



Project RURAL HERITAGE: Training plan on European cultural heritage interpreter in rural areas

NEWSLETTER: 04

LEONESES



The project RURAL HERITAGE (a ERASMUS+ project of innovation, developed by a European strategic partnership of six partners led by the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation León-Bragança) is in last stage of implementation lifetime. The intellectual outputs have already been elaborated and evaluated and are being revised to incorporate some improvements after the pilot phase. They will be published soon after translation into the six languages of the project (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Slovenian, Italian and Hungarian).

The last activity held was a short term training course for staff to improve the capacity of the professionals of the six partner organisations in the project, to carry out an internal evaluation of the intellectual results and to draw a series of conclusions on rural heritage, its contribution to European heritage and the importance of heritage interpretation as a communication, management and conservation strategy; a summary of these conclusions is included in this Newsletter.

The Project developed a training plan to support European policies that seek to make the European Cultural Heritage a factor of economic and social development. Rural heritage offers a great potential to revitalize rural areas where there is not only a valuable material heritage but also a hidden tradition and popular knowledge underexplored that must emerge as a fundamental part of the European heritage. In addition, the project sought to improve access to training for all, especially in rural areas, through materials and specific actions for these target groups, raising awareness of the importance of rural heritage and promoting intercultural and intergenerational exchange in Europe

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Results of the Project

Training Plan on rural heritage to promote the European rural cultural heritage transmission and to contribute to improve the current professional qualifications thanks to the design of new competence units of **European rural heritage interpreter**, with 3 intellectual outputs (freely accessible OER).

1) METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE OF “RURAL HERITAGE INTERPRETER”:

- **Curriculum** of the new qualification with 3 competence units (CU1: design and development of interpretation activities on rural heritage; CU2: guide-interpreter of tangible & intangible rural cultural heritage; CU3: guide-interpreter of natural heritage and cultural landscapes)
- **Methodology:** new pedagogical methodologies for training on interpretation of European rural heritage

2) STRUCTURED TRAINING COURSE Mainly materials for teachers, including training content on **rural heritage of Europe** (archaeological and monumental, vernacular architecture, industrial heritage, intangible heritage, local knowledge and natural heritage and cultural landscapes) in addition to **innovative teaching-learning methodologies** (active and emotional) to facilitate knowledge and skills for heritage interpretation in the future professionals.

3) E-LEARNING PLATFORM open to the general public, especially in rural areas.

Target groups

* **PEOPLE FROM RURAL AREAS** as the main users of the E-LEARNING PLATFORM (IO3): Non-qualified young and women, unemployed workers, tourism guides, entrepreneurs, owners of rural tourism hotels or companies, local authorities. Service sector workers: small rural hotels, rural houses, restaurants, traditional product makers, small services enterprises, active tourism enterprises are potentially target groups because they need to be trained in new competencies in order to increase the range of services offered to visitors, tourists between others.

* **VET TRAINERS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS** and others from the formal and non-formal VET sector and the educational community, as main users of the METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE (IO1) and the STRUCTURED COURSE HANDBOOK (IO2).

* **PROFESSIONALS** related to tourism, heritage, environmental education, rural development, regional-local administration, employment, etc., users of the ICT PLATFORM (IO3) mainly but also of the other outputs.

* **Anyone interested** in these new professional qualifications on rural heritage interpretation.



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4th Transnational Meeting. SEPTEMBRE 8, 2022. Bragança (Portugal)

The internal evaluation of the intellectual results and the general progress of the project (schedule, dissemination actions, collaborators involved, multiplier events, etc.) were made in compliance with the permanent Evaluation Plan. Finally the deadlines and conditions for the contribution of all partners to the last phase of the project, next actions and project sustainability were agreed.



4th transnational meeting was held in Bragança (Portugal) on 8 September 2022, at the premises of the partner CORANE.

Representatives of all partner organizations attended physically the meeting.



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TRAINING COURSE for staff (C1). León (Spain)

This short-term course was organized by the project coordinator AECT León-Bragança and was held in León on September 9-11, 2022. It provided training to two representatives of each participating entity of the partnership (teachers and trainers interested in the content, techniques and methods developed which will be applicable to their work within the entities).

The program of the three-day training activity included talks, debates and practical visits.



Program:

Friday 9

16:00 Welcome and introduction. Jesús Núñez (AECT Leon Bragança)

- 1) "The archaeological and monumental heritage in rural areas" Lilla Zábó (ELTE)
- 2) "The vernacular architecture and the intangible heritage in rural areas". Jesús Núñez (AECT)
- 3) "The natural heritage and cultural landscapes". Raquel Trigo (CORANE)
- 4) "Heritage interpretation and conservation. Interpretive techniques". Rosa Villacé (SERVIMA)
- 5) "Curriculum designed of Guide-Interpreter of the European Rural Heritage". Vedran Jakačić (CPI)

18:30 Visiting the ethnographic museum "Leon peoples Museum" (custodian of the traditional culture of the regions of León). Mansilla de las Mulas (León)

20:30 Visiting the ancient caves for the production and conservation of wines in the rural winegrowing area of Valdevimbre (León) & Dinner

Saturday 10

10:30 – 13:00 Villar del Monte (León), an example of recovery and preservation of rural culture and vernacular architecture. Workshops of ancient trades

14:00 Traditional lunch in Santa Colomba de Somoza (León).

16:30 – 17:30 Visit guided to the traditional house of Maragatos (local inhabitants).

18:00: Visit guided to Astorga (Roman remains, cathedral and other monuments)

Sunday 11

9:00 – 10:00 Final conclusions of the course & Evaluation



TRAINING COURSE Rural Heritage. **Conclusions**

- 1) There may be different concepts of cultural heritage. Europe developed its own concept of cultural heritage, which relies on the current holistic approach to heritage integrating tangible, natural and intangible heritages.
- 2) European cultural heritage represents the Europe's cultural unity and its rich diversity on the levels of Member States, regions and localities and is a means of integration, in which diversity is considered as an asset.
- 3) Regional heritage is crucial, because it links national and local heritages and contributes to the shared European heritage and identity through the preservation and promotion of particular values, tangible properties, natural reserves and intangible, cultural and social practices.
- 4) The rural heritage is an important source of economic, social and cultural innovation and exploiting its huge potential can be useful not only to emancipate and integrate communities but also for revitalisation of rural areas.
- 5) The landscape represents an important facet of rural heritage as well as an interesting resource to be used in heritage interpretation since it clearly shows different interrelationships between natural and cultural elements of heritage that are easily fixed in our emotional memories.
- 6) Professional skills focused on rural heritage and active methodologies based on heritage interpretation and exploration of emotions should be strengthened to improve their incorporation into museums, heritage interpretation centres and other interpretive programs, which will help to improve the visitor experience and create true links, both emotional and intellectual, with the explored rural heritage.
- 7) Heritage interpretation techniques have many areas of application such as tourism, management and conservation of heritage, education and in rural development, connecting local people with visitors through strategies in which both become protagonists. Heritage interpretation allows sites or resources to be presented to the public by making connections between heritage elements, the experiences and needs of local people and the expectations of visitors.
- 8) Heritage interpretation is an important tool for transformation of reality and heritage conservation. Its main aims are attitudinal change, affective involvement, participation in actions, and understanding consequences of actions.
- 9) Local population can be involved in interpretation activities that provide a global vision of the heritage and serve to strengthen the sense of belonging to the site through knowledge and appreciation of one's own heritage, while helping to understand the benefits that its conservation has for the community.
- 10) Heritage interpretation enhances services that can represent an economic income and therefore can become a powerful means of local development, generating main or complementary income, through various services (local guides, shops selling local products and handicrafts, visits to producers, recovery and enhancement of local heritage, etc.).
- 11) Passion and enthusiasm are essential characteristics when developing initiatives for the recovery, conservation or interpretation of rural heritage, both tangible and intangible, as was shown through some of the practical experiences during the training course.





TRAINING COURSE. Rural Heritage. **Practical visits**

The training event was held over three days, during which the different themes of tangible and intangible heritage around which the results of the project are structured were reviewed, with classroom training sessions but also practical sessions to learn about various experiences of museums, interpretation centres and recovery projects such as the Museum of the Peoples of León in Mansilla de las Mulas or the Museum of House of Maragatos in Santa Colomba de Somoza.

The participants have visited some of the regions of León such as Los Oteros, Maragatería or La Cabrera, being in the last one where one of the most special experiences was lived through the visit to Villar del Monte, a small village where the passion for the recovery of heritage of a small group of enthusiastic people became evident during an exciting visit, in which many of the principles and relationships that had been remarked during the project made sense.



Villar del Monte, an example of recovery and preservation of tangible and intangible rural culture and vernacular architecture where we were very welcomed and the promoters of this initiative showed us several recovered spaces and houses, workshops of ancient trades and the Lace Museum and didactic centre of Castilla y León. Thank you **Nati Villoldo**, **José Luis González**, **Germán González** and **Bryan Jeffery**, for your explanations and especially for your dedication and passion.



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