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Factual report on the ERASMUS+ project:

Rural regions and green future jobs

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1. Introduction to the project

Within the framework of the ERASMUS+ Programme, the cooperation partnership between the **Academia Española de Formación - Spanische Weiterbildungsakademie e. V** and the **Centro Integrado Público de Formación Profesional Costa de Azahar, COSDA**, in Castellón pursued the goal, with the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" to develop the foundations of a concept for the implementation of "green skills" in vocational training by means of the exchange of good practice and the establishment of a transnational cooperation structure, using the example of the initial and further training of hotel and tourism specialists with a focus on the development of regional ecological skills in the rural Black Forest region and the hinterland of the municipality of Valencia (Comunitat Valenciana), Spain.

The following report describes the main phases and results of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs", which started on 01.01.2022 and ended after an extension on 31.03.2023. For a better overall understanding, the organizations and promoters involved in the project and their specific interest in the issues of rural development and sustainable nature tourism are presented in more detail below.

2. Partner organizations and institutional cooperation

The applicant and sponsor of the ERASMUS+ cooperation project "Rural regions and green future jobs" is the **Academia Española de Formación - Spanische Weiterbildungsakademie e.V.**, AEF for short. The AEF was founded in 1984 in the context of the Spanish "guest worker migration" as a reaction to the lack of suitable educational opportunities for migrants and their support in self-organization and social participation. Since 1985, the AEF has been a state-recognized educational institution. It should be emphasized that the AEF is the first cultural project of an intercultural educational institution founded by migrants with state recognition in Germany. The AEF is a registered non-profit association that runs the educational institution of the same name. Through its intercultural educational work, the AEF is respected and recognized both in professional circles and by other migrant communities. The AEF is headquartered in Bonn and has further course locations and project offices in Troisdorf in the Rhine-Sieg district (NRW), Nuremberg and Hornberg in Baden-Württemberg. In Hornberg in the Black Forest, the AEF has been running the IQ project "Bienvenid@s - Intercultural Opening Black Forest" since 2013, offering integration courses and other integration projects. In recent years,

AEF has promoted the integration of refugees, especially from Turkey, Syria and Ukraine, with its measures. With various projects in the MobiProEU-programme from 2015-2020, the AEF has, among other things, enabled young people from Spain to receive vocational training in Germany, as in the Black Forest region. On average, the AEF conducts about 350 training measures with a volume of about 18,000 teaching hours nationwide and reaches about 3,500 participants from about 60 nationalities of origin.

The AEF's experience from cooperation in the rural Black Forest region around Hornberg with SMEs, municipalities, business and tourism associations on issues of integrating foreign skilled workers and securing skilled workers was decisive for the genesis of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs".

The Spanish cooperation partner is the Centro Integrado Público de Formación Profesional Costa de Azahar, or COSDA for short, in Castellón-Valencia. The COSDA vocational training centre is a state school for vocational training in the fields of hotel management, tourism, restaurants and gastronomy. For more than 50 years, the vocational school has been training aspiring hotel and tourism professionals and chefs according to the principle of service-learning methodology, similar to the operation of a hotel, with real cooking workshops, services, pastry, bakery, travel agencies, event management, hotel rooms, tourist information and guided tours. This also includes the preparation of breakfast and dinner for the boarding students, as well as their own restaurant. For this reason, students acquire a complete and practical education that facilitates their adaptation to the tourism and hotel industry. A total of about 400 students are enrolled and usually all graduates have job offers on a regional, national and international level even before completing their studies.

The joint cooperation project "Rural regions and green future jobs" emerged from various personal bilateral contacts and international committee work. The decisive factors for the cooperation were the similarities in local networking and working methods, and the comparable challenges of developing rural areas and using natural space in the sense of a new sustainable nature tourism. Of central importance for the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" is the development of institutional cooperation between the project partners AEF-Spanish Academy of Continuing Education and the Costa de Azahar Vocational School in Castellón (COSDA), which as educational institutions want to expand and develop their respective profiles.

3. Project regions and tourism - potentials and current trends

The project "Rural regions and green future jobs" connects two regions that at first glance appear to be completely different: the Black Forest region around Hornberg with the Kinzig valley and the Castellón region as one of the three provinces of the Autonomous Community of Valencia.

With an altitude of up to 1,493 meters above sea level and an area of over 6,000 square kilometers, the Black Forest is Germany's highest and largest contiguous low mountain range and is located in the southwest of Baden-Württemberg. It is the most important tourist region of the federal state and the most visited holiday destination among the German low mountain ranges. In December 2019, 2,845 commercial establishments offered 157,859 sleeping accommodations in the Black Forest holiday region. Around 91,000 of these beds can be found in the 1,843 hotels in the holiday region. In addition, there are about 8,000 other hosts and private landlords with less than ten beds in the holiday region. Tourism provides about 100,000 direct jobs and more than 300,000 jobs in suppliers and service providers in the region. It should not be forgotten that the region also has a very strong and specialized industry, such as mechanical engineering and supplier industries.

Tourism has a long tradition in the region. In the 19th century, for example, tourists from the well-known bathing resorts such as Baden-Baden began to explore the region as hikers. Tourism in the Black Forest gained momentum primarily through the expansion of transport routes - especially railway lines such as the Kinzigtal and Höllentalbahn. Now it was easy to travel through the Black Forest, but it still didn't attract any tourists. More popular is the Alpine region. With the discovery of winter sports as a leisure activity, the Black Forest became a popular holiday destination all year round. When traditional industries such as watchmaking and textiles collapse, new opportunities for income and survival open up for the people. The real boom began after the Second World War. The Bollenhut, green forests and lovely valleys attract millions to the Black Forest region. Added to this are the many towns that are prescribed the good air for a cure. One third of all overnight stays in the Black Forest are booked in the health resorts and Kneipp spas. With the cuts in health care in the 1980s and 1990s, the boom came to an end for the time being. And the Black Forest has an image problem: it is considered "dusty", a boring hiking region for pensioners and spa guests. Hoteliers and the active tourism associations and tourist boards have seen this crisis as an opportunity and have targeted traditional images and brands, while at the same time picking up on new trends, such as wellness. Starting with new de-signs for cuckoo clocks and traditional costume accessories to new offers that complement the well-known hiking routes: such as mountain biking, e-biking

or adventure swimming pools. Of central importance is the return to what makes the Black Forest unique - its originality: nature, farm holidays, lovingly designed guesthouses or hotels and restaurants that advertise cuisine from the region. The newly established national park and the marketing of regional products with Black Forest flair are in vogue and the younger generation can also identify with these values. The Corona pandemic caused dramatic slumps in the industry and lasting upheavals in the labour market. In the region of the Schwarzwald Tourismus Kinzigtal e.V. tourism association with 13 municipalities alone, the number of overnight stays fell by 25% from 521,478 in 2019 to 387,599 overnight stays in 2020.

With the withdrawal of the Corona requirements, the number of overnight stays rose again to the level of 2019 with a continuing upward trend. The region is and remains a major destination for domestic tourism. However, the months of hotel and restaurant closures also changed conditions in the labour market. Many skilled workers reoriented themselves and sought work in industry, which offered better working conditions and pay. In these rural regions, demographic change is already having a full impact. In addition, young people in particular are migrating to the conurbations. Therefore, the shortage of skilled workers is worsening at all levels. The trend towards sustainable nature tourism is doubly affected by this development: the development potential cannot unfold due to the lack of skilled workers and, at the same time, new demands are made on the qualification of skilled workers who should and must act as know-how carriers and mediators of sustainable nature tourism.

The province of Castellón is located in eastern Spain in the north of the Valencia region and is also known by the brand name Castelló Costa Azahar. Castellón is one of the three provinces of the Autonomous Community of Valencia and has a population of approximately 500,000 inhabitants, with the majority of the population concentrated on the coastal strip. The capital is Castelló de la Plana, which is also the second most mountainous province in Spain due to its location in the coastal mountains. Its 120 kilometers of coastline are characterized by beaches and bays, but also by natural areas such as the Islas Columbretes, a natural and marine park of volcanic origin. On the coast there are tourist resorts such as Benicarló, Peñíscola, Vinaròs, Oropesa de Mar and Alcossebre and Benicàssim. The mountainous region offers an alternative or complement to beach tourism with natural parks such as El Prat de Cabanes-Torreblanca and Sierra de Espadán. Also inland are tourist resorts such as Morella and Segorbe. Fans of alternative music will find one of the most important festivals in this field in Benicàssim. The gastronomy of the province of Castellón is completely Mediterranean, with agricultural products such as oranges and artichokes, as well as traditional rice dishes such as paella, in all its varieties.

In the coastal region, agriculture is dominated by the cultivation of the orange, the artichoke, the olive tree and the almond, all of recognized quality with D.O. certification. Pig farms, cheese and wine are also being strongly reintroduced in this sector after years without publicity marketing.

The most important industrial sector is tile production, which is carried out in practically all regions, with the largest production in Europe concentrated in the province of Castellón. In addition, petrochemicals, wind turbine construction and, with considerable investment, photovoltaics are new industries.

Tourism mainly takes place on the coast and focuses on mass tourism, family tourism and has a medium level, but with a favourable price-quality ratio. However, the seasonal nature with the concentration on the summer months is problematic for the workers.

On the other hand, internal tourism has a more cultural approach, where the traditional prevails, small urban centres, tranquillity, nature and restoration of traditional buildings adapted to the needs of today, and the upgrading of rural areas.

The largest and best known representative is Morella, a medieval, monumental, small inland town, full of history and culture, supported by quality gastronomy based on traditions and adapted to new gastronomic trends, which has become a tourist attraction at an upscale level. Morella is to Castellón what Gengenbach as a town could be to the Black Forest.

Despite the different national and social conditions, similar problems and challenges keep emerging, such as the observation that young people are migrating, although they can develop new, future-proof perspectives in rural regions. However, the ecological challenge of climate change and the demand for sustainable formats in tourism also offer opportunities and potentials that are not yet sufficiently exploited. Specifically, the Black Forest around Hornberg with the Kinzig valley with a high tourism potential as well as a medium-sized economy that suffers from an increasing lack of skilled workers. The potential of ecological tourism is only being used to a certain extent and the expansion is failing due to a lack of skilled workers to support the new ecological themes and developments. The same problem occurs in Spain in the Castellón region in the hinterland of Valencia.

Against this background, the concept for the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" was developed with the aim of finding new ways in the vocational training of skilled workers in order to meet future needs and to implement the aspect of regional development and sustainability in vocational training in order to improve the long-term employment of skilled workers.

4. Realization of the project - measures

Both external and internal administrative and organizational factors affected the implementation of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" and also required an extension of the project duration until the end of March 2023. The conclusion of the financial agreement between the AEF as the project executing agency and the national agency took place on 20.04.2022. This was important for both partner organizations in order to obtain planning security.

In both partner organizations, there were staff changes or absences, such as due to Corona illnesses and a staff departure at the AEF. Both partner organizations reacted to these unexpected challenges with an internal reallocation of tasks and a continuous exchange of information via Zoom meetings, among other things. In addition, they agreed on a first institutional coordination meeting on 13-14 June 2022 in Castellón.

This first institutional coordination meeting was submitted in the schedule as the first get to know meeting, but became necessary in this short form due to the above-mentioned circumstances and proved to be very helpful for the planning and preparation of the further steps. From the AEF side, the Executive Board and the full-time pedagogical staff took part in the discussions. Regardless of time delays due to other scheduling commitments of possible external actors, such as representatives of vocational schools and SMEs, municipalities, etc., the partner organizations were able to plan and implement the three central exchange and encounter meetings. These were the visit of a delegation from Spain to the Black Forest from 2-5 September 2022 and the return visit from Germany to Spain from 19-22 October 2022 as well as the final event from 6-7 March 2023 in Hornberg.

4.1 First exchange meeting - COSDA in Germany - Black Forest

From 2-5 September 2022, the first visit of a delegation of the COSDA vocational school took place as planned in Germany, more precisely the Black Forest. Besides the deputy head, three other senior trainers participated in the exchange. The AEF had prepared a varied programme of visits with a wide range of stakeholders to promote professional exchange.

The first stop was the Elztal Hotel in Weiden. This is a third-generation family business that presents itself as a four-star spa hotel. A total of 130 people work in the business, including 33 trainees at present. The hotel currently produces 30 % of its electricity through photovoltaics and covers its heating costs through a wood pellet plant, which is fired with raw materials mainly from its own forest stand.

Foreign professionals are an integral part of the team, and the hotel provides its own

accommodation for some of them. Recruitment is done through the ZAV, among others, but in some cases it is very bureaucratic and involves uncertainties for the hotel. The hotel's equipment is based on traditional patterns and is almost exclusively carried out by local companies. Example wood processing. Regional sourcing plays a major role in procurement and purchasing and the qualitative advantage is used. The hotel kitchen was visited and the work processes in the hotel and restaurant operations were explained.

In Hornberg, another professional exchange took place with a representative of the Schwarzwaldtouristik Kinzigtal e.V.. The hotel and restaurant industry in the region is suffering from an acute shortage of skilled workers. Due to the Corona pandemic, many skilled workers have also migrated to industry. The training situation is characterized by the fact that the industry has a bad image and many drop out of training. At the same time, there are more and more companies that pay above the pay scale and are actively looking for employees. Tourism in the region has great potential and is developing more and more in the direction of sustainable tourism with nature experience. The marketing of regional products is becoming increasingly important.

The comparison of training contents in Germany and Spain as well as the possibilities of internships and the exchange of skilled workers were intensively discussed by the Spanish delegation.

On the second day, another expert exchange took place on the topic of "Regional Tourism" in the historic town of Gengenbach. 80% of the tourists come from Baden-Württemberg and the neighbouring federal states. But the town of Gengenbach is also very popular with international tourists. Particularly noteworthy is the group of Spanish-speaking tourists. Therefore, there is also Spanish-language information material. There are about 120 hotels and guesthouses in the town with about 240,000 overnight stays per year. In addition to the regional catchment area, both the tourism potential and the strong position of industry in the region were highlighted. Further regional offers are being systematically developed, such as the new project of a mountain bike trail and geotracking in the local vineyards with tastings.

A project of local wine and spirits production in combination with a mobile home park near Gengenbach was visited and analyzed as an example of a rural tourism offer. The special demands on staff in this marketing concept were discussed with a member of the Wolf family. Parallels were drawn with similar projects in Spain. The assessment of the marketing strategy from the point of view of the Spanish delegation was informative here, who were absolutely convinced by the concept for rural tourism with local product marketing. However, the concept was assessed as not transferable, as one would probably not get permission for it in Spain.

Another example of local marketing was the so-called market barn, where gastronomy offered regional dishes and local products. Here, too, the marketing concept as well as the use of staff was analyzed by the participants. The complexity of local production and marketing places special demands on practical in-company training, which complements or even goes beyond the curricular expertise.

Finally, another example of the recruitment of seasonal workers, who mainly come from Eastern Europe and are accommodated by the company in its own flats, was described in Wolfach. In view of the shortage of skilled workers in the Black Forest, the companies take the protection of their employees seriously. Thus, even four-day-week models are introduced in order to be able to reconcile family and work in the catering industry.

On the third day, the participants conducted an interview with the hotelier and owner of a restaurant in Wolfach. He described his situation. Due to the lack of staff, he can only use 50% of the restaurant's capacity. He is the boss. The succession is unclear, although the business is profitable in principle. The lack of staff and the difficulty in finding trainees and/or skilled workers is still the biggest challenge for traditional restaurants and hotels. Other tourist hotspots with their specific staff requirements were recorded, analyzed and further explored through walk-throughs in Triberg and Schonach.

The golf resort Öschberghof in Donaueschingen as an example of a luxury hotel with a golf course and wellness offers formed the conclusion of the inspections and recording of tourism projects. The training of skilled workers in Spain was an important point of discussion here, as cooks, for example, can gain interesting professional experience here. Remarkable also here was the organization of work and the use of personnel due to the strict German labour legislation, which practically prevents overtime.

The final discussion with the representative of the Black Forest Tourism formed the conclusion of the four-day exchange.

Conclusion: The importance of the ERASMUS project "Rural regions and green future jobs" was emphasized and the institutional anchoring confirmed. The region offers many examples of successful regional rural and nature tourism, which provide new ideas for training, organization and development in Spain.

The staffing problems in the Black Forest region show similar patterns as in Spain, although under very different conditions and for very different reasons. In Spain, training in the hospitality and hotel industry is much more prestigious, but job prospects and working conditions are more precarious than in Germany. The potential of tourism for the development of rural areas has become clear and forms the basis for further professional exchange. The visit of the delegation from Spain was reported in detail in the local press.

4.2 Second exchange meeting - AEF in Spain

After the first trip of the delegation of the Costa AZAHAR School for Gastronomy and Tourism (COSDA) to the Black Forest, the German delegation visited the vocational school in Castellón from 19-22-10.2022. With Mr. Helmut Osterholt, StD a. D., former head of the hotel school belhoga and the hospitality department at the vocational college Lise Meitner, Ahaus, NRW as well as member of the ChefHeads Community, the AEF had gained a proven expert on the topic of vocational training for this exchange meeting. Due to current appointments and illness, for example, no municipal representatives from the Black Forest took part in the meeting.

The programme started with a visit to the market hall of Castellón de la Plana to get an impression of the local fruit and vegetable production as well as the range of fish and sea products.

The Castellón region is very much characterized by beach tourism, which is popular with the masses. Nevertheless, new nature and cultural tourism offers have emerged in the course of the last few years. On the one hand, these offer a perspective for the interior of the country, on the other hand, this kind of tourism also enhances the local products. For this purpose, an ecological wine grower, the ecologically sustainable hotel project Mar de Fulles in Alfondiguilla as well as the caves of San José - La Vall d'Uixo with its underground river and the historical town of Vilafamés were visited. During these local visits, the participants saw clear parallels to the Black Forest and the concepts of sustainable nature tourism there. The demand for responsible tourism with nature offers, regional products and sustainability is similar in both regions.

A current problem in the marketing of local products highlighted the discrepancy between the claim and reality of sustainable product cycles. The region is known for the cultivation of high quality citrus fruits (oranges, mandarins and lemons). In supermarkets and hotels of the "beach tourists", cheap imports from distant countries were preferred instead.

Of central importance was the visit to the hotel and gastronomy school COSDA with its installations, such as the training kitchen, the school restaurant, the boarding school as well as various discussion rounds with the teaching staff as well as the students and trainees.

During the visit to the Spanish school, the group from Germany was also able to get an idea of the differences in education. The vocational school has a recognized international level of education and provides comprehensive theoretical training with a high practical component. Through the applied service-learning methodology, similar to the operation of a hotel, with real cooking workshops, services, confectionery, bakery, travel agencies, event management, hotel rooms, tourist information and guided tours including meals for

the boarding students, as well as their own restaurant, the training is practical and action-oriented. The school-based training comprises 2,000 hours. This form of school-based vocational training differs fundamentally from the dual system in Germany. As an expert, Helmut Osterholt was able to observe how the practical part of the training is organized in Spain. There are differences that can certainly be bridged by appropriate measures. In his career as head of various vocational schools, Osterholt has already dealt with these issues with other partners from the Netherlands or Scandinavia. See Chapter 5.

Besides questions about the curriculum, the possibilities of an exchange in the form of internships for the graduates of COSDA in the Black Forest were discussed. It was clear to the Spanish vocational school that in addition to good technical training, other challenges would also come into play in a future exchange. "During the visit to the Black Forest, we all suddenly realized what profiles are needed for this special kind of "rural tourism"," was the unanimous opinion of the organizations involved.

The big question is whether and how it will be possible to sensitise and train international professionals on these topics and thus attract first-class professionals to the rural regions.

4.3 Final conference in Hornberg-Schwarzwald

In order to reach as broad an audience as possible, such as the target group of hotel and restaurant owners, the final event of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" took place on two days from 6-7 March 2023 in Hornberg in the Black Forest.

With the presentation of Mrs. Isabella Schmider of the Schwarzwaldtouristik Kinzigtal, representatives of hotels and restaurants as well as the expert speaker Mr. H. Osterholt, the forum was highly occupied. In addition, the representatives of the vocational school COSDA as well as the full-time pedagogical staff and the employees of the AEF in Hornberg.

The most important results and experiences of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" are summarized in the following chapter.

5. Experiences and results of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" – Regional nature tourism as future training content

In conclusion, the experience of this EU-ERASMUS project "Rural regions and green future jobs" was very enriching for all participating organizations, both institutionally and professionally. Of central importance for the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" is the development of institutional cooperation between the project partners AEF-Spanish Academy of Continuing Education and the vocational school COSTA AZAHAR (COSDA) in Castellón near Valencia in Spain as well as the connection of two European tourism regions. This project objective has been fully achieved.

Against the background of the effects of the Corona pandemic on tourism and the economy as a whole, the question of the possibilities and conditions of sustainable (nature) tourism in the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" has opened up new perspectives for all participants.

In the project "Rural regions and green future jobs", the term nature tourism was deliberately not redefined, but used as an open category in order to openly capture and address the phenomena and problems as well as the specific challenges. The deputy director of COSDA, Pau Montero, describes this view as follows: "From a southern European point of view, the large areas with forests, mighty rivers and ski slopes have a great attraction for nature lovers, also the more traditional cities with old and monumental buildings, traditional markets and monuments. It is important to value tradition over standardization and the local over the common, the authentic over the generalist, and although there is an audience for everything, we find it more interesting to opt for higher quality tourism than mass tourism. Many families have been able to combine their usual work with the creation of businesses dedicated to tourism: Country houses, shops with typical products, souvenir shops, wineries, restaurants, bars, etc. as well as experiences in nature: mountain biking, horseback riding, boating, hiking, cultural tours, etc.

One aspect that works very well for us and that is easy to implement is gastronomy, no longer as a service but as a first-class tourist attraction. Tourists travel to remote places just for the gastronomy. This also serves as a springboard to open new business opportunities, because every place has its charm. The problem in these cases, and this also happens in Spain with family businesses, is that it's a big effort for families to prepare or have prepared their children for a better life, so the generational change often doesn't exist, which means that many profitable businesses have to close or change hands."

The experiences from the Black Forest and Castellón show that the concept of "nature tourism", even if strictly speaking it only serves as a backdrop for local activities, is viable and holds great potential for rural areas. In the course of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" it has become clear to all participants that beyond purely institutional

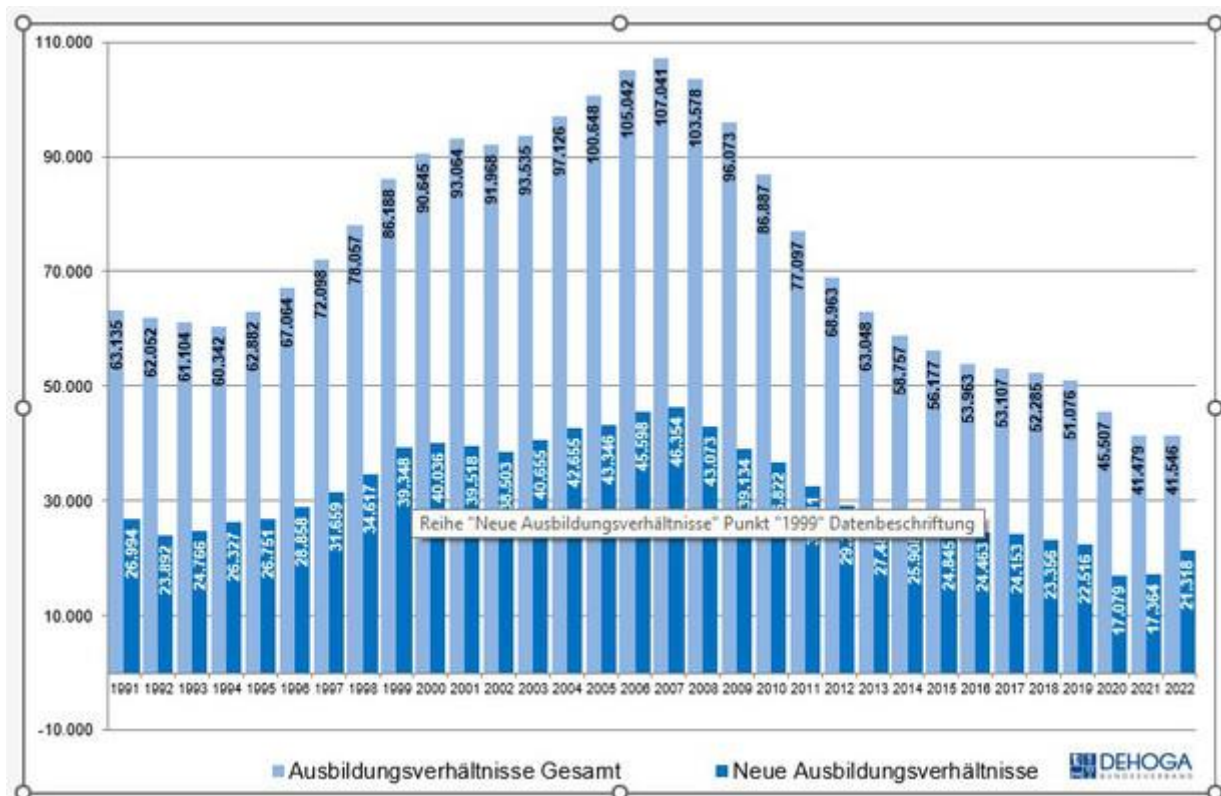
cooperation, the exchange of experts represents a first sustainable result. The Black Forest region has not been the focus of COSDA graduates so far, and here, for example, ERASMUS funding opens up the possibility of acquiring new practical experience and language skills in Germany. The AEF, as an intercultural educational institution and provider of integration projects related to the labour market in the region around Hornberg in the Black Forest, sees advantages in several respects. On the one hand, learning the German language and the opportunity to work with other clients and in a different culture. On the other hand, there are jobs with a reasonable salary and good organization on the part of the companies that value skilled workers. For example, by providing housing and German courses.

Acquired language and practical skills can further improve the employability of graduates. In Spain, professional practice shows that the seasonal structure of tourism endangers employment security and social exclusion tourism potentials, such as the development of the Spanish national parks, still remain far below their potential, as there is a lack of skilled workers with ecological and appropriate language skills who can, for example, look after tourists from Germany.

The project "Rural regions and green future jobs" has confirmed that the potential of "nature tourism" is already being used in the Black Forest region as well as in the region of Castellón, but is still far below its potential. However, good individual ideas only work in combination and as part of an overall concept. In this respect, the supra-regional municipal cooperation, such as in the development and signposting of hiking and cycling trails in the Black Forest, were named as good practice examples in the project.

The strategic development factor, however, is and remains the availability or access to skilled workers who can support the new ecological themes and developments. The lack of skilled workers refers to both the purely quantitative and the qualitative side. In the course of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs", parallels but at the same time fundamental differences became apparent. While the hotel and restaurant industry in Germany has a rather bad image and - intensified by the Corona pandemic - there has been a massive migration into industry, fewer and fewer new entrants are entering the labour market. In Spain, these professions continue to have a recognized image, but suffer from the reality of poor working conditions. With regard to the COSDA vocational school, the teachers involved in the project made it clear that the students were very motivated and consciously chose professions such as gastronomy hotel and tourism and are studying for them at a high standard.

The current development in Germany is illustrated by the following graph and tabular overview of the number of apprenticeships and apprenticeship occupations in 2022. In 2007, an all-time high of 107,041 apprenticeships was reached in Germany, and in 2021 there were only 41,546. Mind you, this was at a time of increasing demand on the labour market.



Training contracts in the hotel and restaurant sector 2022

Occupation	Trainees in 2022 total	New training contracts concluded in 2023
Cook	14,453	6,820
Restaurant specialist (VO 1998)	3,292	1,006
Specialist for restaurants and event catering (VO 2022)	2,132	2,132
Hotel specialist	14,046	7,092
Hotel clerk (VO 1998)	419	73
Management assistant		

in hotel management (VO 2022)	203	203
Specialist for system catering	3,176	1,427
Specialist in the hospitality industry (VO 1998)	1,927	669
Specialist in catering (VO 2022)	1,506	1,504
Kitchen specialist (VO 2022)	392	392
Total	41,546	21,318

Source: DIHK, March 2023

The development of the number of employees in the hospitality sector shown here shows the dramatic consequences, especially for the marginally employed, as a result of the Corona restrictions.

In principle, the shortage of skilled workers affects all sectors of the economy and in a study by the Freiburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry this is seen as the main problem for regional economic development. According to this study, demographic change has a particularly strong impact in the rural regions of Ortenau and the Black Forest, as young people are migrating to the cities. Against this background, it is understandable that the question of skilled workers from abroad and models of exchange are becoming increasingly virulent. The topicality of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" with its institutional cooperation as well as the perspective of a skilled worker exchange of graduates of the COSDA in the Black Forest region also becomes clear in this aspect.

In addition to the exchange of good practice and the development of a transnational cooperation structure, the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" pursued the goal of developing and demonstrating a concept for the implementation of "green skills" in vocational training using the example of the training and further training of tourism specialists with a focus on the development of regional ecological skills in the rural Black Forest region and the hinterland of Valencia, Spain.

The starting point for the considerations of AEF and COSDA was the comparison of the given training curricula and training systems. Unless otherwise stated, the following comments are based on the presentation by Mr. H. Osterholt at the final conference on 7.03.2023 in Hornberg and the results of the on-site discussions in Castellón at the COSDA vocational school from 19-22.10.2022.

In Germany, dual training dominates and there are around 320 state-recognized training occupations. The countries with dual training systems show marked differences in this respect. For example, there are significantly more than 200 apprenticeship occupations in Austria, Luxembourg and Switzerland. There are a good 100 in South Tyrol. See overview table "Vocational training options in comparison".

Vocational education and training in Germany is divided into three sectors - the dual system, the school-based vocational system and the transition system. In addition to vocational schools, vocational colleges and individual intermediate business schools in some federal states are also considered to be VET schools. However, vocational education and training primarily takes place in the dual system.

- Dual system: The usually three-year training takes place at two learning venues, in the company and at the vocational school.

- School-based occupational system: The usually two-year, exclusively school-based training takes place in vocational schools, with the focus on health, education and social occupations.

- Transition system: Training courses lasting up to one year serve to provide vocational orientation and to acquire pre-vocational or basic vocational qualifications in order to improve subsequent in-company and school-based training. No fully qualifying vocational qualification is imparted.

Dual training to become a cook, for example, is the classic and primary way to obtain a vocational qualification for this occupation in Germany. The school-based part of vocational education and training is only organized uniformly in some areas at federal level. The 16 federal states of the republic each lay down provisions under federal state law, which may differ from one another.

The table of learning areas/subjects and training hours below shows that 1,440 teaching hours (UE) are provided in the school-based part of the training and a further 800-1,000 UE are provided in the in-company training or specialized practice.

Möglichkeiten der Berufsausbildung im Vergleich

	Deutschland	Österreich	Luxemburg	Südtirol	Schweiz
Ausbildung/Lehre					
Bezeichnung	Duales System	Duales System	Duales System	Duales System	Duales System
Dauer	3 Jahre	3 Jahre	CCP*: 2 Jahre DAP**: 3 Jahre	3 Jahre	EFZ***: 3 Jahre
Regelalter Beginn/Abschluss	15 Jahre/18 Jahre	15 Jahre/18 Jahre	15 Jahre/18 Jahre	15 Jahre/18 Jahre	15 Jahre/19 Jahre
Schulische Vollzeitausbildung					
Bezeichnung		Tourismusschule		Hotelfachschule	
Dauer		5 Jahre		5 Jahre	
Regelalter Beginn/Abschluss		14 Jahre/19 Jahre		14 Jahre/19 Jahre	
Schulische Vollzeitausbildung					
Bezeichnung		Hotelfach-, Gastgewerbe-, Fachschule	Hotelfach-, Gastgewerbe-, Fachschule	École d'Hôtellerie et de Tourisme	Berufsfachschule
Dauer		3 Jahre	3 Jahre	3 Jahre	3 Jahre
Regelalter Beginn/Abschluss		14 Jahre/17 Jahre	14 Jahre/17 Jahre	16 Jahre/19 Jahre	14 Jahre/17 Jahre
Schulische Vollzeitausbildung mit Berechtigung zum Hochschulwesen					
Bezeichnung		Höhere Lehranstalt für wirtschaftliche Berufe			
Dauer		5 Jahre			
Regelalter Beginn/Abschluss		14 Jahre/19 Jahre			

Quelle: Evaluierung der Ausbildung von Köch:innen, Masterarbeit, Elisabeth Gruber



Kofinanziert durch das
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*CCP: Certificat de capacité professionnelle; **DAP: Diplôme d'aptitude professionnelle; ***EFZ: Eidgenössisches Befähigungszeugnis

The comparability of training can be achieved through the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and its counterpart, the German Qualifications Framework (DQR). Like the EQF, the DQR describes eight levels. However, these are structured differently from the EQF levels. A larger number of categories were used for characterization. The categories and competence descriptions of the DQR expand and concretize the EQF in a certain way, which - in accordance with the character of a meta-framework - has a high level of abstraction. The DQR identifies four (instead of three "pillars") (knowledge - skills - social competence - autonomy) to adequately represent the learning outcomes sought in the German education system. It thus makes clear that a holistic understanding of competences is of central importance in the German education system. The four-pillar structure was chosen to adequately represent action competence in all its aspects. The EQF, which as an overarching transparency instrument must be able to relate different national education systems to each other, focuses on the abstract category of learning outcomes, divided into knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy.

T

he vocational training implemented in Spain, here specifically in the COSDA vocational school, takes place in school. The purely school-based training is followed by work placements and later experience in the companies with the real stress situation in the company work process. The training kitchen at school only achieves this stress factor to a limited extent. This school-based training has a scope of 2,000 units, i.e. in this respect it is more extensive than in Germany.

The training for cooks corresponds to EQF-DQR level 4 with a three-year training period. In Germany, depending on the school-leaving qualification, up to level 5. COSDA graduates are therefore very well trained and can work directly as skilled workers in Germany.

The example of chef training shows the teaching and learning content with the credits and the total number of hours.

DIPLOMA DESCRIPTION	DIPLOMBESCHREIBUNG
The holder of this diploma will have acquired the General Competence with regard to:	Der Inhaber dieses Diploms hat die allgemeine Kompetenz in Bezug auf Folgendes erworben:
Managing and organising cooking production and service	Verwaltung und Organisation der Kochproduktion und des Service
establishing offers and resources	Erstellung von Angeboten und Ressourcen
monitoring procurement production and service activities	Überwachung von Beschaffungs-, Produktions- und Dienstleistungsaktivitäten
complying with economic goals	Einhaltung wirtschaftlicher Ziele
following the established quality protocols	Befolgen der festgelegten Qualitätsprotokolle
acting in accordance with rules on hygiene	Handeln in Übereinstimmung mit den Hygiene- und Arbeitsvorschriften
labour risks prevention	Risikoprävention
environmental protection	Umweltschutz

COURSE STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICIALLY RECOGNISED DIPLOMA	CRE DITS ECTS	STUDIENSTRUKTUR DES AMTLICH ANERKANNTEN DIPLOMS	Credit s ECTS
PROFESSIONAL MODULES IN THE DIPLOMA ROYAL DECREE		PROFESSIONELLE MODULE IM DIPLOMA ROYAL DECREE	
TOTAL CREDITS	120	TOTALE CREDITS	120
Raw Materials Stock Control	3	.	3
Pre-processing and Preservation Processes in Cooking	16	Vorverarbeitungs- und Konservierungsprozesse beim Kochen	16
Patisserie and Confectionery Preparations in Cooking	12	Konditorei- und Süßwarenzubereitungen beim Kochen	12
Culinary Preparation Processes	16	Kulinarische Zubereitungsprozesse	16

Kitchen Production Management	15	Küchenproduktionsmanagement	15
Food Quality, Safety and Hygiene Management	5	Management von Lebensmittelqualität, -sicherheit und -hygiene.	5
Gastronomy and Nutrition	3	Gastronomie und Ernährung	3
Administrative and Commercial Management in Catering	4	Administratives und kaufmännisches Management in der Gastronomie	4
English	7	Englisch	5
Human Resources and Team Leadership in Catering	3	Personal- und Teamführung in der Gastronomie	3
Project on Kitchen Management	5	Projekt zum Küchenmanagement	5
Vocational Training and Guidance	5	Berufsbildung und -beratung	5
Business and Entrepreneurial Initiative	4	Geschäfts- und Unternehmerinitiative	4
On the Job Training	22	Berufsausbildung	22
OFFICIAL DURATION (HOURS)	2000	OFFIZIELLE DAUER (STUNDEN)	2000

The cooperation developed in the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" between the vocational school COSDA and the AEF-Spanish Academy of Continuing Education as well as the involved stakeholders, such as the tourism associations, the hotel and restaurant businesses, has created a network and a platform of interest that contributes significantly to raising awareness of the issue of rural development through sustainable tourism. The two rural regions can benefit from each other as they jointly develop strategies against the lack of skilled labour and their experiences can be an example for others. The project "Rural regions and green future jobs" shows especially young people the importance of vocational training and its opportunities in rural regions. In this first initial phase, the graduates of COSDA will benefit from this. Until the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" they only knew the Black Forest by name, but they were not aware of what the region has to offer in concrete terms, what role the nature aspect plays and to what extent this type of nature tourism attracts a demanding public. Future internships with language mediation in the Black Forest will open up new employment prospects for the COSDA graduates in the Black Forest.

In addition to the described exchange of good practice, the establishment of a transnational cooperation structure, the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" pursued the goal of demonstrating a concept for the implementation of "green skills" in vocational training using the example of the education and training of tourism professionals with a focus on "regional ecological skills development" in the rural Black Forest region and the hinterland of Valencia, Spain.

Within the framework of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs" it was of course not possible to change or freely add to the existing curriculum and the state-approved curricula. However, the project partners have come to the conclusion that the complexity of local production and marketing, for example, places special demands on theoretical and practical on-the-job training, which the current curriculum only covers to a limited extent.

In the current situation, the following concrete options for action and ideas emerge as the main result of the project "Rural regions and green future jobs":

- Vocational training in Spain can convey ecological-regional contents more consciously and sensitise for the topic through the appropriate selection of teaching examples.
- In the counselling work and the individual coaching of the students, the rural region and the potential of nature tourism can be consciously used as an independent aspect in the potential analysis in order to show long-term career perspectives.
- the expansion of language competence through internships with language mediation in the Black Forest expands the training and career perspectives of the COSDA graduates.
- the topic "food processing for people with special dietary needs" is already included in the training course. Within this topic, for example, food is prepared for pupils with allergies and intolerances, but also for those with non-medical reasons: Halal, vegetarian and vegan.
- A cycle for kitchen management and service management was introduced with great success. Double degree in 3 years.
 - New addition of a cycle for Oil and Wine Technicians, aimed at technical staff in oil mills and wineries.

These training contents and subject areas offer a good starting point for further pursuing and implementing the idea and concept of "regional ecological competence development". Either in the form of focusing the content in the existing training blocks or in a new training unit.

In the area of dual vocational education and training in Germany, the instrument of additional qualifications offers itself to anchor the aspect of rural development and nature tourism as a particular specialization in vocational education and training in the future. With the latest regulations for dual vocational training in Germany, it is now possible for the first time to acquire two nationally standardized additional qualifications through an agreement between the training companies and trainees:

- Specialization in Vegetarian and Vegan Cuisine for Chefs
- "Bar and wine" for the three-year catering and hotel occupations.

In the same way, an independent additional qualification would be conceivable on the topic of "nature tourism with organic/natural/regional cuisine and cultural specialities".

Within the framework of the training part in the vocational school, it would also be possible to define and establish the aspect of "nature tourism" as a focus in the so-called differentiation and support area.

The project "Rural regions and green future jobs" and the participating cooperation partners COSDA and AEF see this recommendation as an invitation and request to interested specialized institutions and organizations to define this additional qualification in detail and to develop a model curriculum in a further project.

AEF and COSDA
Bonn / Castellón - April 2023



Gez. Dr. A. Kalnins and Pau Montero

See:

www.aef-bonn.de

<https://aef-bonn.de/project/tourismus-schwarzwald-europa-projekt-rural-regions-and-green-future-jobs/>



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