

Vocational Education for the Sustainable Development of Rural Tourism Enterprises

VESURT Meeting 1 – Pontevedra, Spain

October 17th to 20th 2012

Report by UK partner

Overall Project Aim – To train rural tourism providers to become more sustainable.

Objectives:

1. To enable partners to learn about sustainable tourism initiatives in partner countries.
2. To develop and evaluate short training modules, using shared resources, for rural tourism sector staff, trainees, students and partners about sustainable and local tourism in the languages of the partner countries.
3. To identify ways of extending and disseminating the training modules.

Task and Questions for Meeting 1

Current experience and practice (Learn from each other, share best practice, develop european awareness – case studies)

1. What are our organisation's particular experience, interests, and needs?
2. What sustainable tourism, and associated training, occurs in our organisations?

Results

The main activity was getting to know each of the partners and informally answering the two questions above. We re-planning the project as the number of partners was reduced from 7 to 4. This involved agreeing tasks and responsibilities for each partner as well as meeting venues and dates.

We agreed how we communicate between the meetings using Facebook and Wiggio - a social networking website at <http://localsust.wiggio.com>. These would only be used for partners and silent partners. Towards the end of the project we would develop a website for trained staff/ trainees and students, key organisations, networks, and as a public site.

We also agreed to develop a standard set of questions about sustainable tourism (to be asked and videoed or used as a questionnaire) for 1) tourism enterprises 2) tourism information staff 3) visitors. These would then be agreed and tested at the next meeting in the UK and used by the students at the following meeting in Portugal, and by the partners at all future meetings.

Lastly we made several visits which would form the basis of sustainable tourism case studies. We agreed to use visits during each of the 8 project meetings as sustainable tourism case studies. The standard set of questions would be asked in relation to each case study. These would then be used in our teaching between each meeting. At the next meeting we would review and evaluate how we each used them for vocational teaching.

Host – Celtas Terrae

Celtas Terrae is an association located in one of the largest cities of Northern Spain - Pontevedra. The organisation was formed as a response to the need to motivate and foster participation of youth in the local society as well as to foster youngster's participation in rural areas of Pontevedra province. At the moment the organisation is formed by young people in the age of 16 to 30 years as well as youth workers, trainers and coordinators. The main directions of the organisation are intercultural education,

expression of arts as a tool (photography, music, folk traditions etc), environmental issues, rural development, leisure, promotion of Youth in Action programme and fostering of youth work in the rural area. The association has vast experience in projects with the Youth in Action programme as promoters and implementers of various projects (youth initiatives, exchanges, training courses, voluntary work). The members are working to set up a European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme. We are currently working on a voluntary basis in a project for a rural municipality for the collection and recovery of tools and materials used in activities related to ethnography and activities to create an ethnographic museum.

Silent Partner

The municipality of A Lama is a small rural town in the interior of the province of Pontevedra, Galicia, España. The municipality is predominantly rural and there is little secondary and tertiary sector, the public transport are scarce and unemployment is very high. Young people after completing their studies, have to choose to migrate to other places in search of work. These limitations make them very vulnerable. Access to information in the municipality is not easy and the possibilities for personal development are minimized. The municipality covers an area of 112 km², the population is in full decline since the last two centuries many people choose to emigrate. The Municipality is actively engaged in the promotion of EU projects aiming at enhancing the empowerment of its inhabitant and the development of initiatives able to foster rural tourism and development.

Revised plan for stages, tasks and meetings

The 7 Tasks will relate to 8 stages and meetings, with the main task of training materials and events included in two meetings, and with each country partner hosting two meetings. However each partner does not need to attend each meeting. Each meeting and task will be the responsibility of a single partner. The competencies are in brackets. The questions indicate the tasks.

We agreed to travel out on Tuesdays, Meetings on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, with travel back on Saturday/ Sunday.

1) Current experience and practice (Learn from each other, share best practice, develop european awareness – case studies)

16-19 Oct 2012

Pontevedra, Spain

(Porto airport, Train)

1. What are our organisation's particular experience, interests, and needs?
2. What sustainable tourism, and associated training, occurs in our organisations?

2) European experience and practice (Learn from each other, share best practice, develop european awareness – case studies)

12-15 Mar 2013

Stamford, UK

Travel - (Stansted, Birmingham or East Midlands Airports, 90 mins. Train)

Accom - Travel Lodge, Manton, Rutland minibus or car for 15 mins. Travel to Stamford

Visit – Stamford New College, Cookery School, Brewery House/Crown Hotel meeting room, Rutland Water/ Rutland Cycling

1. What interesting sustainable tourism initiatives and examples occur in each partner country
2. What sustainable tourism certification schemes occur in each partner country?

3. Case studies and certification from own country
4. Suggest practical activities

3) Principles and skills (Components of the training, as topics and competencies)

1. What is sustainable tourism?
2. What skills, knowledge and values are needed by the rural sustainable tourism sector?
3. Design of questionnaire

4) Demand and skills (Approach to the training, as analysis of questionnaire)

16-19 Apr 2013

Porto, Portugal

Travel - (Porto airport, and minibus for 14+ people??)

Accom - Youth centre and town hotel

Visit - ?

1. What is the interest and need for sustainable tourism in the rural tourism sector?
2. What is the skills gap amongst staff and trainees, and how can it be filled?
3. Needs, skills and skill gaps
4. Practical activities for student learners Eg. Food preparation by students as competition
5. Questionnaire analysis for visitors, students and professionals

5) Training material and events (Shared training material as presentation, activities and case studies)

4-7 Jun 2013

Bialystok, Poland

Travel – Chopin Airport, Warsaw, Train

Accom – Hotel

Visit – Bialowieza National Park www.poland.travel/en/Bialowieza

1. Building on the above, What common training material have we developed and can we test?
2. What training events do we each want to use to test the common training material, and how can we evaluate it?
3. Start to produce training material, presentations and trainers guide for using presentation during training sessions.

6) Training material and events (Shared training material as presentation, activities and case studies)

24-27 Sep 2013

Pontevedra, Spain

Travel – Porto airport

Accom – Restaurant Ruas, A Lama

Visit – A Lama, Biona,

1. Building on the above, What common training material have we developed and can we test?
2. What training events do we each want to use to test the common training material, and how can we evaluate it?
3. Finish producing training material, presentations and trainers guide for using presentation during training sessions.

7) Training evaluation (Evaluation and certification)

3-6 Dec 2013

Cromer, Norfolk, UK

Travel - (Stansted, Norwich Airports, 90 mins. Train)

Accom – Maynard House (£20/ person/ night and breakfast), Bed and Breakfast (£40/person/night)

Visit – City College Norwich, Holt Hall, Cley Nature Visitor Centre, Sheringham Park Centre, National Trust, Marchants Place Community Centre for wifi/ meeting room

1. How successful has the training been, and how can we promote and present it more widely?
2. How can we certify the training?

8) Wider promotion (Dissemination through website, leaflet, and country-based event)

25-28 Mar 2014

Bialystok, Poland

Travel – Chopin Airport, Warsaw, Train

Accom – Hotel

Visit – ?

1. How can it be promoted to wider organisations and networks?
2. How can we extend the project and/or our partnership?

9) Final evaluation

8-11 Jul 2014

Porto, Portugal

Travel - (Porto airport, train)

Accom - town hotel

Visit – Festival ?

1. What are the lessons and learner feedback from the project and how successful has the project been?
2. Completing the final report and closing the project with our National Agency reports and final report.

Sustainable Tourism Topics

1. Ecotourism - Forests esp. in Poland, Portugal
2. Gastrotourism – Local food and food preparation esp. in all countries
3. Agrotourism – Traditional and agricultural farms with local produce and techniques
4. Craft tourism – Old, traditional crafts and skills of old craftspeople
5. Sport tourism – Low impact recreation and sport eg. Wild swimming, biking, canoeing
6. Travel tourism – Train, bike and walking, guided tours and Camino pilgrimage
7. Cultural heritage tourism – Traditional calendar festivals, Traditional music and dance, heritage and archaeology guides
8. Virtual diaspora tourism – Cultural event with diaspora country host in own country, without travelling.

Revised Project Results

1. Staff Meeting in our own organisations.
2. Training presentations and sessions (eg. 1 hour to 1 day?) to be used by our organisations with student learners, and professionals.
3. Practical activities by learners eg. Planting trees, making food as a competition.
4. Questionnaire and survey of needs of Visitors, Students, Professionals.
5. Photos and short videos eg. Video interviews with visitors, students and professionals, training sessions.
6. Case studies of sustainable tourism – prepared by Portugese and Polish mobility students for

competition/ assessment.

7. Case studies of sustainable tourism by partners of own organisation and country, esp. new, innovative enterprises by young people.
8. Social network/ website for communication between partners.
9. Website for final products and growing network, Links to other EU-funded projects, online resources, files, training presentations.
10. Webpages on own organisation's website.
11. Evaluation of learning by learners.
12. Evaluation of project and partnership cooperation by partners.

Sustainable Tourism Case studies

Santiago de Compostela pilgrims

The partners met several pilgrims in Pontevedra, either staying in the hotels or in the street. These pilgrims are the commonest group of international visitors to Pontevedra. Many walk on the Portuguese or French routes. The Portuguese route passes through Pontevedra. The four tourist information offices in Pontevedra provide much information for these tourists. The Camino de Santiago Train from Irun, on the French border, to Vigo, carries many of the French and northern European pilgrims by train for some of the journey. The train travels through spectacular mountain and river landscapes. However the train journey is not well promoted by local tourist information centres.

Learning points: Sustainable travel by train and foot.

Casa Florencio, A Lama

The partners visited Daniel, the owner of the Casa Florencio bar, accommodation and camping field. He is also the chairman and founder of the Rio Barbeira Cultural Association. We were shown the camping field and visitor accommodation at Casa Florencio. Promotion of the camping field is limited by law. The Casa Florencio website www.casa-florencio.com includes pages on the Rio Barbeira Cultural Association. The website is in Spanish but does not have a french or English version.

Learning points: Value of local champions. Value of an accessible website in different languages. Value of working with the local community, including prisoners.

Rio Barbeira Cultural Association, A Lama

The partners were introduced by Daniel to the walks around the river valley area of the Rio Barbeira with its derelict water mills and old tracks. His small water-powered maize mill was restored by the Association as a tourist attraction. The walking routes were restored by prisoners. Ox carts were restored by a keen local farmer who led a community procession along some of the riverside walking routes and old tracks. The Association aims to promote and restore more small watermill for grinding maize. The agricultural economy of the area has changed completely as young people have emigrated to Brazil and Mexico. Returning emigrants have bought houses in the village of 3,000 population. The aims of the Association includes to provide sustainable tourism opportunities and increase local employment of local young people.

Learning points: People in small rural communities have multiple roles. Community organisations can play a vital role in promoting rural tourism.

Rural young people

The partners visited some of the Tourist information centres in Pontevedra. Rebeca works at the local Tourist Information kiosk in Pontevedra. She is employed on a short-term contract until December with the Municipal authority of Pontevedra. She is about 25 years old and lives with her parents in a small

mountain village near Pontevedra. She has a degree in Tourism and wants to work in tourism. 40% of young people (18-30) in Spain are unemployed, probably even more in remote rural areas. So what are the employment or enterprise opportunities for local young people?

Traditional Music

The partners stayed in Pontevedra. Galicia is famous with tourists for its traditional music and dance. A street busker was playing Galician bagpipes in Pontevedra. He also had a band of four people who dress in traditional costume to play for weddings, dances and festivals. However employment for traditional musicians is seasonal and periodic, so they have to find other employment in the temporary marginal economy.

Learning points: The tourist experience is often made by musicians and craftspeople who live and work in the marginal economy.

Local food

Seafood meal at Soto restaurante. A complete meal of spider crab, cockles, mussels, langoustine, squid and fish, with local white wine Albarino and red Rioja. The very full meal costs 11.50 euro. However the restaurant was not well advertised, in small restaurant with fairly old décor. It was a small family business with older husband and wife cooking and two young waitresses. The whole meal was locally caught, and not over-fished ie. sustainable fishing. The wine was locally produced. The staff were all one family.

Learning points: The most sustainable food is not always from the most advertised or obvious restaurant.

Sports and sustainable rural tourism

The partners visited a Sports Tourism Fair in Pontevedra. It promoted a range of sports, from cycling and golf to football and car racing. Sports organisations and enterprises were promoting their own sports. Several rural sports were promoted as sustainable. The sustainability of different sports depends on particular circumstances of the players, the playing place, and their particular social, economic and environmental impacts, most importantly by how people travel to and from the sport, and the equipment and clothing etc that they use.

Learning points: It is difficult to determine the sustainability of different sports. Each sporting activity should be assessed separately.

YouTube files from Meeting

Added by Nestor Blanco to vesurt wiggio site on Thu, 29 Nov

First meeting in Pontevedra - <http://youtu.be/q4nytYvk5Y0>

First meeting in Pontevedra - <http://youtu.be/rI-8aqwDcbE>

A Lama case study as powerpoint - http://youtu.be/e_i4am5fa7M