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ONLINE CONTEST GUIDE

For teachers and organizations

A guide to help organizations and teachers implement online competitions to improve and innovate education provision in tourism. This guide is highly adaptable and aims to provide useful guidelines and tips for using online competitions as effective learning tools.

TEEF TOURISM
EDUCATION
FUTURE

INDEX

What is an online contest? 1.

General considerations 2.

Before 3.

During 4.

After 5.

Showcase and testimonials 6.

1. What is an online contest?

ONLINE CONTEST

An online contest, as we understand it in these pages, is a transnational educational challenge fully developed online. Students from different schools interact and work together, alone or in groups, through distance cooperation tools (eTwinning, Teams, ...) and methods (transnational teams, participative approach, project-based learning). Peer-to-peer voting among the pupils is planned to select the winners of the contest and to increase the digital dimension of the activity



WHY DO WE NEED

GUIDELINES FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF ONLINE CONTESTS?

Guidelines for organizing online contest training for VET students, especially in tourism education, are an **essential** tool for ensuring the contests are effective, fair, and **beneficial** to all participants. Guidelines can define **learning outcomes** and thus help align competitions with educational goals, ensuring that students acquire valuable skills and knowledge. Guidelines can help us to help establish clear, **standardized criteria** for judging, ensuring that all participants are assessed fairly.

WHY DO WE NEED

TO ORGANIZE AN ONLINE CONTEST?

Organizing an online contest for **VET teachers and students** offers numerous advantages and serves multiple purposes. It **enhances learning**, encourages **innovation**, and prepares students for future challenges, in particular in the **tourism industry**.

Benefits for Teachers:

- Professional Development
- Practical Learning
- Innovation in Teaching
- Networking and Collaboration
- Enhancing Curriculum Relevance
- Cultural Exchange
- Quality Improvement
- Promoting Sustainable Practices
- Professional Recognition

Benefits for Students:

- Enhanced Learning Experience
- Practical Skill Development
- Digital Literacy and Technological Skills
- Innovation and Creativity
- Promoting Sustainable Practices
- Intercultural Aspect
- Tourism Industry Engagement
- Motivation and Recognition
- Critical Thinking
- Inclusivity

2 General Considerations

WHEN TO ORGANIZE AN ONLINE CONTEST?

*What time is **optimal** for organizing an online contest for VET students?*

To maximise **student participation** and ensure a **fair workload** and **quality**, there are some key planning considerations to take into account among partners: academic calendars, student workload, major holidays, exam periods, special events, etc. Furthermore, for some schools using the 'challenge method', such as Ethazi, it is crucial to know in advance the topic and duration of the competition in order to be able to plan and integrate it into students' challenges.

The **best recommended time**, in our experience, for organizing an online contest for VET students is during the first mid-semester, while preparatory activities can begin at the beginning of the semester.

WORKLOAD TO CONSIDER

*A contest should last around **20-25 hours** for students.*

For a contest of this duration, consider **10 to 15 hours of teacher work for preparation**. To these must be added the commitment of **20 to 25 hours** (depending on the duration of the project) **to assist the students during the activities**. For the students, the workload will be at least equal to the duration of the competition, but more activities are of course allowed.



3 BEFORE the contest

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Create contest guidelines

- Define objectives / goals / topics and make a general description of the idea of online contest
- Define the expected learning outcomes for students and teachers as well

Find at least one partner, preferably an international one.

The contest can be organised with a minimum number of two partners.

How to find a partner institution?

- Join International VET organization (i.e. EfVET)
- Thematic teams (i.e. EfVET Tourism Thematic Team)
- E-Twinning or similar platforms
- Thematic group on Social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, ...)

Appoint contest organizing team / committee

- Appoint student's mentor / coordinator per participating institution
- Decide on contest mentorship - which teachers will be involved (language teachers, specialized VET teachers, ...)
- Define minimum number of students participating



DEFINE SOFTWARE, HARDWARE AND VENUE SETTING

Cooperation Platforms

- **Google Classroom / Zoom**
- **Microsoft Teams for Education:** Useful for managing submissions, distributing materials, and providing feedback.
- **Moodle:** A comprehensive LMS that can handle project submissions and peer reviews.
- **Canva:** LMS platform that supports assignment submissions, peer reviews, and grading.

SUGGESTION
Use platform with free of charge plan!

SUGGESTION
Always prepare a backup plan!

VENUE SETTING FOR ONLINE CONTEST:

- **Technical Support:** Provide technical support and resources to ensure all participants can access and use the requested technology.
- **Equipment:** Use a reliable computer, webcam, and microphone. Ensure good lighting and a quiet environment. Good audio quality is essential for good online cooperation and the effectiveness of the contest.
- **Internet connection:** Ensure a stable internet connection without disruptions
- **Virtual Conference Rooms:** Set up virtual rooms, if possible, for different activities.

SUGGESTION
special care should be taken with the sound, which can completely ruin a presentation.

Prior testing of technical features is required



4 DURING

DEFINE TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES

The timetable and deadlines vary depending on the characteristics and theme chosen for the competition. In our opinion, the following meetings are the minimum to be realised. Some suggested activities are indicated for each type of meeting.

1. Preparatory meeting

Online meeting between the contact persons of the contest to establish all activities before the kick-off meeting

2. Kick-Off meeting

(Depending on the number of participants, the kick-off meeting can last up to 2 hours)

Presentation of participants

Possible Ice-breaking activities:

[Truths and a Lie](#)

[Virtual Scavenger Hunt](#)

[Pictionary](#)

Forming the teams

Draw names of the competitors with

[Wheel of Names](#)

Assignment of contest activities / Presentation of topics

Some of the most relevant topics for contests in tourism are:

Eco-Friendly Travel Packages

Sustainable Tourism

Promotion of Cultural Heritage

Religious Tourism

Gastronomy

SUGGESTION

...But there are no ideal topics: choose the one that suits you best!

Deciding the format of contest outputs:

Outputs of the contest could be: PP Presentation, Video Presentation, Length and characteristic of the presentation (i.e. use of a certain template)

3. Peer to peer meeting

(with or without mentors – approximately 1 hour)

The ultimate goal is for student competitors or transnational teams to meet, communicate and collaborate *on the tasks of the contest*. Peer meetings can also be used as sessions where each teams present the draft of their work and receive **constructive feedbacks**.

These meetings improve learning, collaboration, motivation and personal development on a high extent. By giving and receiving feedbacks students can **build confidence**, improve their knowledge and **presentation skills**, and better prepare for their final competition.

4. Final Presentation

(approximately 2 hours)

Presentation of contest outputs by the teams. Each team must be given a time limit to perform the presentation. This final phase is an opportunity for contestants to improve **presentation skills**, demonstrate **skills and knowledge**, but also to work on skills such as **creativity, time management** and **digital skills**

EVALUATION CRITERIA, FEEDBACKS AND VOTING

Evaluation criteria

Clearly define the evaluation criteria that peers and judges will use.

Suggested criteria:

- Content Quality
- Presentation
- Creativity and Innovation
- Consistency with contest themes

SUGGESTION

...Other criteria may vary depending on the topic of the contest!

Providing feedbacks

Comments Section: Include sections for peers to provide constructive comments and suggestions for improvement.

Feedbacks: Require students to provide feedback for each entry they evaluate to ensure meaningful engagement.

Use 'The Sandwich Method':

1. Start with a slice positive feedback
2. Add a layer of critical feedback
3. Cover of with a slice of positive feedback
4. Remember to explain the reasons of your feedbacks.

Voting

Peer-to-Peer Voting Process (highly suggested) during or after the final session.

Preparation of students: provide a short briefing session to explain students the evaluation criteria and the importance of providing constructive feedbacks.

Note: Combined peer-to-peer and expert evaluation is also applicable.

- **Anonymity:** Ensure anonymity in the voting process to avoid bias and encourage honest assessments.
- **Digital Platform:** Use a digital platform (Google Forms, Mentimeter, Slido) to collect votes and feedbacks.
- **Criteria-Based:** Structure the evaluation form based on the established criteria, (if possible with sections for scoring and comments).
- **Scoring System:** Use a consistent scoring scale (1-5 or 1-10) for each criterion.

Announcing Results

Score breakdown: Provide a breakdown of scores to participants, showing how their projects were evaluated against each criterion.

Feedback sharing: Share constructive feedback from peers (or expert judges) to help participants understand their strengths and areas for improvement.



5 AFTER

CERTIFICATES / RECOGNITION / REWARD

Announcing Results

Digital certificates: Create and give digital certificates to winners and participants.

A printed version of the certificate is preferred for certificate awarding and winner announcement ceremony.

Public Recognition

Announcement: Publicize the final contest's details and announce the winners on the institution's website, social media accounts, and newsletters.

Press Release: If possible, issue a press release to local media to celebrate the achievements of the winners.

Reward

Each organisation decides whether or not to award prizes to participants in the competition, in accordance with internal regulations.

Prizes can be:

- Cash
- Gift Voucher
- Scholarship
- Internship opportunity
- Study visit
- Educational Trip
- Equipment for work
- Electronic Gadgets / Devices
- Merchandise (T-shirts, hats, cups, bags)

FOLLOW UPS

Follow ups are highly suggested to increase the impact of the activity.

Some suggestions:

- Sharing experience with peers
- Search for funds for future competitions
- Self-reflection: vlog (looking back to your experience, what they are proud, what does it mean to their future, dissemination...)



6

Showcase of TEF Online Contest

● Within the TEF Project we implemented the following piloting of our online contest.

THE TRIPPLICITY CONTEST - SUSTAINABLE CITY TRIP

Participants: Students from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece and Portugal.

One group of three students per organization (9 in total).

Assignment: Present a TRIPLE city break considering sustainable (environmental, economic, social) experiences.

Cities: Fatima (PT), Sarajevo (BiH), Kalamata (EL)

Curricular: yes, partly extra

Participants age: Open

Output: Powerpoint Presentation **in English** using the project template.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE OUTPUT?

Prepare a **three-day trip**, one day per city (excluded travel time). Define one **target group**.



SUGGESTION

...Be specific and realistic! (e.g: "young couples")

Travel: Arrange the trip from one city to the other, choosing public transport and, if possible, sustainable ones.

Define **Accommodation + breakfast** (in each city)

Food (One typical / traditional meal / dish per day)

Leisure (a morning and an afternoon activity per day / landmarks to see and why)

Students' introduction during kick-off meeting: (5 min each: name, age, hobby, interests).

Answer to the question: **"What does tourism mean to you?"**

Reward: Certificate of participation for all contestants

TESTIMONIALS

Sara (student - BiH): *I actually didn't even know where **Kalamata** was.*

This competition allowed me to get to know this city virtually...

***I want to visit this place.** Also, this was a unique opportunity to listen about the pilgrimage site of **Fatima**.*

Ilma (student - BiH): *It was great and I didn't expect it to be this much fun.*

*The best part is that **we made friends** with contestants from other countries and now we follow each other on social media.*



Eva (student – PT): *The online skills competition was an **interesting experience**, because I learnt more about a country that I didn't know anything about: I knew about its existence, but not its history. It was a way of learning and getting to know it, as well as getting to know my colleagues from other countries, who were a great help. It was very **important for us to have them giving their opinions** and helping us about their country, so that we had a better idea of their tastes and the most suitable places to visit. It was a **memorable experience**.*

Iman (student - BiH): *I would like it to be possible for such contests to be **face to face**. I am especially glad that the **voting** was peer to peer. I liked that the other team listened to our advice and brought the **Sarajevo vibe** to the presentation.*



Anisa (teacher - BiH): *I am proud of my students and other competitors. This is a great way for them to **develop their language and presentation skills**. Peer to peer voting is fair and actually a great idea.*

Artiola (student - EL): *I loved this project it was **fun and also competitive at the same time**. I had the opportunity to **meet new people and learn about their cultures** and also make new friends. I can say that I'm very glad and thankful that I could be part of this project, with the help of my teachers.*

Tina (teacher- EL): *The participation of our students from the Tourism and Hospitality Sector of our school in the online competition with students from Portugal and Bosnia was an experience which helped them **learn about other cultures, cities, make new friends and to develop different skills** - some of which like social and presentation skills. It was a contest full of collaboration with interaction, challenge and obtaining more knowledge of the Travel and Tourism Industry – moving learning outside the classroom walls.*



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