

European **L**earning **S**yllabus for outdoor **A**nimators

ELESA Project

Project N° 539073-LLP-1-2013-1-BE-ERASMUS-EQR



Valorisation Plan

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The English version of the ELESA Learning Syllabus is the original version and should be considered the official text.

Co-funded by
the Lifelong Learning
Programme
of the European Union



“ ... consist in a statement by the partners ... and list the various commitments that the partners will agree to ensure valorisation of the project ... ,“

Description of deliverable 14 / ELESA project application (p. 97)

Through this ‘Valorisation Plan’ the ELESA consortium wishes to broaden this engagement by briefly reflecting on a wider context and the perceived implications ELESA could have or could provoke in the future.

As the ELESA project drew to a close, more and more questions began to surface about the scope of the project. The most crucial one obviously being ‘**What’s next** ?’. But also more precise questions such as:

- How can ELESA be implemented ?
- What is the best structure to implement ELESA ? (training providers; sectoral apprenticeship / vocational training centre; synergies, ...) ?
- What are the legal implications (at regional, national and EU level) ?
- What is the appropriate procedure for a pan-European training programme such as ELESA, to be referred at EQF (level 5) ?
- Should the ELESA Learning Syllabus lead to the construction of a National Qualification and aim at being EU-wide mutually recognised or is there an alternative at EU Level ?

During the last couple of years, many issues within the larger scope of EU policy emerged for the Active Leisure sector. Some examples would include:

- Implementation of the new EU Directive 2013/55 on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (replacing Dir. 2005/36) per 18/01/2016 ¹;
- The launching of the EU project on ‘Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations’ (ESCO); ²
- EU elections, the installation of a new EU Commission (2014) and the shift of competences between different European DGs;
- Feasibility study on a Sector Skills Council (for Sport & leisure) ³;

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:354:0132:0170:en:PDF>

² <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/home?resetLanguage=true&newLanguage=en>

- Feasibility study on Social Dialogue (for Sport and Active Leisure) ⁴;
- The introduction of a sector skills passport for tourism (Quid Active Leisure ?) ⁵

Since the launch of these three research projects EQFOA (2006 - 2008), CLO2 (2008 – 2010) and the ELESAs project (2013 – 2015) the respective partnerships were founded upon collaborations between training providers on the one hand and sectoral employer organisations on the other. Therefore this valorisation plan will consequently focus on:

1) The educational environment

2) The professional environment

1. The educational environment

Taking into account the strong emphasis ELESAs puts on ‘workplace learning’ ($\pm 50\%$ of the total learning effort of ± 3200 hours) it is not reasonable to assume that one single training provider has the capacity to offer the full ELESAs training programme.

By focussing on EQF-5, the ELESAs training syllabus automatically lands in the sphere of vocational education and training as well as in the sphere of operation of the Short Cycle Higher Education. It therefore justifies further analysis on how the world of education and the world of the Outdoors (as a trade), can cooperate to achieve the implementation of ELESAs. In this context it would be worthwhile to investigate if umbrella organisations such as EURASHE ⁶ and EC-OE ⁷ jointly could achieve the introduction of a training programme for Outdoor Animators based on the ELESAs training syllabus.

It remains an open question if this cooperation can be organised on a regional, national or European level.

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=784>

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=329&langId=en>

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/esco/escopedia/-/escopedia/Skills_passport

⁶ EURASHE : European Association of Institutions in Higher Education ; www.eurashe.eu

⁷ EC-OE : European Confederation of Outdoor Employers ; www.ec-oe.eu

From the educational point of view, cooperation with the Outdoor sector seems imperative. The reverse question: ‘if the Outdoor sector has the capacity to create its own training centre(s)’, however, is very challenging. The answer will be dependent on financial feasibility.

The sector certainly has the capacity to organise ‘workplace learning’ but will the sector be able to provide enough resources to engage staff for teaching and managing the training centre(s)? Or:

- Would e-learning be a feasible alternative?
- Would the sector best rely on collaboration with existing educational structures?

Regardless of the structural set-up to provide the ELESA training programme, getting ELESA referenced against EQF will always be key.

At the moment it is not clear how / where / by what authority this referencing can be done.

As ELESA is set-up as a pan-European training programme in order to promote mobility for the Outdoor Animators within the EU, any valorisation plan will first of all have to deal with this EQF issue.

Alongside education comes the ‘transfer of prior acquired competences or prior learning’ to / from other workplace experiences, learning programmes or qualifications.

Most probably the ‘Europass’ developed by the EU agency Cedefop⁸ is a useful tool for the Outdoor sector to organise, control and promote the transfer of prior acquired competencies.

Apart from Europass, the European Commission (June 2014) also developed the Sector Skills Passport for Tourism. The EURES (the European job mobility network) skills passport not only enables users to record their work experience, it also allows them to request previous employers to endorse skills that have been obtained in the workplace.⁹

If a Sector Skills Passport is feasible for Tourism it should also be feasible for the Outdoors. Implementing a sector skills passport as an online tool requires a structured skills list. The European project ESCO¹⁰ (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) provides such a structured vocabulary of skills, competences and knowledge that can be filtered by occupation or by economic sector. ESCO therefore provides an excellent basis for

⁸ www.cedefop.europa.eu

⁹ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-678_en.htm

¹⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/home>

developing sector skills passports. Moreover, in the near future EURES will also be based on the ESCO terminology, so that the ESCO outcomes can be used for online job matching.

As it turns out, the Active Leisure sector (the Outdoors and the Fitness sector)¹¹ actively participated in the endeavours of ESCO and participated in the sectoral reference group on ‘Arts, culture, recreation, sport and active leisure’.¹² Therefore, creating and implementing an Outdoor Skills Passport should be possible within a relatively short period of time.

Other issues that will have to be dealt with in order to validate the outcomes of the ELESA project are related to accreditation and quality assurance.

It is believed that some outcomes of the desk research might serve as a useful tool for the validation and accreditation of training programmes for Outdoor Animators.¹³

A sectoral pan-European Register of Outdoor Professionals without doubt is essential for quality assurance. It would also lend great weight to the argument for concurrent accreditation and the logic of accreditation of a pan-European training syllabus. In such a pan-‘European Register of Outdoor Professionals’ (**EuROP**), independent national registers can culminate in a central European database.

A register of professionals would be beneficial for:

- Outdoor professionals (Animators);
- Outdoor providers;
- Outdoor employer federations;
- Training providers.

In conclusion from the ‘educational environment’ viewpoint, valorisation of the ELESA learning syllabus should focus on:

- Referencing to EQF;
- Elaborating on synergies with the world of education (accredited training providers);
- Development of an Europass for the Outdoors;
- Development of a Sector Skills Passport for the Outdoors;
- Development of an accreditation system for training providers;

¹¹ http://www.ec-oe.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Active_Leisure/Statement_EHFA_ECOE_23_11_12.pdf

¹² <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/home?resetLanguage=true&newLanguage=en>

¹³ http://www.elesa-project.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/ELESA_Desk_Research_Summary.pdf , pp. 6-19.

- Creating a pan-European Register of Outdoor Professionals (EuROP).

2. The professional environment

In order to evaluate and monitor the results of the ELESAs project, it is paramount that the sector establishes a 'Forum' of relevant stakeholders. The purpose of this 'Forum' is to review on a regular basis the standards, training needs and any other issues related to the implementation of the ELESAs Learning Syllabus. The 'Forum' should therefore be open to both employer federations and training providers.

The ELESAs learning syllabus implies that students should specialise in at least two (2) Outdoor Activities and that these so called 'hard skills' will be assessed by means of the *Professional Technical Capacity (PTC)* assessment tool.¹⁴

This unique sector driven concept of PTC does not replace or discredit any existing training award, diploma, certificate, ...etc. Moreover, the underlying assumption is that it does not matter where and how the trainee achieved the ability to master the agreed PTCs. What is most important is that he/she can prove his/her capacity to demonstrate the requested PTCs in the appropriate natural and technical environment defined by the sector.

PTCs will specifically focus on the professional technical capacity an Outdoor Animator must have in order to meet the needs of the typical activity provider in that sector. It is therefore integral to the process that the sector stakeholders are involved and consulted in the process of creating and validating a PTC.

Regarding the ELESAs training syllabus, 16 outdoor activities were selected in order to produce 'ready to use Standards for Professional Technical Capacity' (PTCs) for each of these activities.

¹⁴ http://www.elesa-project.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/ELESAs_Desk_Research_Summary.pdf , pp. 36-44.

This list of activities is an initial – and by definition – a dynamic list. If in the future more PTCs are needed, obviously this list must be extended. The latter implies that a competent body of representative stakeholders from the sector must be set up to amend, validate and if necessary extend the list of PTCs. It can be estimated that this sector driven competent body will need an organisational structure and will probably have to meet i.e. at least every 2 years.

Most important for the commercial Outdoor sector however, is the issue of mobility of Outdoor Animators within the EU.

As discussed above, Europass (Cedefop) and a Sector Skills Passport for the Outdoors (EURES) seem to be useful tools to promote mobility. However, proper enforcement of European directives, especially those which relate to mutual recognition of professional qualifications, remains the Achilles' Heel for the mobility of Outdoor Animators in the EU.

Nevertheless, it is believed that precisely because of its pan-European approach, ELESA is fully compliant with the principles of the new EU Directive 2013/55 on the recognition of professional qualifications (replacing Dir. 2005/36).¹⁵

It is also believed that, considering the pertinence and the accuracy of both Directive 2005/36/CE and Directive 2013/55/CE, the EU Commission should properly enforce Directive 2013/55/CE. Therefore, the Outdoor sector requests the EU Commission to urgently deal with formally logged complaints. The sector also requests that relevant action should immediately be taken against Member States that have deliberately chosen not to enforce these EU directives.

Pursuing these goals might be a long-winded venture but they are paramount within the context of valorising the ELESA training syllabus. Without a proper (EU) legislative backup the pan-European ambition of the ELESA learning syllabus will be jeopardized.

In conclusion, from the 'professional environment' viewpoint, valorisation of the ELESA learning syllabus should focus on:

- Creating a forum of stakeholders and training providers to review standards, training needs and related issues;

¹⁵ Directive 2013/55 is due to be operational from 18/01/2016 onwards.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:354:0132:0170:en:PDF>

- Creating a competent stakeholders body to monitor the unique sector driven concept of the ‘*Professional Technical Capacity (PTC)*’;
- Pursue the enforcement of Dir. 2013/55/CE;
- Lobby the EU to take relevant action vis-à-vis EU Member States that do not enforce EU legislation on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications;
- Pursue a pan-European legislative solution for the mutual recognition of qualified Outdoor Animators.

Conclusions

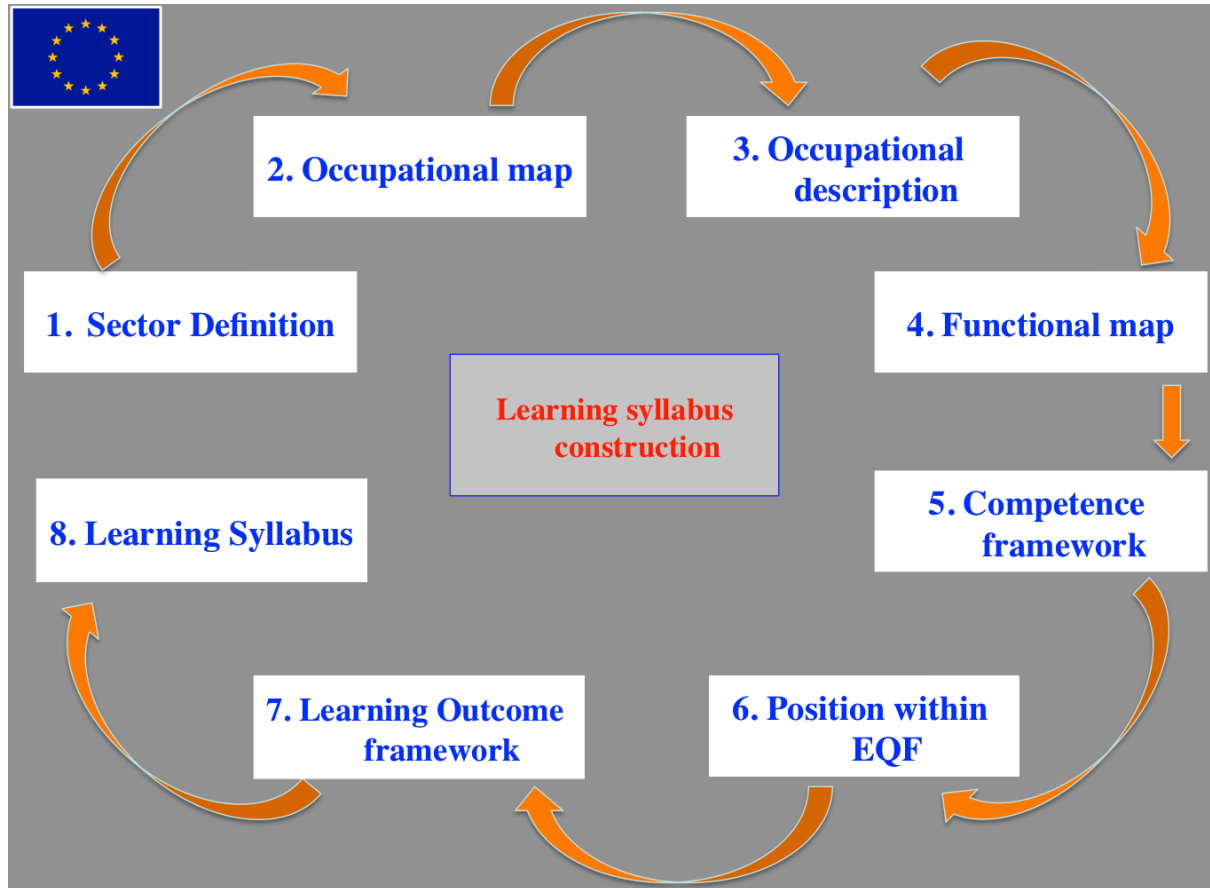
Taking into account the conclusions of both the ‘educational environment’ and the ‘professional environment’ the valorisation plan for the ELESA learning syllabus can be summarized as follows:

- Formal referencing of ELESA to EQF;
- Elaborating on synergies with the world of education and training;
- Development of a Europass for the Outdoors;
- Development of a Sector Skills Passport for the Outdoors;
- Development of an accreditation system for training providers;
- Creating a pan-European Register of Outdoor Professionals (EuROP);
- Creating a forum of stakeholders and training providers to review standards, training needs and related issues;
- Creating a competent stakeholders body to monitor the unique sector driven concept of the ‘*Professional Technical Capacity (PTC)*’;
- Pursue the enforcement of Dir. 2013/55/CE;
- Lobby the EU to take relevant action vis-à-vis all EU Member States that do not enforce EU legislation on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications;
- Pursue a pan-European legalistic solution for the mutual recognition of the Outdoor Animator Qualification.

Regarding the transferability of the research methodology developed through the three consecutive research projects (EQFOA, CLO2 & ELESA) in the time span 2008 – 2015, it is believed that the 8-steps strategy – from labour market intelligence over learning outcomes to a Learning Syllabus – can, without doubt be an inspiration to other sectors.

Using this 8-step strategy will certainly be beneficial to:

- Keep partners on track during the whole research process;
- Save a lot of time, energy and money.



The 8-steps pathway to ELESAs

Particularly the last of the eight steps can be the most inspiring one. Using the combination of 'Module Descriptors' and 'PTC's' in order to translate previously defined learning outcomes into tangible syllabus items, proved to be a worthwhile and fascinating process.