



**TTRAIN – Tourism Training the Trainers**

**GAP analysis (O2)**

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*Based on all partners' contributions*

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## 0. Executive summary

The objective of this report is to show up the present situation of the vocational education and training in the tourism sector of the partner countries (Iceland, Finland, Italy and Austria) in order to identify the main requirements for the improvement of the education. For this purpose a GAP analysis was performed in December 2015 (interviews) and January 2016. It contains three parts:

1. Description of the present situation
2. Interviews with five tourism professionals
3. Interview with five training providers, development staff and policy makers (funding organisations)

The main focus of the interviews was on good practises, needs and requirements for improving education for tourist staff. From the results of this GAP analysis, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations given in view of the further outcomes of the project Tourism Training the Trainers (TTrain).

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## 1. Introduction

The TTRAIN project aims at educating experienced tourism professionals by enhancing their skills to give on-the-job training to new and inexperienced employees in the field of tourism with the overall objective to increase employability within the tourism sector, to develop skills of professionals in the field of tourism and – in the long run – also for the benefit of employers and customers. A research phase, forming a first step in the project life, covering desktop as well as field research to organise a GAP analysis as basis for a foreseen TTRAIN curriculum should take place in partner countries (Iceland, Finland, Italy and Austria). This document shall first help to have the same understanding of related tasks and secondly to provide a joint template for partners to show their national research results. The basis for all activities is the TTRAIN project application.

The objectives of the research are in particular to understand any similarities and differences of relevance between the above mentioned partner countries and in view of future learners' needs and their environment.

Further, the curriculum will be beneficial for stakeholder to involve and for a successful and sustainable project implementation.

Hence, direct and indirect main target groups to consider in the research are:

- Tourism and education stakeholders;
- Businesses – mainly SMEs - in the tourism sector and their HR managers;
- Employees in those sectors who shall work as train the trainer;
- Final beneficiaries of future on the job trainings in the sector;
- Others (like VET providers).

Characteristics of the tourism sector in partner countries provide the main framework as well as SMEs' challenges and learning/ working conditions of our final beneficiaries to better understand e.g. the delivery format the project team has to consider in the curriculum.

The skills and competences<sup>1</sup> for the TTRAIN curriculum will consider any teaching related skills, including self-confidence as well as transversal skills, which the future on-the-job trainers will need in order to:

- promote professional development,
- provide tourism operations their learners shall improve, and
- design/prepare learning environment and time arrangements which allow completing the training besides their daily work.

## 2. Methodological scope of the report

The present document includes results from a **desk and field research** carried out by the project partners for the purpose of gaining information regarding the situation in the field of tourism and tourism training on national level in the partner countries. Therefore, the following are considered in the **desktop research** to understand the country situation:

- People working in tourism in each country (total # and % of workforce)
- Demographic data (male/female, age) in this sector
- Training/education in the field
- General description of the educational system regarding the tourism sector (i.e. existing formal or non-formal schools or apprenticeship programmes)
- Demand for qualified personnel in the sector
- Rather/too many unskilled young people in the sector
- Needs and wants identified regarding training for better work performance
- EQF (European Qualification Framework) & NQF (National Quality Framework): considered as upper-secondary education providing EQF level 4.
- The 'training instructor' in partner countries and in the tourism sector today
- Skills/competences for new trainers in the tourism sector

The **field research** is for the collection of data from the final beneficiaries of this project:

- Tourism professionals
- Trainers/Training provider/HR managers

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<sup>1</sup> For skills and competence definition we refer to those used in <http://www.eucen.eu/EQFpro/GeneralDocs/FilesFeb09/GLOSSARY.pdf>

Five interviews were carried out for each target group category and in each partner country. The templates for the semi-guided questionnaires are provided in the appendices of this document. The survey contains questions regarding

- The situation of vocational instructors in the tourist sector
- Training competences in reality vs. those the market asks for to have qualified instructors in work place to train newcomers and other unskilled personnel in the tourist industry
- Existing training for/in tourism sector
- Suitability for learning portal (eLearning or blended learning)
- Minimum/maximum duration and distribution (if any)

### 3. The situation of the tourism sector in partner countries

In all the partner countries, the tourism sector is an important part of the national economy. Its contribution to the GDP (gross domestic product) ranges between 2,5% and 14,8%.

In Iceland, the share of tourism in the GDP was about 5% in 2013, according to preliminary estimates<sup>2</sup>. Since then growth has been erratic with over 24% increase in foreign arrivals in 2014 and around 30% in 2015. In 2014 total tourism export<sup>3</sup> was the largest provider of foreign currency (304.5 billion ISK) in the economy or 28% of Iceland's total export of goods and services.

Finland's tourism's contribution to the GDP was 2,5 % in 2013 (preliminary data), according to the TSA. Compared to other industries, tourism was economically bigger than the food industry and over twice as big as agriculture. In 2013 the total tourism demand was 14.4 billion euros from which the domestic tourism demand covers about 70% and inbound tourism demand about 30%.

In Italy, according to the last World Travel and Tourism Council report<sup>4</sup> of 2014, the sector "Travel and Tourism" contributed with 66 billion Euro to the Italian economy, or 4,1% of the GDP. A further growth of 1,8% was expected in 2015 and 2,1% by 2025 (it is expected that the contribution to the GDP reaches 4,6%, which is equivalent to 82.4 billion Euro).

In Austria, the direct and indirect value added of the tourism and leisure industry generated a total of 46.5 billion Euro, or 14,8% of GDP in 2013, according to the Tourism Satellite

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<sup>2</sup> Statistic Iceland, Tourism Satellite Account 2009-2013

<sup>3</sup> Statistic Iceland, travel spending and air passenger transport (transit and passenger services with Icelandic carriers outside the economy) according to BOP data

<sup>4</sup> The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) (2015), Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2015 Italy, (link: [www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic%20impact%20research/countries%202015/italy2015.pdf](http://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic%20impact%20research/countries%202015/italy2015.pdf))

Account (TSA). In the same year 36.8 million arrivals (+ 1,9%) and 132.6 million overnight stays were (+ 1,2%) registered.<sup>5</sup>

Besides these differing numbers, the developments of the sector on national level are characterised by the individual history of the different countries and their current economic situation.

In Iceland, tourism is the fastest growing industry and has recently become the main income source for the country and thereby replaced the fishing industry which had been the main industry in Iceland the last century. In Iceland, the annual growth of the number of foreign tourists visiting Iceland has been more than 20% the last seven years.

Finland's tourism is largely based on domestic tourism. However, since the growth potential of domestic tourism is small, growth is sought from international markets, which has proved to be a successful strategy. In recent years foreign tourism has developed more quickly than domestic tourism. From the beginning of the millennium to 2014 domestic overnight stays increased by 14% and foreign overnight stays by 38%.<sup>6</sup> Registered accommodation establishments in Finland recorded nearly 19.8 million overnight stays, of which domestic tourists accounted for 14.1 million and foreign tourists for 5.7 million in 2014.

The largest group of foreign visitors in accommodation establishments are Russians with 1.3 million overnight stays in 2014. This applies to the Kainuu region, as it is located to the Russian boarder. However, from 2013 to 2014, Russian overnight stays reduced by 23%. Main reasons for the reduction of Russian tourism are the downturn in the Russian economy, weakening of the rouble and general geopolitical tensions.

In Italy, tourism is an important sector compared with the entire economy. Despite the opportunities that the unique historical and artistic heritage of Italy might provide, there are difficulties in maintaining competitiveness internationally. It is obvious, that there are huge differences in the number of visits between the North and South in general, and especially in comparison to Sicily. The latest report of Banca d'Italia<sup>7</sup> on international tourism in Southern Italy shows that in this part of Italy the expenditure of foreign tourists is the lowest compared to the other Italian regions.

Austrian tourism regions show differences in view of city and rural tourism. The capital city Vienna in the east of Austria is the place with the highest rate of over-night reservations in 2013. The Austrian cities in general are visited for their cultural sights or events. In Austria,

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<sup>5</sup> WKO (Austrian chamber of commerce) 2014

<sup>6</sup> These figures are data from Statistics Finland's statistics on accommodation establishments and they have been collected from accommodation establishments with at least 20 beds or caravan pitches with electricity connection, and youth hostels. [http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/matk/index\\_en.html](http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/matk/index_en.html)

<sup>7</sup> Banca d'Italia (2013), Il turismo internazionale nel mezzogiorno e in Sicilia negli anni della crisi, (link: <http://www.strumentires.com/attachments/article/433/Pasetto.pdf>)

the alpine regions are popular for winter sports. While for Austrian city tourism continuing capacity utilisation is registered over the year, bed occupancies in rural tourism areas struggle with seasonal dependence.

The main purposes of trips to Austria are in particular business trips or private trips. The locations with the most over-night stays are hotels, followed by private holiday apartments and camping places<sup>8</sup>. In 2014, the majority of foreign tourists came from Germany, followed by the Netherlands, Switzerland and Lichtenstein, Italy, UK, Czech Republic, USA, France, Russia and Belgium.

### 3.1 Tourism labour market situation and prospects in the partner countries

In all the partner countries, tourism labour market situation is influenced by the economic crisis to a certain extent. Countries, such as Italy, are still struggling with its side effects in form of a high youth unemployment rate, while in some countries, such as Iceland, tourism has recovered from the recession.

In Iceland, employment in the tourism sector has increased rapidly in recent years. In 2014 tourism related industries employed almost 15.000 people, around 8% of total employment. Employment in these tourism related industries (not all inclusive) has increased by 27% since 2009 –after the recession – while the increase in total employment during the same period was 6%.

In a very short time, new tourist businesses have been established, but often with lack of sufficient quality. Annual employee turnover in the tourism sector is around 30% (which means that around 30% of the staff would quit during one year and have to be replaced by new staff). This is considered too high percentage as it takes too much time and effort to train new employees.

Another problem is lack of qualified people. In some tourist sectors, specific education is required. This is for instance the case for pilots of aircrafts and boats, bus drivers, cooks in restaurants, etc. Those trades are regulated by laws and regulations. However, the need of education for this category of personnel has become obvious. Basic skills in service management, the company policy and general hospitality are necessary. A learning model presented in new quality guidance for the tourism sector will be implemented as minimum requirement for those companies who want to provide certified services. The name of the quality guidance is Vakinn (English: Awaken) and contains instructions on the minimum quality requirements, which tourist service providers should have implemented.

In Finland, a total of 136 700 persons worked in industries linked to tourism in 2013, which is about 5% of all employed people. Young people's (< 30 years) share of employees was about

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.wko.at/Content.Node/branchen/oe/Tourismus\\_in\\_Zahlen\\_2014.pdf](https://www.wko.at/Content.Node/branchen/oe/Tourismus_in_Zahlen_2014.pdf)

30%. In the tourism sector, there are a lot of unskilled people. Also, like many other remote areas, Kainuu region is suffering from unemployment (16,9 % in 2014) and a decline in population, particularly as young people are moving from the region. Nevertheless, tourism is a significant factor in the regional economics of Kainuu and it is also one of the priority fields in the regional development programme.

Considering the data on unemployment in Italy, the tourism sector is an important source of jobs, especially for young people. Italy reached a youth unemployment rate (people between 15-24 years) in 2015 of 44,2%. The observatory on the tourism labour market in Italy<sup>9</sup> estimated that the tourism sector provides almost 1 million jobs in Italy, a figure which represents 5% of the national employment. The travel industry, with agents and tour operators, hotel and catering sector, offers many opportunities for young people. According to the report mentioned above, young people accounted for 63% of employment, 602.000 employees under the age of 40 and 342.000 under 30. Besides the high youth unemployment, the tourism sector is also affected by the crises. With a total unemployment rate of 14%, Sicily has one of the highest unemployment rates in Italy. It is undoubtedly a region struggling to emerge from crisis. The Strategic Plan for the Development of the tourism sector in Italy<sup>10</sup> of 2013 highlights that Italy has countless resources that can be developed from the touristic point of view and which are not appropriately exploited. The plan sets out guidelines that will guide the development of tourism in the country and actions organised to speed up its implementation and economic impact. One of the guidelines aims at developing skills of tour operators through the introduction of specific training and communication initiatives.

Austrian tourism also suffers from a lack of qualified personnel, as many qualified people leave the industry with increasing age, and indeed much more frequently than in case of other professions. Special conditions such as evening, night and weekend working times are characteristic for the tourism industry as well as seasonal, weekly and daily fluctuations in the workload.

In general, the tourism sector also shows a high amount of young people. In 2014, 252.556 people were registered to work in the tourism sector. 70.094 were employed, 173.041 workers and 9.421 apprentices. Despite a relatively high level of unemployment in the hotel, catering and kitchen occupations (34.000 unemployed persons, annual average 2012), not all vacancies – especially seasonal jobs – are occupied.

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<sup>9</sup> EBNT (2015), Osservatorio sul mercato del lavoro nel turismo - VI Rapporto, (link: [http://www.ebnt.it/documenti/osservatori/Dati\\_Osservatorio\\_C\\_sul\\_mercato\\_del\\_lavoro\\_nel\\_settore\\_turismo\\_VI\\_2015.pdf](http://www.ebnt.it/documenti/osservatori/Dati_Osservatorio_C_sul_mercato_del_lavoro_nel_settore_turismo_VI_2015.pdf)). The Report of 2014 is based on INPS data for the years 2008-2011, by Federalberghi, FIPE (Italian Federation of public exercises), and EBNT (Bilateral National Tourism Organisation).

<sup>10</sup> Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Dipartimento per gli Affari Regionali, il Turismo e lo Sport (2013), Piano Strategico per lo sviluppo del turismo in Italia, (link: [www.agenziademanio.it/export/download/demanio/agenzia/5\\_Piano\\_strategico\\_del\\_Turismo\\_2020.pdf](http://www.agenziademanio.it/export/download/demanio/agenzia/5_Piano_strategico_del_Turismo_2020.pdf))

By 2016, the demand for health care workers is expected to rise slightly. With other professions a stable trend can be expected. It should be noted that these and similar services are mainly provided as part-time, secondary or summer jobs and that the demand for typical summer and winter sports is highly seasonal.

For professionals in the leisure and sports industry, knowledge of e-marketing and advertising, online reservations and selling as well as software and computer skills in general will become more important.

For employees in tourist offices, the area of tourism marketing, regional management and sustainable destination management is a topic. Building networks with regional actors of tourism infrastructure, such as hotels and restaurants, recreational service providers, etc., and the promotion of tourist destinations under the consideration of ecological, economic and socio-cultural sustainability aspects strategically will be a task. Furthermore, it opens employment opportunities for skilled professionals with experience in the field, strategic knowledge and sales and marketing expertise.

In general, the increasing demand of guests and customers as well as the increased health consciousness among the Austrian population leads to a stable labour market and a constant development in travel, leisure and sports.<sup>11</sup>

Although the tourism sector in the partner countries is an important factor for economic growth, it is affected by the impacts of the crisis. In Italy, and especially in Sicily, tourism weakens, although resources for its development exist. The country responds to this issue with a Strategic Plan. It was recognised, that today the sector is more complex and customers are much more diverse, more sophisticated. The quality of services offered to tourists has become more important than in the past. Regarding unemployment, in Italy, the sector is seen as a good possibility to decrease the youth unemployment rate. Among the partner countries, a high amount of young people are represented in touristic occupations.

Besides instable economic status, tourism has to face other challenges. In Austria and Iceland, the sector has a high fluctuation rate. People leave the sector with increasing age, due to irregular work conditions, especially qualified employees. Therefore, tourism labour market is concerned by lack of qualified personnel. The development of many new tourism businesses within a short period of time led to insufficient quality, as reported in Iceland. To address this issue, a learning model on new quality guidance for the tourism sector will be implemented on national level. This comparison shows that more or less, the partner countries have to deal with a lack of skilled personnel and quality in the tourism sector. In

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<sup>11</sup> AMS 2014

Italy and Iceland, these issues are already addressed on public level, while in Finland and Austria, nothing specific is reported.

### 3.2 Training in the field of tourism

To address the issues mentioned in the previous section, many training programmes in the field of tourism exist on several levels in the partner countries. The following section will present a selection of trainings offered in the partner countries, describing programmes in the field of tourism covering different areas and levels.

In Iceland, the Icelandic Travel Industry Association (SAF) and trade organisation initiated several educational lines: Tourism studies (including the understanding of nature of traveling, environmental issues, etc.), education for tourist guides, online marketing courses, service management in tourist companies, start-up of tourist companies and courses in quality management in tourist companies. Some of those programmes are within the formal educational system while others are in the non-formal system. However, all those programmes include close collaboration between the educational provider and the workplace. The college (EQF 4-5) programmes are for “Travel knowledge and Guidance” or “cook”. For EQF 1-3, vocational educational centres offer targeted courses for “Fish and traveling”, “doorkeepers”, “Maid” or “Assistant in catering”.

The Finnish education is supported by the government, which means that both Finnish and international students can benefit from the education system free of charge. However, in the future the Universities may have a tuition fees for the students coming outside the EU.

After 9 years of obligatory basic education pupils have the possibility to follow the path of upper secondary education for 3-4 years or vocational education and training for 3 years. There is a possibility to study both upper secondary school and vocational school at the same time (4 years) and graduate from both of them.

Vocational education and training (VET) is currently classified into eight fields. Tourism, Catering and Domestic Services form one of the VET fields. The VET sector comprises upper secondary vocational education and training and further vocational training. The qualification is 120 credits, which takes three years of full-time study, unless prior learning can be counted towards the qualification (e.g. upper secondary school education, working life experience). The qualification includes at least 20 credits of on-the-job learning. It is targeted towards both young people ready to enter the labour market and adults already active in working life or adults outside the labour market. A vocational qualification gives a general eligibility (right to apply) for tertiary studies. There are 119 study programmes

leading to 53 different vocational qualifications confirmed by the ministry of Education and Culture.

A total of 146 000 students attend initial vocational training every year. Tourism, Catering and Home Economics comprises about 13 % of the total number of students (more information see [www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi)).

In Kainuu, the Vocational College (KAO) offers education e.g. at the fields of tourism and catering and domestic services. ([www.kao.fi](http://www.kao.fi)).

In Italy, everyone must attend school for ten years, until 15 years of age. After junior high school, students must enrol at a high school or a technical institute or a professional training school. At this level, in the field of tourism students have two options:

For EQF 4, the professional training school (5 years) for eno-gastronomy and hotel accommodation is offered with subjects for “kitchen work”, “dining room services”, “sales and tourist services” and with practical lessons. Its degree gives access to tertiary education.

Also for EQF 4, technical institutes (5 years) are another option. Their programmes focus on technical and economic aspects of tourism. The subjects studied are “tourism and business”, “law and tourist legislation” or “art and tourist geography”. Graduates can enrol at: university, short specialisation courses of 800/1000 hours, two year courses to obtain a higher technical diploma.

For post-secondary education, six “Higher Technical Institutes” offer programmes in the field of tourism: two-year post-diploma courses, for those who decide to continue with studies alternative to the university ones. Higher technical institutes (ITs) are specialised technical schools established to meet the demand of new and high level competences coming from the labour market, in particular from the technical and technological sectors.

In general, courses last 4 semesters and lead to the qualification of “Higher technician” (Diploma di tecnico superior, EQF 5). These courses offer on-the job training and high-level training in “management of cultural heritage” (with marketing in the tourism and cultural field) and “professionals in the field of tourism and hospitality”.

In Italy and in Sicily there are many vocational educational centres that offer trainings, usually under the Social European Funds. In 2016 the Sicilian offer of training will be addressed to 18-29 years old unemployed but also to adults with long times of unemployment. There are several accredited organisations in Sicily that organise free courses e.g.: “promotion or regional resources”, “chef”, “pastry chef”, “professionals in the hospitality sector” or “management of B&B”.

In Austria, there is a great variety of programmes (on different levels) for initial and further education in the field of tourism. For formal and initial education, the offer ranges from apprenticeships, over secondary education to studies on university level.

Austria has a formal dual apprenticeship system. The completion of an apprenticeship is in line with EQF 4. Students, who finished compulsory school, attend vocational school and simultaneous work as apprentice in companies. The apprenticeship takes place mainly in so called “apprenticeship companies”, where the young people work mostly on a 40 hours per week basis. Apprentices spend approximately 20% of the training period in vocational school. During the training in apprenticeship companies the apprentices learn the chosen profession on the basis of practical work. In the vocational school general knowledge is deepened and gives theoretical background for the selected occupation. Popular apprenticeships offered by vocational schools in the tourism sector are “cook”, “restaurant specialist” or “gastronomy specialist”. In the area of tourism organisation, “travel agency assistant” or “fitness attendant” are regular offers.

Upper secondary educations (EQF 5) in tourism have duration of five years and are completed with a formal degree. The schools also combine practical work with subject-specific knowledge transfer. On the level of tertiary education (EQF 6-8) the tendency directs to management studies in the sector of tourism.

In the non-formal and CVET sector, adult education centres offer basically every kind of trainings, from additional apprenticeship courses to courses on tertiary level and soft skills or trend courses for specifications in the field or professional development. Providers offer training courses on subjects extra-occupational, which become more important nowadays for the sector e.g. in “sales and marketing” as well as courses for “waiter” and “cook” to unemployed people.

On tertiary level, the course offers in the partner countries show some similarities in terms of subjects, as they are in the context of management.

In Iceland, the university (EQF 6 – 8) provides general knowledge on tourism sector and specific programmes (geography, biology, etc.). At the Open University of Reykjavik management and leadership in tourism as well as short courses for middle management in tourism are offered.

In Finland there are five applied universities offering 8 bachelor’s degree programmes (210 ECTS, 3,5 years) in English in hospitality and tourism, such as “Restaurant Entrepreneurship”, “Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management or “Sports and Leisure Management”.

The Kainuu University of Applied Sciences (KAMK) also offers “Sports and Leisure Management”.

The Finnish University for Tourism Studies (FUNTS) provides a multidisciplinary approaches and an innovative way of developing tourism related research and education at (academic) universities. Students of ten member universities can study tourism studies as a minor subject. FUNTS itself does not lead to the award of master level degrees, but students will

graduate from their own universities and receive a degree in their major with the orientation towards tourism studies<sup>12</sup>.

In Italy the "Laurea triennale" corresponds to a Bachelor Degree with duration of three years (EQF 6), while the "Laurea Magistrale" corresponds to a Master Degree with duration of two years (EQF 7). Only the Laurea Magistrale gives access to third cycle programmes (Post-MA degrees, Doctorates or Specialising schools, EQF 8).

In the field of tourism there are specific courses of studies. The Bachelor in Tourism Science (3 years) mostly provides knowledge of economics, geography, history and archaeology, art history, demo-ethno-anthropology, law and language that allows graduates to work in organisations belonging to the tourism industry.

After a three-year Bachelor the students can access a Master Degree. Almost every faculty in Italy offers a course of study in tourism. Some of these can focus on specific aspects such as economic or managerial skills, conservation and valorisation of the heritage and so on.

Graduates within the course offered by the University of Study of Palermo may work as: Advertising agents in (regional) public institutions and advertising companies; Hotel technicians in public institutions, regional public institutions, hotel companies, etc.; organisers of trade fairs, exhibitions and cultural events, in regional public authorities, private facilities; Receptionists in companies and public institutions; Organisers of conferences and banquets, in companies and public bodies as receptionists and conference staff; Travel Agents, in travel agencies, networks (groups of associated travel agencies), Olta (On line travel agency), tourism associations; Guides, in travel agencies, tour operator companies, tourism institutions at large.

In Austria, the University of Applied Sciences Krems (EQF 6-8) offers study programmes in "tourism and leisure management", which include languages, business knowledge, as well as specialisation e.g. "event and sports management" or "arts and culture tourism". The University of applied sciences Carinthia with the programme "hotel management" includes hotel operations and process management, marketing & sales, E-commerce, controlling, foreign languages and soft skills, personal development and leadership, project management, practical lectures, hotel real estate management and finance.

In Iceland, formal and non-formal courses e.g. in management, marketing or for tourism guides exist with a collaboration of providers and workplace. These are options for professionals in the field, while colleges offer programmes for e.g. cook or, on lower level, VET centres for e.g. maid. In Finland, initial as well as further education is funded by the government and offered to students and adults. Programmes for e.g. catering and domestic services contain three years of education and on-the-job-learning. On-the job training and

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<sup>12</sup> The coordinating university of FUNTS is the University of Eastern Finland (see [www.uef.fi](http://www.uef.fi))

high-level training in “management of cultural heritage” or “professionals in the field of tourism and hospitality” are offered in the frame of two year courses in Italy. ESF funded courses for unemployed people are “chef”, “pastry chef”, “professionals in the hospitality sector” or “management of B&B”.

In Austria the programmes are also related to work practice, e.g. in form of apprenticeships or short courses in the field of tourism.

Summarising, students or adults on secondary level have on-the-job training either during initial education or in working contexts in all the partner countries. On tertiary level, the universities or universities of applied sciences mostly offer leadership or management programmes in the field of tourism, leisure and sports.

In-house trainings exist in Iceland or in Austria in the frame of apprenticeships. Young people are trained by a member of the company, they are working during their education. For further education, VET centres offer special courses. So far, in-house trainings by colleagues are not part of the education system for tourism in the partner countries, but there is potential, as practical trainings are part of the courses and work-related skills are essential for occupations in this field.

### **3.3 The role of the tourism professionals (on the job trainers)**

Following the desktop research, a field research was conducted in the partner countries. The following sections include the information gained from this research.

In Iceland, respondents were from 28 to 57 years old, most of them between 31 and 40 years old. Although all of them had considerable experience in their field, human resources, and business management etc., they are all dedicated lifelong learners, participating in short courses, training programmes related to management skills, servant leadership, quality management, teamwork and leadership. All respondents were involved either in in-house training (training as trainers) or in organising training for the staff or region. As they were all involved in human resource management in their organisations, their role included the obligation of organising in-house and vocational training. Their experience within tourism varied from few months to more than 30 years although all of them had experience and/or education in relation to HRM (human resource management) from other sectors. Being responsible for training did not necessary include them to be involved as trainers themselves although about half of them was. Usually experienced workers at the workplace took care of training new employees although they sometimes also attended a specific group-training as well.

In small and micro companies (with less than 10 employees) the role of the tourism professionals was also to train new employees. In small companies lack of resources was a

problem, as training offered was expensive and they had problems paying employees salary while on training.

There seems to be growing concern, among tourism professionals, about training and education in tourism among tourism professionals, everyone agrees that the sector needs to mature, processes need to be defined, quality increased through consistency and quality of services.

In Finland, respondents were from 35 years to 70 years old, most of them from age group 31-40 or 41-50 years old. Their experience in the tourism sector varied from 8-50 years. They are all dedicated lifelong learners, who participated in a large variety of trainings. Also, all the respondents have been working as trainers.

In Italy, all tourism professionals contacted for the GAP analysis have management responsibility, including responsibility for Human Resource development. This includes selection of staff and in-house training of staff. The training is either carried out by these professionals themselves or by other experienced staff. All professionals interviewed had at least 5 years of professional experience in the sector.

Four of the interviewed professionals worked in micro companies (less than 10 employees), one professional in a medium-size company (a Franchising Company with ca. 20 employees, which is part of a big hotel chain). This is typical for Sicily, where the tourism sector is mainly made up of a multitude of micro, small and medium-sized companies.<sup>13</sup> None of the tourism professionals has originally been trained in tourism, and only one has undertaken a post-graduate master in economy and tourism management before launching his tourism company. All other professionals have been fundamentally trained on the job.

Only the manager working for a hotel chain has followed a specific curriculum in her training, starting with a one-year activity at the reception of a hotel, and continuing with a training curriculum on the job organised by the franchisor (including face-to-face class trainings, informal on-the-job trainings, online trainings).

Training for tourism professionals is mainly done in an unstructured way in micro companies – this was a concern for most of the interviewees. Two of the tourism professionals said that they organised regular meetings to receive feedback from the staff about their training needs and update employees on specific trainings. In the franchising hotel training is organised in a structured way (including a curriculum with training material online) and monthly staff meetings serve to identify current needs in training.

It has to be highlighted that only one of the interviewees had knowledge of regional training offers and had participated in a training course offered by a business incubator located at the University in Palermo. All four representatives of micro enterprises would be interested

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<sup>13</sup> See Regione Siciliana, Progetto F.A.R.O (2013), Piano formativo per il settore del turismo della Regione Siciliana, (link: [http://www.sicilia-fse.it/Uploads/Temporaneo/Piano\\_formativo\\_turismo\\_def.pdf](http://www.sicilia-fse.it/Uploads/Temporaneo/Piano_formativo_turismo_def.pdf)).

in a new training offer, only the manager of the franchising hotel said she was completely satisfied with the curriculum and trainings offered by the hotel chain. One of the training needs most often mentioned was training in marketing and publicity, including through online channels (social media).

In Austria, five tourism professionals were interviewed anonymously from different companies within the tourism sector. Respondents were from the age group of 21-30 and 41-50. Their experience within the tourism sector ranges from seven to 20 years. One is the owner of a company called “Wien bewegt”. Two are managers of an enterprise, one is a waiter and another one is a cook. From their educational background, the respondents with completed apprenticeships, cook and waiter, worked in restaurants and one even owned an event agency. The same completed the concession exam and has 20 years of experience as a tourism expert from VET. Another respondent also has tourism and gastronomy background and now works as a manager and expert/trainer/coach. The other respondents currently work in a restaurant or bar. One, the cook, completed apprenticeship and the qualifying examination and the other one has no completed training in the field of tourism. Except for this person, all of them started with an education in the practical area of restaurants (apprenticeship cook and/or waiter), hotels or event management agencies. And except for one, they all participated in short courses, training programmes or were involved either in in-house trainings or trainings of VET provider.

According to the demographics of the respondents, there is a lot of experience in the field of tourism. The majority has long-term practical experience, but also in the area of management and HR. It is also interesting, that in Italy the majority of the respondents wasn't initially in the field, while in Austria, formal education to work in tourism is important. The people asked in the different partner countries have experience and participate in trainings regularly to refresh their knowledge or for professional development.

### **3.4 Required professional skills of tourism professionals**

In Iceland, all interviewed tourism professionals were interested to develop further required professionals skills needed to give in-house training to their employees. None of the respondents had a pedagogic education related to training; two of them had a diploma in “Executive Coaching” that they used for training and developing especially middle managers. When selecting in-house trainers they usually contracted experienced trainers in private companies or used courses provided by universities, colleges or lifelong learning centres. All of them were quite enthusiastic about implementing “training for trainers” in their organisation to enhance their and their colleagues’ pedagogic and training skills. Their focus in training was always on good services and particular skills required by the job. In some

organisations, training for trainers had already been tried out by training skilled employees in IT (management systems) who consequently were supposed to train and advise their fellow workers.

The respondents defined the most required skills that need to be trained are:

- Service
- Quality and professionalism
- Positivity and problem solving
- Communication and appearance
- System and IT knowledge
- Environmental issues
- Material usage
- Consistency – of services
- Ergonomics

In Finland, interviewed professionals defined the following required skills (at least 3 times mentioned) that need to be trained and are most important:

- Customer orientation
- communication
- work ethics and values
- Language skills (especially English)
- Concern of safety
- Quality focus

Three persons (small-scale companies) mentioned that all the staff should have a basic knowledge of the entrepreneurship (how the resources for the salaries etc. are collected). This is especially important for the persons wishing to start their own business in future (or continue the already existing business).

All the interviewed persons mentioned that all the education should have a strong connection to the actual working situations. Combination of the on-duty learning and traditional training is recommended. It is important to remember, that many skills needed by to front-line personnel can be learnt only at the actual working situations.

It would be beneficial, if all the trainers (incl. vocational and applied university teachers) could have on-duty working periods at the companies e.g. every second or third year.

Some skills (e.g. reception software, ICT etc.) have to be learned in each company due to the large variety of software and technical solutions used in the companies.

Some companies have a specific non-English speaking client groups (e.g. Russians, Chinese, Japanese) – in these companies specific language skills may be needed especially for the safety reasons. However, these needs (so called “rare” languages) are usually fulfilled by hiring native employees originating from these countries. It is important to organise tourism training in English for the immigrants from other countries.

In Italy, the skills most often mentioned in the interviews are:

- Stress management and time management
- Problem solving
- Customer orientation (the “capacity to enter into the client’s needs”, as one interviewee put it)
- Concern for safety
- Knowledge of work procedures for the particular professional activity
- Knowledge of work technology and ICT skills

According to the interviews with tourism professionals, relationship skills and communication skills are the basic requirement for working in the tourism sector – all respondents said that they would not even employ a person that does not dispose of these personal characteristics as these are difficult or even impossible to acquire.

Tourism professionals said, however, they would employ persons with different professional background and education, as technical knowledge (e.g. knowledge of work procedures, how to handle food, how to respond to customers’ needs) could also be learned and trained on the job. In-house training/on-the-job training is therefore needed at the beginning of the employment to learn the basic technical and professional knowledge (which can be provided by more experienced colleagues/managers of the companies); and then to refresh technical knowledge during later years of employment. Further training needs mentioned by the respondents were: improving customer care and problem solving, stress and time management, language courses, training in (online) marketing, including through social media, training in management and administrative issues, training in legal issues, including regular updates about changes in the legal basis for tourism.

The current focus of in-house training is mainly on basic technical knowledge and the improvement of basic skills, such as customer care and stress management, and this is carried out in satisfactory way (in the eyes of the interviewees) by managers/fellow colleagues. It would be desirable, though, 1) to have a comprehensive training curriculum for employees and 2) to receive training in more specialised technical areas such as marketing, use of social media, language courses, management and administrative skills, and legal basis/updates on legal changes for tourism companies.

Funding opportunities for training was largely unknown by the interviewed professionals, most of them think that trainings for the tourism sector should be funded by the public authorities, e.g. by the region of Sicily or by the respective municipality, as a flourishing tourism sector could contribute significantly to economic growth.

In Austria, regarding the feedback from the tourism professionals, there is a wide range of training activities available on the market, especially on CVET level. For professional development there are courses for specification, i.e. for patisserie. Other occupation related courses involve management or service, but also language courses. For the acquisition of soft-skills courses mentioned for communication, time management, stress management, planning and positive charisma are important for the sector.

These courses mainly exist as (formal) colleges, but also as non-formal courses/seminars and on the job trainings. Sometimes external experts are consulted and it is mentioned, that the quality of the courses depend on the teacher, and that it could be more difficult with externals.

Besides the quality of teaching, more practical experience is recommended for training in the field. Already existing offers, which are considered to be useful regarding requirements of tourism sector, are on the job trainings, but also trainings for communication and social skills, because they are essential for interpersonal processes and negotiation. In general, it is estimated to be good that the trainings are not standardised but individualised.

Appropriate appearance is also mentioned as an important factor in the occupational area of tourism and efficient blended learning as the kind of training that would be attractive to attend.

The respondents defined the most required skills that need to be trained in tourism as follows:

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Customer orientation
- Time management
- Self-confidence
- Stress-management
- Resource management
- Priority setting
- Planning
- Work ethics
- Concern for safety
- Quality focus

Some of these skills are assessed as important by all the respondents, e.g. communication and customer orientation. Others are diverging e.g. problem solving (all except Finland), stress and time management in AT an IT, concern for safety (except Iceland).

### 3.5 Interviews with training provider

In Iceland, basic knowledge in service management and customer service together with related issues for new employees are most important. It is also an important issue to link the formal education to the non-formal. The skills assessed to be required in the field by training provider are:

- Communication
- Self-confidence
- Service management
- Quality focus
- Developing other
- Problem solving

In Finland, respondents assessed skills required in the tourism sector as follows:

- Communication
- Language<sup>14</sup>
- Customer orientation
- Work ethics and values
- Concern of safety
- Service management
- Quality focus
- Environmental issues<sup>15</sup>

Web-based (internet) learning methods and on-duty learning are used in the training. However the trainers and teachers should have enough resources to follow the learning process at the companies, too. It is important, that there are educated trainers in each company organising on-duty learning for the students.

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<sup>14</sup> All the workers should have good enough English skills; other languages are sometimes needed (especially Russian)

<sup>15</sup> Certain companies (especially clients from Central Europe)

The Austrian results show regarding the current needs of participants, that more project planning, collaboration, practices, as well as visits from leading tourism companies are required. Although language skills were not rated to belong to the most important required skills, language in the context of communication was mentioned, for understanding clients, complaint management, etc. Nevertheless, speaking foreign languages is assumed to be an advantage, e.g. Arabic. Also, cultural skills, and generally social skills as well as customer orientation and time management are necessary in today's work context in the field of tourism.

Based on their professional view on required skills in the field of tourism respondents mentioned as the most important competences:

- Communication
- Stress-management
- Problem solving
- Customer orientation
- Self-confidence
- Specific knowledge (terminology, allergens etc.)
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Language skills
- Time management
- Service management
- Quality focus
- Environmental issues

Regarding the methods used by the respondents, following input is gathered from Iceland and Austria: Creative learning methods with intensive communication between instructor and between individual participants are beneficial – it is important to have a mentor in the company. Also, web-based learning methods to reach also people in small companies all around the country are in demand. The genuine opinion is that the course should be work-related and practical.

One of the trainers designs his course units with support of procedure documentation, flexible and audience orientated, respectively tailored for customers. Depending on the customers, they have a duration of 45-50 min. and complete from 1-2,5 units per day.

The material used for these courses includes books, especially school books, professional information from the internet, m-learning, e-learning, CDs, internet resources, etc.

Summarising the results of the field research regarding the skills needs from the perspective of training provider/HR experts, the following are mentioned in all the partner countries:

Communication, service management, quality focus. The design of material can be web-based, but should be varied and creative. A strong focus lies on the relationship between trainer and trainee.

### 3.6 Good Practice examples in the field of tourism from the partner countries

Iceland:

Good practice 1:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Training for hotel maids (in Icelandic and English)
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	SAF and IDAN
<b>Cost:</b>	Pilot project
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	IDAN
<b>Duration:</b>	40 hours (60 teaching hours)
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Hotel maids – started in November 2015
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Including group work, first aid, ergonomics, communication, cleaning hotel rooms etc.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Non-formal accredited education implemented within a lifelong and vocational training centre.
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Focused on actual job and practical training. Developed in cooperation with key stakeholders and companies.
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	Not yet part of the formal school system.

Good practice 2:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Iceland for tourist – what they need to know and be aware of when travelling in different conditions.
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Landsbjörg, their websites <a href="http://www.landsbjorg.is">www.landsbjorg.is</a> and <a href="http://www.safetravel.is">www.safetravel.is</a>
<b>Cost:</b>	funded
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Offered by SAF to car rentals within the association in cooperation with Landsbjörg
<b>Duration:</b>	40 min
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Front line employees in car rentals that provide assistance and information to tourists travelling in

	different conditions.
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Increasing information to tourists travelling in Iceland. What to consider when preparing your travel in Winter. Clothing, rescue equipment, weather, road and highland conditions. How to select a car, find information about conditions and weather. The objective being to decrease unnecessary accidents and rescue missions. (This course is a part of the Icelandic tourism quality framework – Vakinn)
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Non-formal
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Practical and necessary information
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	Perhaps something that needs to be obligatory.

Finland:

Good practice 1:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	RestoRus
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Kamk ( <a href="http://www.kamk.fi">www.kamk.fi</a> )
<b>Cost:</b>	
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Public (EU structural funds)
<b>Duration:</b>	2,5 years
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Persons speaking Russian as a mother tongue. Participants must have a secondary education needed to apply to Applied University and good enough Finnish skills (education in Finnish)
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Applied University degree in Tourism
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Tailor-made formal degree education
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	The education promotes especially well-educated Russian immigrants to integrate to the Finnish society. Russian speaking staff is needed in the tourism companies (Russians are the most important foreign group in Kainuu): Russian tourists don't always speak English and they have specific culture-related needs.

<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	The target group is limited. It is not clear, if this education could be repeated.
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<b>Good practice 2:</b>	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Hygiene passport
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Kao (www.kao.fi)
<b>Cost:</b>	130 euros
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Trainee and/or employer
<b>Duration:</b>	1 day (8 hours)
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Employees in the restaurant and food production sectors
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Training and test. Training concentrates on Food hygiene.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Non-formal training, formal test. Test is obligatory for the staff working in the restaurants and food production
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Obligatory test. Training gives the participants basic knowledge of the food hygiene.
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	Basic training and the test is same for all the participants. Additional sector-depend training should be included (e.g. Additonal 2 <sup>nd</sup> day) in the training.

<b>Good practice 3:</b>	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Tourism safety passport
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Kao (www.kao.fi)
<b>Cost:</b>	124 euros
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Trainee or/and employer
<b>Duration:</b>	1 day (8 hours)
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Personnel working at the tourism sector (hotels, activities)

<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Training gives basic information about the safety procedures and risks in the tourism sector.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Non-formal. Training and test are voluntary.
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Gives basic information about the safety (and quality) procedures and risks.
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	Training and test are not obligatory and not all the employers ask for it.

Italy:

Good practice 1:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Master in Economia e Gestione del Turismo (Master in Economy and Tourism Management)
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Centro Internazionale Studi Economia Turistica – Ciset, University Ca’ Foscari, Venice <a href="http://virgo.unive.it/ciset/website/it/formazione/master-economia-e-gestione-turismo">http://virgo.unive.it/ciset/website/it/formazione/master-economia-e-gestione-turismo</a>
<b>Cost:</b>	7000 € for the whole Master; full and partial scholarships are provided by public authorities and private companies
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Public and private (University, Region of Venice and Touring Club Italiano)
<b>Duration:</b>	1 year
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	The Master targets young people interested in working in the tourism sector (from hotels to tourism marketing to public entities); it prepares especially for management positions in tourism. It has been created 20 years ago and has trained more than 600 students to date. It is recognised internationally as best practice example.
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	The Master has a comprehensive study programme. The different modules are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism basics</li> <li>- Economy and Tourism Resources</li> <li>- Economy and Management of Tourism Companies</li> <li>- Tourism Marketing</li> <li>- Organisation and Management of Human Resources in Tourism</li> <li>- Tourism Legislation</li> <li>- Planning and Controlling in Tourism Companies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English for Tourism</li> <li>- Financial Management</li> <li>- Public and Private Policies for the Development of Tourism</li> <li>- Internship in Tourism Companies</li> <li>- Project Work and Final Discussion of the Project</li> </ul>
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Formal, presence Master
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	The strength of this Master is its combination of theoretical and practical training, the opportunities for students to get in touch with tourism professionals and practitioners throughout the whole study programme and to act as consultants for the so-called „live projects“, real practice cases presented by tourism companies. 98% of the graduates have found a job after taking the degree (in different tourism companies, in the private and public sector). Success stories on the website show the variety of activities undertaken by Graduates.
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	The length and probably the cost (although scholarships are available)

Good practice 2:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Comprehensive training curriculum, online, face-to-face and conference calls
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Accor Hotels <a href="http://www.accorhotels-group.com/en/recruitmentand-careers/why-choose-accorhotels/training.html">http://www.accorhotels-group.com/en/recruitmentand-careers/why-choose-accorhotels/training.html</a>
<b>Cost:</b>	- (unknown, as internal training activity)
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Employer
<b>Duration:</b>	Continuous training curriculum; duration/length depends on the knowledge/interest of the respective employee; some parts of the curriculum are obligatory, some voluntary.
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Hotel employees, from reception to management; highly appreciated by hotel manager/HR responsible.
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Training curriculum serve to develop the potential of the employees; it is adapted according to the experience and previous knowledge of each employee. Many of the courses are about internal ICT programmes (e.g. the reservation system); there are also courses on „train the trainer“, guest service, customer service, management, sustainable development policy etc.

<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Formal, part of training curriculum of the hotel chain, online, classroom training and conference calls
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	The curriculum is flexible and adapted to the experience/knowledge of the employee; there are both obligatory and voluntary training elements. There are both courses online and face-to-face; recently conference calls have been introduced to reduce travel costs/loss of time for travelling while having at the same time the possibility to bring employees from different hotels together. Online trainings are always available and can be integrated easily in the work schedule.
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	In online trainings there is not always the possibility to ask questions to the trainers.

<b>Good practice 3:</b>	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	Self-training (Auto-formazione)
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	Palma Nana <a href="http://www.educazioneambientale.com/">http://www.educazioneambientale.com/</a>
<b>Cost:</b>	- (unknown)
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Employer
<b>Duration:</b>	1 day, two or three times per year
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Employees of the organisation; it is appreciated by the employees for the opportunity to bring in own training content/experiences and influence this way also the future development of the company.
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	Training content depends on the specific training or work experience of employees they would like to share and discuss with their colleagues. For example, one of the associates of the company has participated at the test phase of the new curriculum on environmental education on behalf of the Italian Ministry of Education. This experience and the contents will be presented at the next „Self-training“ day. It’s also possible to present a book read on a specific type of activities/work practice relevant for work. Last year such a presentation of a book has become the origin of a new company’s activity.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Non-formal, presence.
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Participatory and open to all colleagues, which is motivating. It’s flexible in its contents and so from this

	type of „open“ training new and innovative ideas can be created. At the same time it is very relevant for the company’s work, as employees present contents (training material/work experience) that have been directly influenced them.
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	Highly depends on the motivation/participation of staff, it is not a structured way of company development/training.

Austria:

Good practice 1:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	New skills tourism
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	BEST Institute
<b>Cost:</b>	
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Employment office
<b>Duration:</b>	15 weeks
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Unemployed people with vocational education and/or experience in the fields of tourism, wellness and gastronomy.
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	The goal of “New skills tourism” is to prepare people for the current requirements in the extended field of tourism and for their reintegration in the job market. The contents are: job application training, German/English for tourism, personal training, IT basics, e-tourism and social media, tourism as business, communication, customer service, allocation of resources, obligatory internship, etc.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Extended curriculum Formal
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Integration in the job market
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	

Good practice 2:	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	“Active Qualification in Tourism” (AQuiT)
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	BEST Institute

<b>Cost:</b>	
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	
<b>Duration:</b>	3-5 weeks
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	Vocational education and training providers, in particular for tourism; unemployed people searching for professional (re-)integration in tourism; public authorities for labour market policy measures; tourism providers and their associations
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	<p>The AQuiT project supports vocational education and training providers working with low-level employees in the tourism sector.</p> <p>Firstly, AQuiT will aim at improving skills among teachers, trainers and experts for relevant VET tourism subjects and supply learning contents and training materials. Local training providers involved shall be enabled to apply these newly acquired practices on their own in an independent and sustainable way.</p> <p>Secondly, unemployed persons will receive the possibility to have their (formally and non-formally) acquired skills and competences recognized for work in tourism, helping them provide evidence of these to potential employers in this sector and promote their chances of (re-)integration into the labour market.</p>
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Formal
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Integration in the job market
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	

<b>Good practice 3:</b>	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	“Cool Cooking”
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	BEST Institute
<b>Cost:</b>	960 €
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Employment office
<b>Duration:</b>	5-6 weeks
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	People interested in working in the field of gastronomy and kitchen.

<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	“Cool Cooking” is a formal, practically based course preparing people in a professional way for their future job as kitchen assistants or assistant cooks. The curriculum consists of the following topics and parts: Basic skills of working in a kitchen, customer service and communication, obligatory internship, individual training and coaching.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Formal
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Integration in the job market
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	

<b>Good practice 4:</b>	
<b>Name of the practice:</b>	“Cool Service”
<b>Provider (incl. link):</b>	BEST Institute
<b>Cost:</b>	924 €
<b>Financing (public, trainee, employer etc.):</b>	Employment office
<b>Duration:</b>	5-6 weeks
<b>Target group &amp; How popular is it?</b>	People interested in working in the field of gastronomy, service and catering.
<b>Abstract/Content description:</b>	“Cool Service” is a formal, practically based course preparing people in a professional way for their future employment in the field of catering and service. The curriculum consists of the following topics and parts: customer service and communication, serving and drinks, event preparation, obligatory internship, individual training and coaching.
<b>Frame-work (formal, non-formal, part of an extended curriculum, online/presence etc.):</b>	Formal, extended curriculum
<b>Strengths of the practice:</b>	Integration in the job market
<b>Weaknesses of the practice:</b>	

## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

In view of the results of the GAP analysis carried out in the partner countries following conclusions can be drawn:

In the partner countries, the challenges tourism currently has to face varies due to political, historical and economic differences on national level. In this context, lack of quality, low-skilled personnel and high unemployment rates and economic differences in the regions are to mention.

In general, the tourism sector offers a wide range of different career options. On upper secondary level, corresponding to EQF level 4, the programmes vary from initial educations (e.g. cook) to (short) training courses and on-the-job training for trained professionals. All the professionals that were asked possess experience in the field, although not all of them initially started their career in tourism. Furthermore, they are committed to regular trainings and/or train themselves. That means that they have technical and field specific knowledge, due to their experience, but are also up to date in view of current trends or regarding refreshing of skills. Besides their expertise, the tourism professionals function as contact person, respectively as mentors. That means, that both parties involved are equals and open communication should be given all the time.

From the conclusions in the different partner countries, it was highlighted that the training should be short, work-related and practical. From the field research, the assessed skills required are differing between the partner countries. The few, which are consistent (also between tourism professionals and providers/HR experts), focus in particular on communication and service, customer and quality orientation. Specific, regarding the feedback of the tourism professionals, communication and problem solving was assessed as skills needed. From the perspective of training provider/HR experts the skills needed are: Communicaton, service management, quality focus.

Based on these results gathered from the field research, the following can recommended for future outputs: The targeted occupations/fields should preferably be related to customer contact and service.

The results for the skills needs, which differ between the partner countries, include inter alia ICT and language skills. ICT skills can become important, depending on the selected occupation, e.g. receptionist. However, it needs to be considered that there are different systems and programmes used in different companies.

From the “good practices” collected by the partner countries, following parts can be picked up and adapted for future outputs:

- Training developed with companies and stakeholders
- Blended learning structure (in-house system)

- Communicative exchange between trainer and trainee
- Flexible structure-adapted according to the experience and previous knowledge of each employee
- Self-training

It can be concluded, that involvement of companies, stakeholders and professionals in form of collaboration and recommendations would add value to the development of future material.

Blended learning structure for the course developed includes the advantage of cost reduction and, at the same time, has a greater coverage, which allows involving and reaching companies in different regions. At the same time, the relationship between trainer and trainee should be close and based on open communication.

A flexible structure, adapted according to the experience and previous knowledge of each employee, can be a challenge. A possible (partial) solution is the self-training approach mentioned above. In this practice, there are both, compulsory and voluntary parts- compulsory probably not possible in frame of the project. But there could be a core curriculum for the course participants and additionally voluntary units, which are self-organised. For this format, webinars or conference calls would be a good opportunity for networking between course participants of different companies.

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