security, like a retirement fund or pension. But this kind of employment security and long-term investment doesn't exist in the modern working world in the same way any more. It's a new world out there, and Boomers have to recognize that if they're going to successfully manage Millennials.

They also have to understand what Millennials actually want and how to motivate them.

Because Millennials don't expect to stay with a company for the long term, their interest is in what can benefit them now.

This doesn't come from an inability to commit. It's the result of massive turnover rates, an unstable economy, and a more competitive work environment.

DRAFT



7. How do you currently prepare your students/learners for the situations described?
(learning environment, methods, material used etc.)

AUSTRIA

- Experienced trainers providing a wider range of methods for basic skills training, including freshening up English language and ICT/digital skills, focused on competence-orientated and partly self-directed learning.
- There is blended learning with interactive e-learning platforms, mainly for training of basic skills such as English, German and ICT.
- For training of communication and self-presentation skills there are role plays, best practice examples which can also be watched on videos.
- Former learners who are already working in tourism successfully are invited to share their experiences with learners and sometimes also provide good advice and also networking opportunities.
- Companies of the tourism sector (among others) are invited regularly to hold in-house presentations on their business field, job requirements and professional perceptions.
- A very important part in training of low-skilled workers are the “Betriebskontakter”, a type of “job coach”. They act as interface and mediators between companies, trainers and learners. Keeping close contact to a large number of companies they arrange work-based trainings, internships accompanied by respective preparation procedures, monitoring of the process and evaluation involving all parties.

SPAIN

The trainers have knowledge of topics related to tourism and know the needs of the students, which prepares the agendas with specific materials of the specialty for use in class.

Practices are developed based on the situations in which students find themselves most commonly.



Thus, in the manuals they elaborate, a theoretical part is developed as the basis of the subject. For example, in the teaching of languages, a grammar and vocabulary base is taught (in which specialization and the most common vocabulary are taken into account in situations in which the student is in contact with tourists).

Practices are also carried out to develop skills such as communicative competence basically orally. Thus, situations are staged in class for students to practice oral communication. It is also recommended to watch videos.

Texts are provided in English to develop reading comprehension. As for oral comprehension, videos in English are seen in class and asked about their content to verify that it has been understood.

Another practical method is to organize debates about everyday situations they face in their work, in order to enrich themselves with the experiences of others. This practice also serves as a reflection on the aspects in which they should improve in their daily work. La formación se realiza en los centros de formación de los proveedores de formación que ofrecen sus cursos a las empresas.

In the catering sector it is preferred to do the training in the workplace, since all the necessary means are available to do the waiter or kitchen practices.

Students are also opting for mixed training, with an important part of the agenda in person and another part making it more flexible online.

Totally online courses following the teleformation methodology are being less valued by students. Some trainers are also tutors of these courses in which various materials are used (pdfs, internet links, videos, ...), and video conferences are conducted to tutor students.

Hospitality companies (hotels and restaurants) prefer to do training in winter, since they have less work at this time.

Mentoring or coaching techniques are also being applied.



8. On the basis of what has been described and discussed, what would you need to respectively improve your training offer, in order to meet these needs?

ICELAND

- Question: What needs to be changed in the way we present and deliver training? All or nothing?

All training needs to be tailor made for the companies, not something standard or “instant”. That does demand work on behalf of the manager with regards to identifying real needs. Training takes time and time is money. If people take part in training that meets a real, identified need then they feel as if they are listened to and participate more willingly. But there can be a difference in what managers think and frontline staff.

There is a need for changing the attitude towards training in companies, f.ex that it is not obligatory. Measures of the benefits of training is the main selling point for training and through them companies are often willing to do competence needs assessments. One of the adult trainers mentioned that training presented on the internet can facilitate access – as people can take their time and even watch it more than once to let the information sink in. It is also possible to mix training through the internet and shorter meetings. This can vary based on the needs for training of new staff at each company. Can be an efficient way to train.

Maybe we need to use the flipped classroom method? Assignments could be presented on the web and then homework – at work. Training needs to be accessible first and foremost. Mixed methods are also a way of meeting the different learning styles of individuals.

Analysing the learning styles of individuals to meet their needs during training is of high importance. It can also be effective to step out of the company for a day for training – change environment. The most important thing is to speak/use a common language in training – not in academic terms and remember that less is more.

Although according to surveys, most companies would like in-house training, some may lack facilities. It all boils down to time and the obstacle of moving people between places as well during workhours. That can be time consuming and costly, but it there can be a difference between situations in small towns (shorter distances) vs the Capital area (longer distances).



There is also a question of the definition of what “training within companies/for companies” means. Is that training where the company seeks the training or general training. Most companies do prefer tailor made training.

If the training offered does not reach the audience, people may become sceptical towards training and not see the purpose of it. How it is presented and what the content is in the context of the workers is of utmost importance. Also, that managers/supervisor see the benefits of spending time on training. It is costly and there may need to be replacements during training, or the workload increased among other staff during the time of training of a specific group. Many variables to take into account.

Meeting the needs of both companies and workers as individuals seems to be a focus. Adjustable approach and focus on cooperation as key elements.

AUSTRIA

- In addition to courses already designed, there should be innovative trainings (also with e-learning sequences) which prepare low-skilled workers also for working in new sectors and approaches of tourism to increase awareness from the beginning.
- Training should always focus on practical education and preparation for real working environments.
- Cooperation between job coaches and companies should be still intensified to offer more work-based training and practical experience, together with the job coaches´know how..
- Best practices, also provided by former learners who can become mentors of low-skilled workers and make them more familiar with the practical requirements they have to match when working in the tourism sector.
- For workers with migration background the focus could be on German and soft skills in the beginning, together with intercultural communication, knowledge and awareness.



SPAIN

Regarding the group of immigrants who are entering the jobs related to tourism it is considered necessary to increase the offer of basic training, which is often considered unnecessary because in Spain workers in the sector are generally very well prepared . However, there are new training needs for this group that have to be covered by not only technical training, but above all, skills related to customer service and communication. Cultural and customs knowledge of different types of tourists must also be developed.

On the other hand, the quality of training (more innovative and with the use of new technologies) must be improved to be as practical as possible and adapted to the needs of companies. In this sense, specific courses should be offered for those companies that will incorporate new unskilled workers. The courses carried out in the sector should also be valued.

New training programs that cover the new innovation needs of the sector must also be developed. Courses related to new forms of tourism (ecotourism, cultural, nautical or gastronomic tourism).

Another kind of training that should be included in the training offer of the training modules is related to the management skills of people and especially the training of entrepreneurs and training in the new tourism economy. Train new entrepreneurs and develop innovation skills. An important element of these programs would be the contents related to tourism marketing.

Improve e-learning programs to make them more attractive by fighting the high percentage of dropouts.

Training courses for trainers in tourism with new, more innovative pedagogical methodologies should also be offered, incorporating the use of technological tools in training.

Training courses could be offered in basic subjects, aimed at people with low qualification, in which practices were made in other countries to learn languages and other cultures. This would help to professionalize the sector more, make it more attractive and attract talent.

Another improvement would be to introduce sustainability training to facilitate the adaptation of the sector and its workers to the new sustainability challenges and ecotourism.



6. General information to be documented

Which organisations took part?

ICELAND

Hotel managers from three hotels and a car rental, Skills center for Tourism, Icelandic Travel Industry Association (SAF).

Profile of participants (role in organisation, work experience): Managers, project managers, educational officer

Adult trainers from LLL centers, adult training expert from a private company, adult training expert from Skills center for Tourism.

Profile of participants (role in organisation, work experience): Seasoned experts in adult training from the capital and rural areas. Have from 3 – 30 years of experience in the field in working with companies on analyzing competence needs, developing content and delivering training.

AUSTRIA

Participants were companies of the tourism sector like catering providers and tour operators with long-term experience in different fields of tourism sector (catering, event management, running a restaurant). The owners of these companies were personally present as focus group partners (also the Austrian associated partners in the project).

For the training providers, experienced trainers with a high awareness of of new learning approaches participated, as well as programme designers and staff responsables (also the Austrian associated partners in the project).

What worked well? What was challenging? What needs to be improved for the next focus group meeting?

All persons involved were interested in taking part in the focus groups and contributed valuable experiences and approaches. It has to be considered, however, that the tourism sector is such

a wide field of different business models and there still are many areas not considered closely (enough).

SPAIN

In the two focus groups, companies from different sectors related to tourism participated, such as travel agencies, hotels, rural tourism, camping and commerce.

As for the training providers, continuous training centers participated, which basically provide training for adult workers and unemployed.

Profile of participants (role in organisation, work experience)

The owners of these small businesses participated in the companies. As for the training centers, trainers participated.

What worked well? What was challenging? What needs to be improved for the next focus group meeting?

Overall the experience was positive. However, it is difficult to gather so many people who have many occupations and agree on them in a day and an hour. On the other hand, we were told that the questions were too general since the tourism sector covers many subsectors and it is difficult to specify a very general approach.

Further relevant observations?

They showed interest in the project and curiosity about its results.

NORWAY

Participants from different organisations belonging to the transport sector in the Telemark area, from the County Municipal Tourism sector, training and counselling organisations, and of course from LoPe.



WORK IN PROGRESS

DRAFT

