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**Toolkit Case Study of Practice**

**Planning training for tourism enterprises via the NTG Skills Matrix and Skills Mapping Templates: The National Institute for Tourism Research (ISNART), @ Union Camere (Italian Chambers of Commerce)**

1. **Name of the organisation and a brief explanation of its purpose**

The National Institute for Tourism Research (ISNART), an organisation forming part of the Italian national system of Chambers of Commerce, was created to support the tourism sector and provide services aimed at understanding new phenomena and also improving the level of competitiveness.

Collaborating as a strategic partner with departments of public administration, since 1992 ISNART has been a highly-qualified point of reference in the observation and study of developments affecting this sector and supporting the qualification and growth of companies within the various areas of the Italian tourism industry.

ISNART has created an Observatory of the Tourism Economy within the sphere of the Chambers of Commerce. This body represents the first national digital ecosystem conceived with a view to supporting the strategies of central and local Public Administration bodies and addressing new requirements for the recovery of the tourism sector. Moreover, the aim of this ‘federated’ scheme is to assist the Chambers of Commerce in the creation of local observatories that focus on the tourism economy.

Furthermore, since 1997 ISNART has been promoting the ‘Italian Hospitality’ project, an initiative originally introduced as a process whereby the quality of businesses offering hospitality and restaurant/catering services may be certified. This activity is in fact currently evolving into what has been referred to as an authentic ‘hub’ capable of providing tourism businesses with a path they may follow to improve performance in terms of their positioning and other relative market variables.

1. **How was the toolkit used to address industry, business or educational needs?**

ISNART has used the skills Matrix within the sphere of its investigative/assessment tool, thereby allowing the organisation to direct and guide tourism planning for enterprises and focusing on particular local areas, and also to orientate training activities through the implementation of training modules.

More specifically,

a) The methodological approach introduced by ISNART for the purpose of investigating the world of tourism includes, amongst various other activities, the use of surveys aimed at tourists during their stay in Italy and also tourism businesses and enterprises. These surveys are in fact conducted adopting the CAWI methodology and administered to over 100,000 Italian hospitality businesses, with a response rate varying between 3,000 and 5,000 companies each quarter.

The questionnaire designed by ISNART comprises a set of fixed questions which investigate trends and the development of the tourism sector, and a set of variable questions which will be adjusted according to requirements stemming from current events and circumstances.

Over the last year attention has been placed on issues encountered by hospitality businesses which have been significantly affected by the current health-care and economic crisis. In particular, difficulties have emerged relating to the recruitment of qualified personnel and the need for specific training aimed at coping with ongoing changes occurring in the sector.

The decision was thus made to further investigate such matters by means of a survey. In order to define and compile the questions to be included in the questionnaire and identify the variables required to focus on the aspects subject to the investigation and research **the skills Matrix developed within the Next Tourism Generation Alliance (NTGA) project was analysed in detail**.

It has been determined that a specific question on the training requirements of hospitality businesses should be inserted also in the survey that will be conducted in the next quarter (April/June 2022), using some of the Matrix variables as a point of reference.

b) The skills Matrix has also been used to create a proposal aimed at identifying training courses, in collaboration with the University of Bari and the Treccani Accademia business institute.

The proposal is currently in the development phase, and its content is thus confidential and may not be freely disclosed (updates will be provided as soon as possible). It will provide for the introduction of some advanced training modules:

* a module on **Tourism and green innovation** pertaining to sustainability and the environment, with the objective of acquiring green and environmental management skills to face new challenges arising in the tourism market;
* a module on **Tourism and social innovation**,which focuses on training regarding issues such as gender equality, age-related accessibility, needs relating to diet and allergies, skills concerning forms of disability and the appropriate relative infrastructures and religious differences in society. These areas of concern are actually seen as market opportunities and levers for territorial development.

For the realisation of the training modules certain variables taken from the list of the skills Matrix list were used.

1. **Were any partner organisations involved and, in the affirmative case, which particular organisations were invited to participate?**

The development of the training plan proposal is being carried out by the University of Bari and the Treccani Accademia institute.

1. **What benefits resulted from use of the toolkit?**

One of the strengths and advantages of the Matrix is to provide an exhaustive, detailed and easily usable framework of skills required for professional activities in the tourism sector. The result of a joint effort, in addition to the Italian scenario, the matrix also refers to situations present across Europe.

The Matrix has been used (and its future use is envisaged) for the instrumental needs of companies, but it will offer potentially useful results and spin-offs for both the industry itself and at the level of professional training.

The main results of the survey will be shared with the members of the national skills group NSG Italia in order to identify critical issues and solutions and, possibly, to determine new areas of training in which it would be worth investing.

1. **Did any challenges arise or were any lessons learnt during use of the toolkit?**

With respect to implementation of the aforementioned activities for which the skills Matrix was used no particular difficulties were encountered.

1. **Would you like to add any further reflections and/or recommendations?**

The skills Matrix has been a useful and effective tool, both for studies of the tourism sector and for the organisation of training schemes.

It is necessary to constantly focus on dissemination of the Matrix so that it becomes well- known and to promote its use by tourism operators, local stakeholders and training institutes, given its great value and effectiveness.