



Understand IT

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WP5

R9 Evaluation report

UnderstandIT

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UnderstandIT

The logo for 'UnderstandIT' features the text 'UnderstandIT' in a light blue serif font. The 'IT' is in a darker blue. To the right of the text is a large, stylized red and blue graphic element resembling a curved line or a partial circle. Below the text is a solid light blue horizontal bar.

I. Introduce of WP5 / Process activities of Piloting

Title of WP5: VET teacher training courses using Vitae

Aims:

To increase the use of modern web 2.0 based ICT tools by VET teachers, trainers and tutors.

Run training courses in Portugal, Norway, Italy and Lithuania.

Description of activities:

For this activity it is not only to run a course, using a member from the understand IT group as teacher, but rather try out how to organise a complete implementation of the course by the involved institutions.

In each institution there will be:

- A) A formal approval of the course by the management
- B) The announcement of the course
- C) Involvement of the student administration for billing, student registration etc.
- D) Involvement of technicians for setting up equipment and software services
- E) Involvement of teacher, trainers and tutors
- F) Preparation before the course is run
- G) Running the course
- H) Creating a European dimension of the course by letting the "students" collaborate with each other across the four countries, using automated translation.
- I) Evaluating how it all worked, as seen from each involved actor

Result:

Vitae courses

A set of evaluation reports

Outcomes:

All 4 countries (Portugal, Lithuania, Norway and Italy) have generated the Vitae course design documents during the four CceD sessions.

What we have agreed upon so far for the Vitae course:

- Similar course in each country
- Same learning outcomes
- Same pedagogical approach
- Same timetable (but it has to be flexible)
- We accept both online courses and blended learning
- Number of ECTS (various in different countries)
- Roles: teacher-trainer, teacher-student and student
- Number of students: 6 – 10. Maximum 16 per coach
- A pre-test in the form of a survey to understand the teacher-students skills today

Information from Vitae course design documents published so far:

	Norway	Lithuania	Portugal	Italy
Course topics	Twelve lessons based on the four lessons in the original Vitae Course	Original as in Vitae course with some adaptation	Thirteen Units (lessons), distributed by 3 Modules (based on the four original Modules of the original Vitae Course)	Original as in Vitae course
Number of ECTS, course duration	6 ECTS	1 ECTS, 4 weeks, 30 student hours	2/3 ECTS	150 hours of student work (equivalent to 6 ECTS)
Blended or online	100% online	blended course	Blended course	100% online
When course will take place		2012 (~ March-April)	April-June/2012	March to the first week of June included) with 12 online lectures and exams
Number of participants	Max 16 students for each instance of the course Pilot: 6 - 10 students	6 – 10 students	Max 16 students for each instance of the course Pilot: 6 to 10 students	6 - 10 students
Learning outcomes	No change in learning outcomes	Original as in Vitae course	Original as in Vitae course	The same of the standard VITAE course

Evaluating of the pilot runs

II. Analyse the Questionnaire for Partners who run pilots

Analyze and then summarize of the results' comparison is more transparent if all partners use same questionnaire. It was prepared Best-Practice Questionnaire for evaluating the pilot runs and uploaded to the UnderstandIT Google Documents. Answers to this questionnaire are the basis for the UnderstandIT VITAE Evaluation.

IMPORTANT: We realized that partner's courses may differ from the original English template in some aspects. This means that some of the questions were not seem right/relevant to their course. In this case, partners were asked do not leave out these questions or write "does not apply" but try to reformulate and answer the question so that it reflects the variation that they have introduced in their course.

Feedback:

The feedback was important, so we have sent a questionnaire to the partners who run pilots. All partners answered to the questionnaires. We have got a lot of useful answers and information from them.

According to the work in WP5, there are results from 4 countries: Italy (2 questionnaires), Lithuania, Norway and Portugal.

Questions to Partners:

General questions

1) How did you introduce/promote the idea for the VITAE course within your institution?

Did your institution welcome the idea from the start? Which argumentation was most helpful to get colleagues and superiors on board? Did you follow a strategic plan in order to convince different players in the hierarchy? How did you have to compromise and adapt the course? What image does the course have in your institution now, after the first pilot runs?

Italy:

Marilena:

Actually, this part of the work was not handled by me. Two other persons in the group, namely Filippo Sciarrone and Carla Limongelly, respectively have contacts with prospective teachers and with students in a master in Science of Education.

Marco:

There is no study programme in which our pilot could fit in our institution, so we did not get colleagues on board, nor had we superiors to convince. We found our selection of participants in the pilot course out of advertising among teachers and schools we could reach. We also reached some students of a study programme dedicated to prospective teachers in Roma3 University (through contacts with colleagues); our colleagues in this case agreed to consider the work in the course as capable to cover a part of a course on new technologies these people was supposed to take. Finally we prepared the way to repeat the pilot course in the framework of a study programme, called TFA (Tirocinio Formativo Attivo) going to be managed in 2013 by our university (it dedicated to prospective teachers as well).

Lithuania:

The course was discussed during the institution meeting. The idea was welcomed and we started to analyse which topic would be interesting and useful for Lithuania teachers and lecturers. It was decided to organize a blended learning course. First and last meetings were organized face to face also including video conferences possibilities (broadcasting via internet and video records); training material was created and was online in Moodle (BETI).

Norway:

We did contact local candidates and we sent an email to all colleagues. We did not get any participants from our own department. The reason for this could be that many of the lecturers already are using Internet and Web in their teaching and there did not classify this course as relevant for them.

Portugal:

All the contents related to E-learning are easily welcome at CENFIM, as an institutional goal but also form each personal expectations of their collaborators. In the particular situation of this pilot course is important to pointing out that in CENFIM is now running an ongoing project looking for a solution for the individualization of training processes, in presential contexts, where the proper use of web based tools is a key success factor. For this goal, there is the need for VET teachers to increase their knowledge, skills and competences in using ICT.

Due to its learning model and its contents, VITAE course as revealed as the right tool to help teachers to effectively use ICT on their teaching activity, so, was easy to convince our colleagues to participate on this useful experience.

2) How did you recruit participants?

Did you have participants from the start or did you have to advertise the course and find potential participants? Which channels proved to be the most promising ones to reach out to your potential customers? Did you try out unconventional channels that you had not used for advertising face-to-face courses? What was the result – how many participants took part? Please give us a profile of the “typical” participant.

Italy:

Marilena:

As far as I know, the recruitment was mainly based on personal contacts. The typical active participant was a prospective teacher with a temporary position.

Marco:

We advertised the course towards several teachers in technical high schools in Roma and Latina. The best channel was the direct actions in the schools, meeting the aimed teachers, explaining something about the course, and distributing the fact sheet we had prepared in Italian (translated by the vitae fact sheet we were provided by the project). The other channel was a contact with colleagues from the Roma3 University, where a one year study programme for enhancing teachers in new technologies was held. I'd say that a typical participant was a high school teacher, may be one with a temporary position, willing to add some more skill on the use of technology in teaching.

Lithuania:

The potential students were invited during dissemination events, conferences, seminars, trainings. Also there were invited teachers and lecturers from other projects, partners from VET institutions.

The best way to reach the participants who were really interested to join the course was face-to-face dissemination events.

The course started 10 students, but 1 person dropped the course in the beginning, another dropped the course after 1 module. They expressed that they have lack of time. Two other persons join the course of the middle of the course.

“Typical” participant – working in school. VET institution, using IT in the teaching process, daily work, but mostly main Office programs, internet, e. mail.

Norway:

We tried to recruit participants using our annual national course catalogue (paper and web). Three teachers at the secondary school level (pupils at age 14-16 years old) did respond and was enrolled to the course

Portugal:

For the pilot course we choose to test it only with our primary target groups. So said that, we have contacted our internal VET - Vocational teachers and course designers specialists, and as result of that we got 12 participants, spread out by all the 12 CENFIM training centers, with several positions inside our organization, getting a mixture of internal trainers, external trainers and course designers specialists, in order to have a full set of our representative primary target group.

3) Which digital applications would you recommend?

What kinds of web-based communication technology have you used for the course (e.g. blogs, wikis, forums, Twitter)? If they were not included in the English template – what made you choose those? Which of the digital applications you used supported the learning process best – please give two concrete examples? Were there any applications which did not help the learning but complicated the process?

Italy:

Marilena:

Blogs were very well liked by students, as well as any application able to support exchange and collaboration.

Marco:

We presented the course in the framework of a general web application implementing the “Understand IT Community of Practice”; in such COP the course was a “group”; in the group/course we used web pages to present the single lessons, documents and resources repositories to make some resources downloadable, blogs/forum/asynchronous-messaging to allow for discussion and interaction between students and students with teachers. We selected the cop as a place for the course, since it seem fit to have the students acquainted with the place where we would like they continue to go after the course; another reason is in that the cop application gave us the needed technological support to communication (however we had no pre-existing cms/lms platform to place the course in, so selecting the cop was quite natural). Outside of the cop we let the student use skype and posterous. I’d say that the posterous and the blog internal to the cop was the best aid to learning process: the former allowed the students to submit quite simply their work and thoughts, besides exchanging comments with peers and tutors; the latter was quite good as a means of communication of statements of general interest. No complications spotted with the communication means we used, thanks. Posterous provided us all with a “lesson of life” too: it quite changed its interface and the students found discrepancies between the explanations we gave in the lesson 2, about the use of posterous, and what they saw actually when they connected. So we changed only slightly the lesson, en route *we actually left a good share of the obsolete explanations we had prepared in the lesson, and added a new document explaining the changes and especially making clear that having to deal with changing interfaces and services, and having to see through new services, is something that will happen to the travelers that use web2.0 ... and the consequent remarks. Very useful experience.

Lithuania:

We have mainly used BETI Moodle platform as learning environment and for communication. We also used, as synchronous communication tool, the Skype and used the Understand IT CoP during some units. As asynchronous communication tool we used e. mail and Moodle mail. Also we used Posterous.

Norway:

We used several tools: blog, online video and audio capture, skype-meetings.

The blog was used during the whole period. The students did report their workings to the blog each week. Teachers (i.e Bjørn and Geir) dis comment these blog writings continues as the course was running. Finally the student created a reflection blog writing to three optional works done during the course.

Portugal:

We have mainly used our own Moodle platform as the main web-based communication technology, in which we have recreated the same Learning environment in particular with the same forum’s objectives as the adopted one’s of the Anne Fox original pilot course did. We also used, as synchronous communication tool, the Skype and used the Understand IT CoP during some units.

4) How did you use the metaphor of the “journey”?

Did you implement the metaphor and how did your students respond to it? Did they take it up and use it themselves in their work or their postings? Was it relevant enough to carry the students through the whole course? Could you quote one specific situation where the metaphor really helped clarify things?

Italy:

Marilena:

Actually, the metaphor was well understood and appreciated; but did not change much the student's perspective.

Marco:

I think that what carried out the students towards the next lesson was rather curiosity to see what new tools they could meet, and how they can be used. As a matter of facts we did not stress the journey metaphor particularly; we maintained as much as possible the “titles” of the lessons, though, and we could talk of the “path” we were following, that in the end revealed its consistency and completeness.

Lithuania:

The metaphor was introduced and understood of students, but students did not use it much in their work and postings.

Norway:

We did use the metaphor and the students did respond that it was clarifying for their understanding of what has to be done both for own evolution regarding using the Internet for learning activities, but also for promoting the concept at own workplace.

Portugal:

We did use the metaphor as the original course did. Some students adopt it during the course and considered it relevant enough to use it, namely with the use of the “Adult Education Tool” combined with the suggested “Vitae e-portfolio”, which they started using not only for they own evolution as trainers but also regarding using the Internet for learning activities.

5) How did you implement the coaching aspect?

Which specific areas of your pilot course were accompanied by coaching? Which percentage of the participants took part in the coaching? At what stage of the course did your participants appreciate the support most? Did you organise this with special tools such as the “Coachmaster system”? What were the most obvious benefits of this feature of the course?

Italy:

Marilena:

Coaching was experimented throughout the entire course, and was a constant of course activities as both trainers-students and peer-oriented communication feature.

Marco:

We didn't use coachmaster. The students experimented some approaches to coaching by less dedicated means, such as the exchange of messages and, especially, the use of Skype. To some extent, the coaching done by the students between them was very useful to 1) allow them to exchange points of view and 2) let them feel a sense of "contribution they were providing" and a sense of "purpose" for their work in the course. The feeling of being taking and communicating their ideas, and helping another in the same endeavor was all important in the course.

Lithuania:

We did not hire a Professional coach and neither used the Coachmaster system. At first we were decided to have an external coacher. But we had a problem with hiring coacher. So we looked inside our institution and found that one of our colleagues has certificates as coacher. We involved her into training process. Also we used the Voicethread of the same coaching session that Carla Arena did on the original pilot course of Anne Fox, complemented with the use of a forum to stimulate internal discussion about that coaching session.

Each of our students did planned a learning session using several Web tools and we, as course teachers, did coach them about the plan for their sessions.

At a later stage we asked our students to make a coaching plan for own institution and to perform a coaching session with at least one colleague.

Students will be able to implement these plans in the future.

Norway:

Our student did plan a learning session using various Web tools. We as course teachers did coach our students about the plan for this session.

Later we asked the students to make a coaching plan for own institution and to perform a coach session with a colleague.

We did not hire a profession coach or using the Coachmaster system. We did all by ourselves and tried the best we could afford using what we learnt in the Vitae pilot course.

Portugal:

We did not hire a Professional coach and neither used the Coachmaster system, so we tried the best we could afford using what we have learnt in the Vitae pilot course that Anne Fox gave us, namely by using the Voicethread of the same coaching session that Carla Arena did on the original pilot course of Anne Fox, complemented with the use of a forum to stimulate internal discussion about that coaching session.

Each of our Portuguese students did planned a learning session using several Web tools and we, as course teachers, did coach them about the plan for their sessions.

At a later stage we asked our students to make a coaching plan for own institution and to perform a coaching session with at least one colleague.

Only one student has been able to fully implement is planned coaching session, during the course time-window, taking the opportunity of one course being starting, in which she is the trainer, during the same time-window of the Portuguese pilot course, making this way possible to do that. All the others students

couldn't managed a compatible time-window to the courses that they usually do, so they only be able to do the planning for future implementations of their coaching sessions.

6) Are you aware of participants' reasons for dropping out of the running course?

It is common that not all participants complete the distance element of a course. For those who dropped out, do you know what their specific reasons were (apart from the usual shortage of time)? Would you be able to give advice how to reduce the number of drop-outs? What do you think is the strongest factor that keeps participants going in difficult situations?

Italy:

Marilena:

The main experimented problem was the lack of time to devote to the course during normal working periods, most of all at the end of the school year. The first guideline to derive from this is to further slowdown the course pace to better accommodate temporary needs. As a matter of fact, being most activities of collaborative nature, some students were discouraged because at the first difficulty in joining a group ... they lost the group. A related issue is to anticipate the starting of the course at the beginning of the school year, in order to have an "overflow" period to accommodate delays. This would also have the unvaluable value added of allowing to really experiment the final education plan, which is not possible this time since the course very end was in July. Last but not least, since the course finished during late summer, it is not possible at the moment to know if the participants actively use the considered Web2.0 tools.

Marco:

The "usual" lack of time was the reason for falling behind with the schedule, and miss the possibility to collaborate; and the lack of time, as far as the comments of the interested students was told to us, depends basically on the work pressure experienced during the period of the course. Admittedly the period was the worst (yet we had no other chance): letting alone august, that is when actually the final accomplishments of the course was met by who finished the course, the period april-may-july is when the teachers have to finish the work with the students, do final assessments, in several cases prepare for the final exams of july (fifth year in the high school). The accomplishments they are requested of seem quite rich (and for the temporary teachers not the less). It seems, moreover, that they were not prepared to work so intensely and in so short a time (we actually made the course lighter that the original one in these respects, yet it seems this was not sufficient). One problem, due to the time compression of the course, was in the fact that several accomplishments could be only devised and discussed, rather than performed, such as the work with colleagues from one's institution, and the real experimentation of the lesson designs. So I think that a way to better success would be to start the course in September and finish it in April, distributing the learning material and tasks over a sensibly longer period of time.

One aspect that you might want to consider is that the course was offered for free and produced a certificate of attendance. The certificate states that he work is equivalent to 3ECTS. A course for which you pay, and/or provide some more directly recognizable title would perhaps see students more available to "sacrifice" ...

Lithuania:

The course started 10 students, but 1 person dropped the course in the beginning, another dropped the course after 1 module. They expressed that they have lack of time. Two other persons join the course of the middle of the course.

Norway:

One of the students who dropped out reported about too much work to do in his job as a school teacher. He was contacted again for two weeks ago and asked if he should finish the course. He was positive to that. We next asked him to make a plan for how he planned to finish. This plan has been made, and we think he will succeed.

Our third student only disappeared without words so we don't know why he dropped out.

Portugal:

Yes.

From the initial 12 students, only 3 has dropped out, in the middle of the course, mostly due to the fact of the time-window of the Portuguese pilot-course has occurred with a high level of work in the training centers where they work.

7) Was the planned timing for the course realistic?

For every unit of the English template course we have given an assumed time-frame indicating how much time participants will need to accomplish the tasks. Did you get any feedback from the students how realistic our estimations were? Which TWO units took a lot longer than indicated and need to be adjusted?

Italy:

Marilena:

As mentioned in the previous answer, even if the net time anticipated for each unit is quite realistic, the encountered problems rather concerned the constant attendance in the sequence of activities.

Marco:

The timing of the original course was actually too much also for us members of the projects (who among us tried to participate had many problems to follow the pace, and many problems to synchronize her/his efforts with others – we could have, for example, make international groups and we didn't, as far as I know). The experience was instructive, though, and allowed us to ease the pressure on the real students: probably, as said before, this was not enough, yet helped much for sure. Probably the answer to the previous question would be useful here.

Lithuania:

We did Introductory Module + 4 modules. As our course has a summer time window, it lasted longer than we expected. Also students need more time for each module, as it was busy time for them – exams time, later summer vacations and beginning of new year. Sometimes it was difficult for students to find the same time for common work, as they were from different institutions and were busy people. Also, it was not very good English knowing students, so they need more time to learn and be familiar with tools, which was in English.

Norway:

We did divide the original Vitae pilot course in 12 lessons and tried to allocate equal work to each of the lessons. I cannot remember that the students have complained about the workload. If they did not manage to do the work they blamed themselves for not being structured in their planning, not taking accounting for the job workload (as teacher in a full job).

Portugal:

We did divide the original 4 modules with 8 units of Vitae pilot course in 12 units spread by 3 modules and also tried to allocate realistic balancing of workload and time of each one unit inside the respective module based on the needed work to be done.

The feedback collected from the students pointed out the need to make several adjustments in order to have a better balancing of allocation of workload & time specially concerning the need to get a better balance between Module 1 +2 and module 3, since Module 3 has revealed to have not enough time to deal with the workload of that module 3, in comparison with the sum of time allocated to Modules 1+2.

So this is one of many other improvements we need to make, to get a realistic and balanced course.

8) Which two pieces of advice would you give to future course moderators?

What could be done more efficiently the next time round? In which areas would you change the contents of your course? Where would you change the organisation of the course? Any psychological tricks future course moderators could use to motivate the participants?

Italy:

Marilena:

The content was ok on the whole. We redistributed some activities in order to better address the time requirements of the participants. Of course this was added to an extensive translation of whatever was possible to translate. Moreover some activities were discarded for different reasons: 1) Carla's Voicethread was not proposed due to language problems; we found similar multimedia products in Italian, but it was not possible to involve the authors in a real interaction with participants; 2) the experience about Cristoforo Colombo was not deemed interesting for both the school grade and for the teaching areas of our participants; 3) ELENE game was discarded since most links were not working.

Marco:

Actually I'm quite satisfied with the course organization in nine lessons. Looking at the behavior of the students that finished, and at their comments, I'd say that we should not change the content, nor make up further translations. Well, of course everything can be bettered, and when we'll do it again, we will surely do further work; yet I'd have to go through the course again, in order to see what to change: there is no other direct observation to consider, besides the one already reported, related to the pressure induced by course "time span" over the target student: on that account we would probably define the modifications for future releases, with respect to distribution of the material along time.

Lithuania:

It would be good to use more similar tools but in Lithuanian language. Sometimes students were dismissed between different tools, and they had too less time to learn one tool and they need to start to use another one.

It was very important to give a quick feedback.

Norway:

One important advice is to chunk the course into smaller pieces (compared to the original Vitae pilot course). We used 12 lessons compared to the original 4 lessons. We think it's better pedagogy that the students easily get an overview of what should be done. Using smaller and more lessons this is possible to achieve.

Portugal:

There are still English contents that need to be translated into Portuguese, so this is highly recommended to have it done for the next course.

Also another important issue is the fixing of the needed better balancing between Module 1+2 and Module 3, in order to give more allocation of workload and time for time last one.

Finally, but not least important is the advice to check every availability of external services or contents, before to start using it, since, as happened during the Portuguese pilot, we had 2 occurrences of changes of service (it's the case of posterous that have changed since previous visit some days before we started to use it on the pilot) and contents (one of the external platform providing external contents stop to work), and for this it is important the trainer to have alternative solutions at hand to be used in such cases!

Course related questions

(These questions are organised along the structure of the English course template which is located at the VITAE project Moodle, course title "VITAE partner pilot". We realize that your course may differ from the original English template in some aspects. This means that some of the questions below will not seem right/relevant to your course. However, please do not leave out these questions or write "does not apply" but try to reformulate the question so that it reflects the variation that you have introduced in your course)

Portugal:

For this group 4 of questions we would prefer to forward the answers of it to the Portuguese document "**VitaeCourseDesignDocument - PORTUGAL - FINAL version - CCeD S4.doc**", because that document has all the work of adapting the original VITAE course, with 8 units distributed by 4 Modules as below described, into a course with 12 Pedagogical Units distributed by 3 Modules, and for that reason the below questions are not directly applicable to the Portuguese adapted Vitae course.

You will find that document at:

[VitaeCourseDesignDocument - PORTUGAL - FINAL version - CCeD S4.doc](#)

You may find also the **Report of the Portuguese pilot course results** achieved, namely with the analysis of both initial and final survey that the Portuguese course pilot participants had filled, **on the following Google Drive Folder:**

You will find that document at:

[WP 5 - Report results of PORTUGUESE PILOT COURSE - REVISED AND SENT-24sep2012.pdf](#)

Italy:

Report of the Italian pilot course results on the following Google Drive Folder:

[WP5-IT - UnderstandIT-Vitae pilot course - Experience from Italy.pdf](#)

Welcome

The start to VITAE course is crucial for preparing the ground for whole online course and motivate the participants. What features from the English template did you use on your own pilot course and how well did they work?

Lithuania:

Activity suggested in the English template	Used in pilot? Yes/No	If used, how successful? Out of 10 pts.	comments
Write a paragraph in your native language about your integration of ICT now	yes	9	Useful to know better students
Use Google Translate to translate the paragraph to English	yes	9	It was not very good English knowing students, so they need more time to learn and be familiar with tools, which was in English, so this tool was used by them.
Send the translation to post @posterous.com to start a blog	yes	9	Useful to know students better each other
Add a comment to a colleague's new posterous blog	yes	9	Start opinion exchange

Italy:

Marilena:

Activity suggested in the English template	Used in pilot? Yes/No	If used, how successful? Out of 10 pts.	comments
Write a paragraph in your native language about your integration of ICT now	yes	8	Useful to reflect about personal inclinations
Use Google Translate to translate the paragraph to English	yes	10	Evaluate the performance of the tool for prospective web surfing
Send the translation to post @posterous.com to start a blog	yes	9	Useful to know each others inclination towards ICT and for group creation
Add a comment to a colleague's new posterous blog	yes	10	Start opinion exchange

Marco:

Activity suggested in the English template	Used in pilot? Yes/No	If used, how successful? Out of 10 pts.	comments
Write a paragraph in your native language about your integration of ICT now	yes	8	
Use Google Translate to translate the paragraph to English	yes	10	<i>Everybody had a clear evaluation of the power and limits of this means</i>
Send the translation to post @posterous.com to start a blog	yes	9	
Add a comment to a colleague's new posterous blog	yes	10	<i>At the beginning seemed just a bureaucratic accomplishment, yet they got to know of each other in this way</i>

Were there any additional features that you used for preparing the participants to handle the online-learning environment?

What would you suggest to future course moderators / teachers?

Unit 1: How we do things around here

Did your pilot course take up the use of the adult education tool suggested in the template? Explain how you used it and how your students were stimulated by this exercise. What worked best on your course and what would you suggest to future course moderators / teachers if they want to introduce and use the adult education tool?

Italy:

Marilena:

It was very interesting for the students ... after an extensive translation aiming at preparing them to the contents of the different sections.

Marco:

For the AdultED Tool we organized the translation of an explanatory document coming from the website, and of course described essence and motivations for its use in the related lesson. The students was interested and also got the gist of the service, realizing that they could use it as an example, usable on their own also if the educational resources that would be listed in the plan of professional development were not all available or simply available.

Unit 2: Our values and beliefs about teaching & learning

How did you facilitate the simulated coaching session amongst the participants? Were they prepared to discuss their values and beliefs openly? Did you discover any tricks to encourage participants to reflect and share their own practices?

Italy:

Marilena:

Unfortunately, no trick of general use. Motivations are mainly personal, and so the tricks to use. We were lucky enough to have no need of such tricks, because the participants were well happy to discuss with each other and with us.

Marco:

Those that endeavored in it were quite simple to facilitate; they were very available to discussion among themselves and with us tutors. It's a pity that some groups had to dissolve later on, due to the drooping out of someone.

Unit 3: Preparing for the journey: diary and packing list

How did you introduce the idea of assessing and documenting the learning progress and recording the competences gained? Did you use the Technology Integration Matrix and the VITAE e-portfolio? What did your participants document and how did they feel about this? Did your participants find it easy to come up with a SMART goal after watching the GROW model video?

Italy:

Marilena:

The main problem that we encountered was due to having to do mostly with prospective teachers or with teachers experimenting a serious lack of logistical support in their organizations. As a consequence, there was a frequent identification between present situation and present obstacles.

Marco:

We used the TIM and the portfolio; the former to much more extent, with several translations of related documents, and monitoring the use by the students. The latter was, to some extent, left as a useful example, not very pushed further. We must admit that everything was left quite “theoretical” since there were very few to compare with in the present experience of the students.

Unit 4: Culture clashes

How did you introduce the discussion about different “digital cultures” and the distribution of digital natives and immigrants? Did you use the “cases” which were suggested in the template? How did your participants interact and exchange their views and opinions? Did they have ideas how to work around or influence the restrictive policies in institutions?

Italy:

Marilena:

We provided a translated summary of the reference paper about digital natives and digital immigrants, to be sure to clearly transfer the main concepts. As about institutions ... simply almost no participant belonged to a fixed institution.

Marco:

We used basically what is in the original course about that. We provided the students with a translation of the article and with the possibility to discuss it on the blog. About the influence on their institution, I think this was not an aim we could point at: well, for one this was not the case of an institution sending somebody on a development journey; the students were basically engaged on personal account; secondly, the students were either prospective or temporarily engaged, and with no time (I mean no time span during and after the course) to try and influence. According to the comments of some students, given at course closure, they could be trying something in the new teaching year (connections with colleagues, and experimentation of the learning activity plan designed at the end of the course).

Unit 5: Speaking with the natives - how they do things over there

How have you integrated the UnderstandIT CoP into this unit? How did you arrange live meetings between your participants and external teachers who shared their experiences about integrating digital tools in their teaching? How did your students benefit from getting useful advice from these external experts? How did you organise the meetings (Skype? Face-to-Face?). Could this real-time exchange be replaced by a podcast/Voicethread that the participants just listen to (as Plan B if a live meeting is too difficult to organise)? Have you managed to find some good blogs for participants to follow in your native language?

Italy:

Marilena:

Actually, in our case the CoP WAS the learning platform, so it was more natural to enrich lessons with personal comments and exchange of ideas. Nevertheless, the participants mainly preferred to communicate through their external blog on Posterous.

Marco:

The course was integrated in the cop, under the shape of a group. The students preferred the posterous blog for task submission and comments (and we too, as a matter of fact). The meetings were mainly Skype based. We made use of Voicethread to present some considerations about possible obstacles (mainly psychological) to the use of digital technologies by teachers and students, and to let the students see the “Networked Learning” screencast (for which we provided subtitles through dotsub.com - so we happily added also this resource to those usable by the students in our course). About blogs and cop to visit we used mainly those suggested in the original course; finding suitable resources in Italy seem problematic at the moment (there are several personal blogs with a lot of information though, yet nothing we would commit on. A suggestion for a blog, basically a newsletter on laws and regulations, arrived by a student.

Unit 6: Let's try the dishes and customs of the digital natives

Have you managed to find some good guides to useful Web 2.0 tools in your own language? How did you conduct the coaching session (eg Skype, email)? Did you use the Coachmaster tool to help you? How did you document the results of your coaching session?

Do you have any evidence that your participants now actively use their chosen tool after the course finished?

Italy:

Marilena:

The participants were very interested in exploring the suggested list of Web2.0 tools. We were able to find such lists on Italian sites but ... at the end no tool is available in Italian, and most of the Italian sites often forward towards the original sites. The results of the sessions were mainly reported on Posterous, even if participants were encouraged to put them on the CoP.

Since the course finished during late summer, it is not possible at the moment to know if the participants actively use the considered tools.

Marco:

They selected a tool and used it; the timing of the course forbid us to verify whether they are using actively it right now; however the responses were quite positive and we could expect that they will use the systems and tools we have shown them. The coaching was via Skype and the results are posted on posterous, in the students' personal blog.

Unit 7: What do I want to take home with me?

Were you able to find some suitable best practice guides and case studies in your language? Did your students prepare their own micro-teaching session using the VITAE learning activity template? Please describe the variety of subjects they chose. How did your participants conduct the coaching session? Can you give ONE specific example that shows how this new activity will be more effective in the classroom than the one the participant used previously?

Italy:

Marilena:

Most sites dealing with best practice in Italian require registration, so we left the participants free to access them. Students were able to prepare their micro-teaching sessions, but they were not able to actually experiment their educational plans. Interestingly enough, two of them were teachers in physical education.

Marco:

They planned activities related to a better comprehension of the use of body and importance of its training, and about the use of Facebook in the class (to enhance the ability to share and compare opinions in a new technology – probably already known technically). The coaching sessions was based on discussions between the students and on our comments pointed out on different versions of the design documents. The summaries of the coaching sessions were quite positive and appreciating on the sense and usefulness of the work, and on the effective enhancement of the proposals, with respect to the initial versions. In the activity related to body comprehension, the use of software tools, probably network based, will surely make a better and live experience, for the pupils, the evaluation of the effects of physical activity on certain aspects of the body and health (rather than just say it aloud by the teacher).

Unit 8: Telling the folks back home

How did you invite your participants to put their learning into practice? Did they produce a tangible activity or lesson plan? How did you manage to give them time to actually try it out (while the course was still running)? Was this an individual activity or did the participants actually share their new expertise with the others? Please describe ONE striking outcome which shows how the “culture of teaching” actually changed for a particular participant.

Do you have evidence from your participants that they have been able to introduce or strengthen existing ICT coaching in their institution? Give examples.

Italy:

Marilena:

The participants produced their lesson plans, but there was not enough time to implement them. Coaching in one’s institution is hard ... without an institution.

Marco:

They planned activities, producing lessons plans. The lessons plans were discussed among them and with us (via Skype the former, via comments on documents versions the latter). They had no time to experience the lesson plan in reality, since it was august. There is a generalized will to try it asap, though. The

students that finished were very willing to learn more and actually we saw no “conversion” from the conviction that an “old” way was the better, to the realization that the “new” way is better. As of the introduction of coaching practice in students’ institution, we have no evidence so far, also because of the timing (as mentioned earlier).

And finally...

Did you assess your course participants' performance in the course? If so how? Eg report, observed lesson, e-portfolio?

Italy:

Marilena:

We continuously observed them, and make them report every out come on the blog. They were very satisfied at the end, and this is a good outcome for us.

Marco:

We didn't manage a formal summative assessment; we actually monitored the execution of the tasks and adopted a policy of commenting the products, so to have them ameliorated if necessary, or to accept them. Judging from the final comments of the students (expressing quite clearly satisfaction and feeling of having gained much by the course, we can surmise that the course had good results.

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III. Attachments

Vitae pilot's evaluation reports from 4 countries: [Vitae pilots evaluations.zip](#)

1. Italy - VITAE_pilotevaluation_Italy, Marilena.doc and VITAE_pilotevaluation_ItalyMT
2. Lithuania – VITAE_pilotevaluation_BETI.doc
3. Norway - VITAE_pilotevaluation_NORWAY.doc
4. Portugal - VITAE_pilotevaluation_PORTUGAL.doc

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