

SIMPLE OPEN LEARNING ADVANCEMENTS (SOLA)

Duration: 2 years

Description of the project

As most VET providers, the BFI's future strategy is to meet Europe's labour market's constantly evolving new and changing requirements with ICT-based didactical methods: the need for mobility, flexibility, learning in the workplace, competency and knowledge based contents, high quality standards and learning possibilities for all groups of age.

In the evolving process the BFI found that it is very hard for VET providers to:

1. find high-quality usable contents in other languages than English,
2. produce own contents without a skilled team of authors,
3. find trainers with experience and sound know-how in the field of e-learning and blended learning,
4. find trainers that can produce e-learning content,
5. introduce specific quality standards that are met in all online-trainings,
6. work with online-trainings only,
7. find high-quality open contents that can be adapted to meet specific regional requirements.

Talking to their many international partners the BFI experienced the same problems in all institutions and countries.

The European Commission proposes actions in "Opening up Education: Innovative teaching and learning for all through new Technologies and Open Educational Resources (OER)" which the project supports in "- helping learning institutions, teachers and learners to acquire digital skills and learning methods and supporting development and availability of open educational resources.....". Supporting the production of OER is also one of the priorities of this Erasmus+ Strategic partnership call.

Another issue this project focuses on is the lack of ICT based learning content in one of the growing businesses in Europe – Sustainable Tourism. In this area the skills of staff mostly do not meet the employers' requirements which was one of the main findings of BFI in an ongoing European territorial cooperation project on tourism in the Austrian – Czech border area.

This analysis is also supported by the partners findings in their countries. The need is also underlined in "The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for the period 2011-2020" which states: "Just as information and communications technology skills are essential for everybody today green skills will be important to almost every job in the future". The project combines both ICT-based technology and green



skills through the creation of OER in the field of sustainable tourism. This approach aligns with national economic development strategies in Austria which see sustainable tourism as a growing business sector. (see “Sustainability in tourism” strategy paper by Austrian National Tourist Office”, 2012).

Based on these findings the project “SOLA” is intended - through SOLA several main goals shall be achieved:

1. Training for established “class room trainers” to work with ICT and the related pedagogical and didactical methods in diverse contexts and to create and adapt specific e-learning contents.
2. Setting high quality standards for e-learning contents, webinars and classroom settings merged in blended learning concepts.
3. Development of open e-learning contents. These contents will follow the specific standards that all project partners agreed on.
4. Development of handbooks and manuals for trainers to use in blended learning settings (e.g. how to assist the self-learning process of students, how to connect distance learning and in-class courses in a coherent learning scenario, how to produce content).
5. Increasing trainers’ international mobility and exchange as well as organisations’ communication, cooperation and exchange of experience and know-how.
6. Giving learners the opportunity to learn self-paced in ICT-based learning methods with contents that are designed for a specific area in the particular language needed.
7. Development and implementation of high-quality curricula and learning modules on Sustainable Tourism to be published as OER
8. Introduction of open badges and ECVET/ECTS to acknowledge learning achievements
9. Involving the tourism industry and major stakeholders (Employment Service, social partners) in the project

So the project addresses the following major target groups:

- Teachers and trainers in VET
- Professionals in tourism
- VET providers
- Tourism industry and its representatives
- Stakeholders (employment services, social partners)

As the issues addressed above are European challenges our opinion is that the answer should be European by trying to achieve the goals in a competent partnership of VET providers, universities and companies.

Participating organisations

- Berufsfoerderungsinstitut Oberoesterreich (Austria - **coordinator**)
- Akademia Humanistyczno-Ekonomiczna w Lodzi (Poland)
- Istituto Formazione Operatori Aziendali (Italy)



- Universidad a Distancia de Madrid (Spain)
- Instituto de Soldadura e Qualidade (Portugal)
- Link & Link Software (Germany)
- Stichting ROC Midden Nederland (Netherlands)
- Tempo Training & Consulting (Czech Republic)