



APRIL 2024 | NEWSLETTER 5

ESTOUR

Introducing Epidemic Safe Tourism (post-COVID recovery) to strengthen SMEs in the Hospitality Sector



What is ESTour about?

An Erasmus+ project that aims at creating the ESTour expert professional profile.

The ESTour project aims at training and certifying people who have been working in the hospitality sector and would like to update their skills related to the new health and safety protocols and new digital technologies, in regards to an effective response to the epidemic crisis' impact.

The main goal of the ESTour Expert is to be able to work at an operational level, namely, to conduct an operational plan by creating and implementing staff protocols and guidelines, retraining and monitoring staff regarding infection control, physical distancing and hygiene measures, and to know how to use the new digital technologies for implementing clients' social distancing during epidemic crises.

In order to create this new ESTour expert profile, the partners of this Erasmus+ project will elaborate the following deliverables:

- Research on the current needs in hospitality sector, based on COVID-19 impact.
- Epidemic Safety Tourism Expert Qualification Profile.
- ESTour modular training curriculum.
- ESTour blended learning course.
- ESTour certification scheme



The ESTour Expert

- Understands, follows and applies new safety protocols.
- Is aware of the new digital technologies for facilitating the operation of hospitality SMEs in times of epidemic crises.
- Conducts an operational plan by creating and implementing staff protocols and guidelines.
- Applies health safety and social distancing practices.
- Retrains and monitors staff regarding infection control, physical distancing, and hygiene measures.



Project Update #1: The Expert Blended Learning VET Course (PR4)

In the context of **Project Result 4 (PR4)**, the action "**ESTour Expert Blended Learning VET Course**" has reached a significant milestone.

The course aims to combine on-site participation (approximately 20%) with self-directed online training (80%). This strategy ensures a balanced approach to learning, maximizing flexibility and accessibility for participants.

A pivotal aspect of the project involves the setup of a *customized learning management system*, tailored to facilitate both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences for ESTour Experts. Expert guidance from instructional designers will ensure the platform's effectiveness in delivering educational content.

Recognizing the importance of *language diversity*, synchronous sessions will be conducted in national languages of partner countries to enhance contextual understanding, while asynchronous materials will be available in English, ensuring inclusivity.

The course structure is informed by *the ESTour Modular Training Curriculum*, placing emphasis on *addressing specific learning needs*. Additionally, a Training Needs Assessment tool integrated into the online platform will enable participants to tailor their learning journey based on individual requirements.

A range of asynchronous learning methods will be deployed, including scenario-based learning, microlearning modules, quizzes, and final tests, to cater to diverse learning preferences and enhance engagement.





Project Update #2: **Advancements in PR5. The Certification Scheme for the ESTour Expert**

Within the scope of **Project Result 5 (PR5)**, strides have been made towards the establishment of a robust "**Certification Scheme for ESTour Expert**". An inclusive overview, action plan, timetable, and KPIs have been unveiled, setting the stage for a structured approach to certification.

Key considerations encompass the formulation of exam questions, the examination process itself, and the criteria for certification attainment. Preliminary assumptions have been outlined, including the necessity for a minimum of 20 participants per country to undertake the exam. Furthermore, it is anticipated that a minimum of 15 individuals will successfully secure certification in each participating country.

The design of the test questions is paramount, aiming to comprehensively assess the knowledge and proficiency of aspiring ESTour Experts. Deliberations have begun on crafting questions that reflect the breadth and depth of expertise required in the field.

The examination process itself is envisaged to be rigorous yet fair, ensuring a standardized assessment across all participating countries. Protocols will be established to guarantee integrity and impartiality throughout the examination proceedings.

Requirements for certification are being meticulously delineated, outlining the criteria that candidates must meet to be eligible for certification. These criteria will serve as benchmarks for evaluating candidates' readiness to be recognized as ESTour Experts.

Looking ahead, the Certification Scheme for ESTour Expert promises to be a cornerstone in elevating standards within the tourism sector. Stay tuned for further updates as we progress towards realizing this key milestone.





Steps ahead... what's next?

As our EU-funded project unfolds, attention turns towards securing its **sustainability** and **continuation** beyond the funding phase. Adhering to the principle of sustainability, we are committed to devising a robust Sustainability Plan to safeguard the project's impact and legacy.

At the heart of our Sustainability Plan lies a two-step approach aimed at integrating sustainability considerations from the outset:

Since the *project's early stages*, our focus has been on laying the groundwork for sustainability. Through comprehensive assessments, we have been spotting potential risks, challenges, and opportunities for long-term viability. Engaging stakeholders and partners, we have gathered insights essential for effective planning.

As the project nears completion, our efforts are intensifying towards refining and updating the Sustainability Plan. Building on project insights, we will fine-tune strategies, policies, and mechanisms to bolster sustainability.

The updated Sustainability Plan will outline concrete steps for post-project sustainability, clarifying roles, responsibilities, and timelines for implementation.

By embedding sustainability into our project framework and promoting forward-thinking, we aim to ensure its lasting impact on the partners and the engaged stakeholders.

5th Transnational Project Meeting (TPM) in Nicosia

The partners met in Nicosia (Cyprus) for the 5th TPM



The main focus of the meeting was to facilitate a comprehensive understanding among all project partners in order to finalise the ongoing activities and design the subsequent project phases with precision and efficiency.

In addition, the meeting provided a platform to discuss and validate the results achieved so far, ensuring alignment with the project objectives.

Ultimately, this meeting served as a key juncture for fostering collaboration, alignment and momentum within the project.

All partners attended the meeting. However, it was noted that one Greek organisation, Elliniki Etaireia Iatrikis Tis Ergasias Kai Perivallontos, had withdrawn from the partnership. We express our gratitude for the contributions made by them thus far and wish them all the best.



The ESTour partnership



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Project ID: 2021-1-PL01-KA220-VET-000027987