

ANHER

Innovative format of education and training of the integrated archaeological and natural heritage
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Dutch National Report on the Pilot Training: "Introducing Cultural and Natural Heritage"

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this report is to analyse the pilot trainings that were created in the ANHER vocational training program for the cultural and green heritage sectors in the Netherlands.

The e-learning trainings were developed within the ANHER project and based on the outcome of the quantitative and qualitative research on the existing good practices in Vocational Education and Training (VET) as well as the learning needs of workers in the cultural and green heritage sectors in the Netherlands (Output 01-A3). The result of the analysis will help to develop future learning materials for particular target groups considering integrated approaches to cultural and natural heritage management.

This report is the seventh output of the European project *Innovative format of education and training of the integrated archaeological and natural heritage (ANHER)*. All strategic partners united within the project produce comparable analysis that will be combined into a transnational report. The national report consist of five parts; (1) introduction of the trainings and target groups, (2) presentation of the courses, (3) evaluation of the training by the learners, (4) evaluation of the training mode by the learners, (5) evaluation of the training process by the teachers.

1. INTRODUCTION OF THE TRAININGS AND TARGET GROUPS

For the Netherlands, two introductory pilots training were created for two target groups; nature conservation professionals working for governmental institutions and private organisations, and heritage professionals working for governmental or bodies. The content of both trainings was assembled of learning units originated in the eight modules that were created within the ANHER project.¹ The units were assembled into new modules, forming a new course. Additional texts were created to connect the new modules of the courses. Both trainings were set up in

¹ The eight ANHER e-learning modules are: Europe's cultural landscapes: opportunities and threats; Heritage strategies, what, why, where, how, by whom and for whom?; Nature conservation for cultural heritage experts; Cultural heritage management for nature heritage managers; Traversing the disciplines of ecology and archaeology: the horizon; The arena, decision making and power relations in landscape planning; Ownership and benefits of heritage; Participatory practices.

English and they were announced on the international and local HEP-portal (<http://hep.e-archaeology.org/en/>).

The trainees were selected from the target groups as listed in Output 01-A3 and invited by email to join the pilot training. Access to the training was arranged through the Blackboard platform of UvA. Each candidate received a temporary UvA-net ID, a training guideline and e-learning instruction. The trainings were scheduled for four weeks. The teacher followed the training efforts and time spending of the trainees and contacted through email the trainees. After the training, the trainees were invited to fill in an online questionnaire in order to evaluate the trainings. This questionnaire was set up equally for all trainees in the project partner's countries.

Table 1 shows the number of respondents on the invitation per domain. In total, 75 people were invited of which 41 responded to the invitation. In the end, 15 people joined the courses and 8 filled in the evaluation questionnaire. Four trainees of the group archaeologists evaluated the course additionally through a written evaluation. Although not all trainees respond to the questionnaire, their basic profile (M/F, age, occupation, work field) is similar to the profile of the target groups of Output 1. It is therefore likely that the trainees of the pilot courses represent the target group in general.

Domain	Call for participation	Respondents that were interested in the course	Respondents that finished course	Percentage of applicants that finished
Archaeological/Cultural heritage	26	17	11	64.7%
Natural heritage	49	24	4	16.7%
total	75	41	15	36.6%

Table 1. Sent invitations and number of applicants for the courses per domain.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE COURSES

Two courses were launched.

1. Online Course *Introduction to Archaeological and Cultural heritage*. The training is aimed at learning about and understanding the importance of crossing disciplinary boundaries between green and archaeological heritage in managing and safe-

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guarding cultural landscapes and natural monuments. It reflects upon the various aspects of cultural landscapes, the role of heritage in society, and strategies for sustainable management.

The training is divided into 6 parts that will be consecutively conducted by each trainee:

- Part 1 - Introduction to archaeological and cultural heritage
- Part 2 - European landscapes
- Part 3 - Domains of Expertise
- Part 4 - Social values
- Part 5 - Common strategies
- Case Study - The IJsselmeerpolders

2. Online course *Introduction to Natural Heritage*. The training is aimed at learning about and understanding the importance of crossing disciplinary boundaries between green and archaeological heritage in managing and safeguarding cultural landscapes and natural monuments. It reflects upon the various aspects of cultural landscapes, the role of heritage in society, and strategies for sustainable management.

The training is divided into 5 parts that will be consecutively conducted by each trainee:

- Part 1 - Setting the scene
- Part 2 - Knowing the other domain
- Part 3 - Problems and opportunities
- Part 4 - Internal Integration
- Part 5 - External Integration
- Case Study - Managing the Wadden sea as a cultural heritage site

For both courses, the training process is based upon individual activities and is realized at distance by internet only.

2.1. Target group


Course 1 is directed to professionals working in the natural heritage sector who want to gain an understanding of new cultural heritage management issues at a National and European level. Prior knowledge on the subject is not required. The training is directed to professionals working in the natural heritage sector at a practical level such as foresters, (landscape) gardeners, educators of natural heritage, and green heritage volunteers, working for governmental bodies and private

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companies. Their work field is in state forests, historical gardens and nature reserves.

Course 2 is directed to professionals working in the archaeological heritage sector or in public services who want to gain an understanding of new cultural heritage management issues at a National and European level. Prior knowledge on the subject is not required. The training is directed to professionals working in the archaeological heritage sector at a practical and policy level such as junior and medior archaeologists working for municipalities and other governmental bodies, archaeologists working for commercial companies, civil servants dealing with heritage issues, and educators of archaeological heritage. They work in project management occupations and policy making professions at a regional and provincial level.

2.2. Level

Course 1 is designed to anticipate on a practical, operational level (level 1).

Course 2 combines a project management level and policy advisor level (level 2).

2.3. Learning objective

Course 1. The major objective of the training is to show the benefits of crossing the boundaries between the disciplines of ecology and archaeology in sustainable landscape heritage management. The participants will gain insight why these two conservation sectors were separated in the first place, why this divide is problematic and then where opportunities lie for cooperation. They will learn about the characteristics of natural and archaeological heritage, the diversity of cultural landscapes, and the need for new management approaches.

The training involves a discussion forum to discuss different attitudes towards practical natural heritage management and their complications, based on participant's experience.

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characteristics of natural and archaeological heritage, the diversity of cultural landscapes, and the need for new management approaches.

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2.4. Language competence

The courses were designed in English at an average level. Explanation of the Blackboard online course environment was provided in national language.

2.5. Mode of training

Both trainings (course 1 and course 2) are conducted in an assisted distance training mode. It means all training materials are provided online and the training process is supervised by a teacher. The training process is composed of 5-6 modules on the Edumatic system. The courses started on the 5th of April 2017 and were completed on the 3rd of May 2017. They take respectively 1-2 and 2-3 hours study per module.

The trainings are composed of the following activities:

- Asynchronous distance lectures - individual work of the trainee with multimedia and interactive e-learning course;
- Asynchronous group discussion: online forum

2.6. Trainee profile (q1- q6)

All of the trainees were Dutch, 40% were male, 60% were female. Based on the respondents of the questionnaire, the age of the trainees considered two main categories. 87.5% was older than 45 years and 13.5% was younger than 35 years. The occupation of the respondents concerned three main groups. They were mainly working as archaeologists (75%), 12.5 % were teachers and 12.5 % works as forester. The work place of the trainees varied more broadly. 50% works in local administration, 12.5% in state forests, 12.5% at a heritage office, 12.5 in higher education institution and 12.5% filled in 'other'. For all of the trainees, the ANHER courses were the first e-learning course they participated in.

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3. EVALUATION OF THE CONTENT BY LEARNERS

3.1. Scope of issues discussed (q7,q8)

75% of the trainees experience that the scope of the issues as discussed in the training is satisfactory, or even very satisfactory (12.5%). However, 12.5% of the participants think that the scope too broad. Most of the trainees (87.5%) would like to have more exercises in the modules and not more theory. Moreover, they suggest (50%) to add more content related exchange and collective work in discussion fora, instead of more individual work. Additionally, participants of both courses explained that the scope on European perspectives was, although interesting, less relevant for their own practice or difficult to connect to their own practice.

3.2. Usefulness (q10, q12, q13, q15)

For 62.5% of the trainees, the courses introduced new issues. The same percentage expect the content to be useful for their work, while 37.5% think that the content will not be useful for their work. However, the content of the modules was for 25% of the trainees probably not understandable, which makes their judgement problematic. The discussion fora were not considered to be interesting although the potential of the fora is recognized (see above). Additionally, participants commented that the trainings should be more applicable to practical situations.

3.3. Assessment of the content (q9, q11, q14)

Nearly all participants (87.5%) value the content of the courses as interesting or very interesting. For 12.5%, it is difficult to assess the content. Although 87.5% of the trainees think that the modules and parts (units) are presented in an appropriate order, trainees also suggested that not all modules seems to be congruent. Transitions between units are sometimes abrupt or successive units do not connect concerning the theoretical or practical approaches of the written material. This also considers use of language. Moreover, the frequently use of (unknown) abbreviations or technical terms that were not explained may hamper understanding the content. Overall, these remarks led to a score of 25% of the trainees that assess the content as 'poor' and 25% of the trainees that scored this question as 'difficult to say'. 50% assessed the content as 'good'.

3.4. Satisfaction (q22, q23)

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As negative aspects of the courses, the trainees formulated the lack of deepness in some parts, too much theory and difficult abbreviations (European terms), the content was too abstract and difficult, too much focused on the European perspective. Some technical difficulties were experienced; such as accessibility of Blackboard and the content through a tablet.

Overall, the time schedule was too short for the participants, they needed extra time (this was not due to the content but because of a lack of free time).

As positive aspects of the courses, the trainees of course 2 mentioned the European context, the relevancy of topics and the discussion. Overall, the trainees were positive about the accessibility of trainings in one's own time and on demand, that the courses were easy to manage and to approach (separation of modules, overview), and appreciated the bibliographies.

4. EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING MODE BY THE LEARNERS

4.1. Communication (q16, q21, q24)

Concerning the communication, the discussion fora were nearly not used, although the trainees value the concept. Nearly all the trainees answered NA on this question, and one respondent thinks that a forum will not improve the quality of the training. The contact with the teachers is valued as satisfactory (37.5%). The majority did not have specific contact with the teachers (NA: 62,5%). 75% of the trainees would like to conclude the course by an online meeting with the authors (teachers). Moreover, they suggest to have a meeting (not online) with trainees and teachers as part of the course.

4.2. Effort (q17, q19)

The time trainees spent working on the course varied widely. For some, 45 min per module was enough, while others spent 0,5 hours every day during 4 weeks. The time involved in the e-learning was for 50% of the trainees appropriate but for 12.5% too short and for 12.5% too long. This last result fit with the answers how much time trainees spent working on the course.


4.3. Forms of learning activities (q18, q20)

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All respondents judged working on the modules as most efficient training method for the courses. However, some comments (see above) suggested that the courses would be more interesting by using discussion fora and writing collective essays.

If trainees could choose between e-learning or traditional (academic) courses, they answer that it depends on the theme of the course or prefer e-learning (both 37.5%). Specifically the trainees of course 1. (25%) prefer traditional learning.

4.4. Evaluation of the training mode by the trainers

The outcome of the market survey analysis (Output 01-A3 NL) is used as a guideline for the development of the two courses. The main outcomes and strategic fields of attention mentioned in the analysis considered:

1. The relationship between heritage and the **role of the public and local groups** is one to develop. There are lacking competencies for all domains in the area of better communication and (social) awareness of value and importance of landscape to the public, and low knowledge of promotional strategies within the archaeological and natural heritage domains. The cultural heritage domain is better aware of these activities and values the needs of local groups more often.
2. **Knowledge of the mutual working fields** is limited, with both domains valuing areas of landscape management, protection and planning differently, such as the natural heritage domain's emphasis on planning strategies and legalisation. Both domains do not value each other's objectives naturally.
3. There is little understanding in both domains of the **strategies to protect and manage each other's domain**. For example, knowledge of integrated and efficient landscape protection is lacking. Specific knowledge is often required and a general understanding of the other domain and enlarging this knowledge is essential when dealing with joint heritage issues. This also includes correlated aspects, such as integration of landscape with several policies.
4. **Archaeologists have little knowledge of natural values** and are focused on particular landscapes or landscapes in general.
5. **Natural heritage organizations nowadays are dealing more often with the values of non-green heritage.**
6. **Short-term development versus long-term landscape development.**

7. Planning strategies and developing **long-term visions on integral landscape management** are important. This includes issues such as agrarian land use versus development of nature, and sustainability in tourism, agriculture, and urbanization.
8. Training interests:
 - i. Understanding of spatial planning
 - ii. Dealing with planning and management of heritage on different scales (local, regional)
 - iii. Dealing with planning and management of heritage on a long-term basis
 - iv. Knowledge of important policy objectives in the other domain
 - v. Dealing with conflicting interests.
9. **Needs and expectations** in training courses differ according to **specific echelons**. For example, the lower echelons are interested in obtaining a certificate.
10. **Flexibility of the course and contact with the tutor** is important.
11. **Courses should be practical** and should even be carried out in the field itself.

5. TRAINING CONTENT VIS-A-VIS DEFINED EXPECTATIONS

The content of the training aimed for introduction to each other's domain (course 1: theme 2,3,5; course 2: theme 2,3,4,7). Although the content of the original modules do provide the content for the required learning needs and objectives at several learning levels, different writing styles and use of English can become obstacles by creating new content. Moreover, due to the construction and order of units in the original modules, it was not possible to select smaller parts (SCO) of the units. Therefore, some units were too much in depth or too broad, while others were too superficial in relation to the theme and aims of the courses. In addition, the transition of the units in the new modules was not always logical and understandable for the trainees. Despite the added introduction texts, not all units form a congruent new module when separated from the original module. Special attention was paid to the practical application of the content. It must be noticed that some content may be too theoretical for the target group at level 1.

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6. TRAINING MODE VIS-A-VIS DEFINED EXPECTATIONS

Considering the training mode (themes 9,10,11), and important aspects of the training process (see table 2, Output 01-A3), the pilot courses were set up differently. They did not provide a certificate and no fee was charged, as the courses were pilots in order to research their qualities and problems. The flexibility of the course was highly ranked and the trainees of the pilot courses (see above) appreciated this aspect. The same goes for contact with the tutor. As trainees suggested, the courses can be improved by using the fora. Although the pilot courses offered this discussion platform, more effort by the trainer is necessary to realise such a discussion.

For following trainings, it should be considered to organise life meetings and/or concluding online meetings.

Element	Average mark			
	Archaeological heritage domain	Natural heritage domain	Cultural heritage domain	Total
Flexibility of the course	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.9
Contact with the tutor	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9
Assignments	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8
Cost	3.6	3.1	3.7	3.4
Obtaining a certificate	3.1	2.1	2.4	2.5

Table 2. The valuation of five elements of the training process in average marks (n=33). Participants were asked to value aspects of the training process itself and to rank five options they consider the most important on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. (Source: Output 01-A3 NL, table 8).

7. CONCLUSION

In the two pilot courses, the target groups participated as were defined before developing the courses. Considering the needs of the content for both target groups, the courses provide the content that suits the learning needs of the target groups in relation to sustainable landscape heritage management. However, new

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modules cannot easily be created from the original modules. Although this is technically not a problem, regarding to the content units are often inseparable from previous of subsequent units.

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