

Boosting Digital Skills and Competencies in Forest Education

1st Newsletter: January - June 2023



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KICK OFF FOR THE FUTURE OF FORESTRY EDUCATION

The kick-off meeting for the “FOREE” project was held at FAST Pichl in Styria, Austria, in early February 2023. The project brings together partners from Italy, Estonia, Germany, and Austria to revolutionize European forestry education.

The primary objective of FOREE is to transform traditional classroom-based forestry courses into a dynamic and flexible hybrid education system. This innovative approach will be achieved through the integration of digital learning concepts, tools, and platforms into adult forestry training courses.



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FOREE REPORT ON BLENDED LEARNING

The FOREE report unveils insights into e-learning and blended learning in forestry education. The survey involved 89 participants from 37 education centers across 9 countries, while 71 participants from 24 institutions contributed to the Focus Groups workshops organized by FOREE partners.

Key barriers identified include organizational challenges, increased workload, and a lack of digital competencies among teaching staff. Limited availability of suitable training exacerbates these challenges, prompting educators to rely on learning-by-doing to enhance their skills.

However, combining digital and practical teaching proves advantageous, particularly during preparation and post-training phases. Contributors confirm that multimedia approaches improve trainees’ performance and facilitate knowledge retention and skill development. Virtual and augmented reality training, especially for safety-related topics, finds widespread support.

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INSIGHTS FROM 6 FOCUS GROUPS WORKSHOPS

Between March and May of this year, we organized Six Focus Groups workshops involving principals and trainers. Two workshops were conducted at the transnational level, while four took place at the national level. A total of 71 passionate participants from 24 institutions across six European countries actively took part.

The discussions were rich and diverse, with participants sharing their valuable experiences and observations. They highlighted barriers, complaints, and challenges they face in forestry education. Interestingly, amidst the concerns, there were also positive experiences and innovative problem-solving approaches shared, offering hope for positive change.



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PRESENTING FOREE PROJECT AT THE CONFERENCE IN VIENNA

The OeAD, the national agency for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, organized a presence conference in Vienna on May 15, 2023, titled "Aspiration and Reality." More than 200 participants from various program fields were actively engaged in this event.

During the event, the Holzcluster Steiermark highlighted the FOREE project in the Vocational Education Impulse Workshop, focusing on the implementation of the horizontal priority "Digital Transformation."



SAVE THE DATE: AUSTROFOMA 2023

Austria's largest forestry trade fair will take place from September 26 to 28, 2023 at Stuhleck in the municipality of Spital am Semmering.

The FOREE project will be on-site and showcased. Don't miss this opportunity to learn, network, and explore the latest advancements in the industry. See you there!

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