QUALITY CONTROL POST

Work Package 5

Deliverable 5.7

Evaluation report

30th September 2013

European

Summary

1. Context of the evaluation of the e-Learning course

The e-learning course developed in this project is focused on long journey transport of animals in the EU for which the use of control posts is foreseen. The subjects treated in the course are general knowledge about animal welfare during transport, the legislative framework, animal health and biosecurity, quality and risk management and logistics and animal handling in control posts. The e-learning tools were developed to provide information and awareness, targeted to drivers of transport companies, CP staff and official veterinary inspectors, on the practical ways they can improve the welfare of transported animals over long journeys.

The students (official veterinarians, transporters, staff of control posts) get first an overview about how animal welfare, biosecurity, environmental sustainability and work safety can interact during transport and at control posts. The course contains basic specific concepts, ethics and legal aspects and detailed examples of travelling times of animals and drivers.

The aim of the evaluation task (5.5) is to know to what extent the tasks dealing with the development of the course packages (5.2) and the welfare assessment tool (5.3), as well as the implementation of the e-Learning tool (5.4) have the potential in the teaching material to realize by vocational training the required transfer of knowledge to the students.

This report describes the objectives to be realised the methodology of evaluation, the results being obtained and the conclusions, with suggestions for further work. Interesting back-ground information is provided in the annex.

2. Objectives

The work plan stipulates that the evaluation procedure to be carried out, aims at:

1) being an operational tool for the project management, especially in view of the possible need to implement changes;
2) stimulating and generating learning among the people involved in the project;
3) verifying the achievement of both the expected results and individual objectives:

The assessment has been developed along the following guidelines:

4) educational, in order to improve course activities and support the learning process;
5) global assessment (balance) of the course (and of the Institutions providing it), as perceived by the students;
6) course impact, in order to verify the actual usefulness and transferability of the course contents into the daily routine of the participants and of their workplaces.

The material to be evaluated is developed in the following tasks:

- design and development of course packages (5.2);
- development of the welfare assessment protocol into an e-learning tool for transport companies, local assessors and control post management staff (5.3)
- demonstration and implementation of e-Learning tools (5.4).

3. Methodology

The e-learning modules were evaluated in two stages, i.e. during the work in progress and as a delivered learning tool. Evaluators were:

a) staff of KU Leuven during the preparation of the course,

b) at an intermediate stage, external evaluators not having participated in the development of the course, and

c) students (veterinarians, staff of transport companies and control posts) acting in the pilot evaluation of the delivered product, i.e. modules for stakeholders, official veterinarians, transporters, control posts staff

3.1. Evaluation of the modules during the work in progress:

Feedback to course developers was given at regular time intervals by KU Leuven during the course of making and construction of the modules (**objective 2**). Besides about 175 interventions by e-mail, also text on specific expertise was provided for writing content of some parts of the course (modules and handbook), including questions to evaluate the students.

The module for veterinarians was used in order to obtain information from external evaluators whether or not the concept of the learning process, content and way of presentation should be reviewed. This was the module being available at that time, being very useful to realize the **objectives 1 and 4** of the required evaluation process. This module was representative for the complete course, being the template for preparing the tool to be used by the stakeholders.

The questions to be used for evaluation were proposed and discussed during partner meetings and finally accepted for starting the inquiry.

The polling system freely available on the website www.vot.rs was used to collect the answers from the external evaluators, i.e. veterinarians working as representatives for their national government.

The list with evaluators (n = 52) to whom the questions were sent during August 2012, without having an obligation to answer, is:

Country	Name	E-mail address
Austria	Kontaktstelle Tiertransport	cpat@bmg.gv.at
Austria	A. Rabitsch	rabitsch.vet@aon.at
Bulgaria	S. Peeva	s_peeva@nvms.government.bg
Bulgaria	T. Sarakostova	t_sarakostova@nvms.government.bg
Switzerland	H. Binder	heinrich.binder@bvet.admin.ch
Switzerland	Office Vétérinaire Fédéral	eucontact@bvet.admin.ch
Czech Republic	S. Nincakova	s.nincakova@svscr.cz
Cyprus	Animal Health and Welfare Division	Animal.health@vs.moa.gov.cy
Denmark	M. E. Gori	mgo@jm.dk
Denmark	Danish Veterinary and Food Administration	lfk@fvst.dk
Denmark	Danish Veterinary and Food Administration	contactpoint.transport@fvst.dk
Denmark	Danish Veterinary and Food Administration	sabp@fvst.dk

Estonia	T. Serva	tarmo.serva@vet.agri.ee
Finland	S. Salminen	sari.salminen@evira.fi
France	Direction Générale de l'alimentation	transport.protectionanimale.dgal@agriculture.gouv.fr
France	V. Barbier	virginie.barbier@agriculture.gouv.fr
France	A.-C. Dereclenne	anne-claire.lomellini-dereclenne@agriculture.gouv.fr
Germany	Bundesambt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit	food-and-vet.inspection@bvl.bund.de
Germany	Bundesambt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit	106@bvl.bund.de
Germany	U. Eberhardt	ulrich.eberhardt@hohenlohekreis.de
Greece	Ministry of Rural Development and Food	Ka6u001@minagric.gr
Croatia	A Milhaljevic	andrea.mihaljevic@mps.hr
Hungary	A. Schmidt	schmidta@oai.hu
Ireland	D. Flood	dermot.flood@agriculture.ie
Ireland	U. Forde	Ursula.Forde@agriculture.gov.ie
Ireland	M. Sheahan	Michael.sheahan@agriculture.gov.ie
Ireland	A Hanlon	alison.hanlon@ucd.ie
Italy	Ministero della Salute	Dav-transporti@sanita.it
Latvia	L. Arajuma	Liga.Arajuma@pvd.gov.lv
Latvia	A. Dranseika	algis.dranseika@gmail.com
Luxemburg	C Georges	Carlo.Georges@asv.etat.lu
Republic of Malta	F. Rossi	francesco.rossi@gov.mt

The Netherlands	P.L.F. Bours	p.l.f.bours@minlnv.nl
The Netherlands	I Arendzen	Iris.arendzen@vwa.nl
The Netherlands	L.R. Arnts	l.r.arnts@minlnv.nl
Norway	Norwegian Food Safety Authority	hebbv@mattilsynet.no
Poland	A Hoffman	Anna.hoffman@wetgiw.gov.pl
Portugal	M. Correia	mcorreia@dgv.min-agricultura.pt
Slovakia	State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak State	fric@svssr.sk
Republic of Slovenia	M. Sedlbauer	mitja.sedlbauer@gov.si
Spain	Sistema Informatico de registro de transportistas de animales vivo	sirentra@marm.es
Spain	M. Villalbal	mvillalba@marm.es
Sweden	K. Oden	kristina.oden@jordbruksverket.se
United Kingdom	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland	TransportWelfare@dardni.gov.uk
United Kingdom	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland	dard-tranwel@nigov.net
United Kingdom	P. McGuckian	Paddy.McGuckian@dardni.gov.uk
United Kingdom	S. Hepple	Sophia.Hepple@ahvla.gsi.gov.uk

3.2. *Evaluation of the final product, i.e. the modules on line by students:*

IZS worked out an inquiry for evaluating the completed course by students participating in the pilot study. The questions were discussed and approved by the partners, who had developed the modules. The questions to be answered were technically integrated in the e-Learning tool available on the dedicated website. Sixty-two out of 92 participants filled out the evaluation form included in the e-learning module. Fifty-one out of 59 veterinarians participated in the consumer's satisfactory poll, and 7 out of 14 stakeholders.

The questionnaire focused on the following aspects: the e-learning concept, the graphic interface and the efficiency of learning activity (**Objective 2, 3, 5 and 6**).

4. Results

4.1.   Evaluation of the modules during the work in progress:

The following questions were sent on August 7 (2012) to 52 experts representing most European countries. Three of them have answered with interesting suggestions for improvement, nine have simply answered with "yes" or "no" or "do not know":

Question	Yes	No	Do not know
What has to be known after having studied the course is clearly explained	7	0	2
The content takes into account the knowledge available before learning the course	3	2	4
The study material is helpful to study the course	9	0	0
The concept of the course is facilitating the learning process	7	1	1
The course is stimulating for studying in depth certain topics of personal interest	6	2	1
Specific comments can be returned by answering this mail	3	0	0

The specific remarks and suggestions, which were received during this phase of development, were sent to the authors involved in the building of the modules, in order to take them into account if they found these suggestions appropriate (**Objective 1 and 4**).

The department responsible for evaluating courses within KU Leuven requires a response rate of 60% necessary for considering the answers as being unbiased when students are evaluating courses. However, it has to be pointed out, that answering this poll was completely free, and that the responders were not societal related as regular students are. Hence, the risk of a bias is rather not existing, so that the response rate of about 71% can be considered as valuable. Moreover, their positive involvement is also proved by the very useful remarks and suggestions they formulated in order to improve the teaching material. It means that these responders, put in the position as teacher and student, were really interested in the subject, so that the mean of 71% "yes" answers is reliable to conclude that the learning activity and objectives will be realized by the actual students when studying the delivered course.

The external evaluators formulated useful remarks and suggestions related to the content of the module for official veterinarians, the structure, specific knowledge that should be worked out or reduced, the need of practical examples or case-studies, rewording or typing errors.

4.2. *Evaluation of the e-Learning modules on line by students:*

There were 92 students who participated in this e-Learning course. This population can be divided into three subgroups having a different level or history of education, i.e. 59 veterinarians, 14 stakeholders (staff control posts, transport companies) and 19 undefined participants.

Two main aspects of the course were asked to be evaluated: the learning process and the technology used for teaching, i.e. the e-Learning approach.
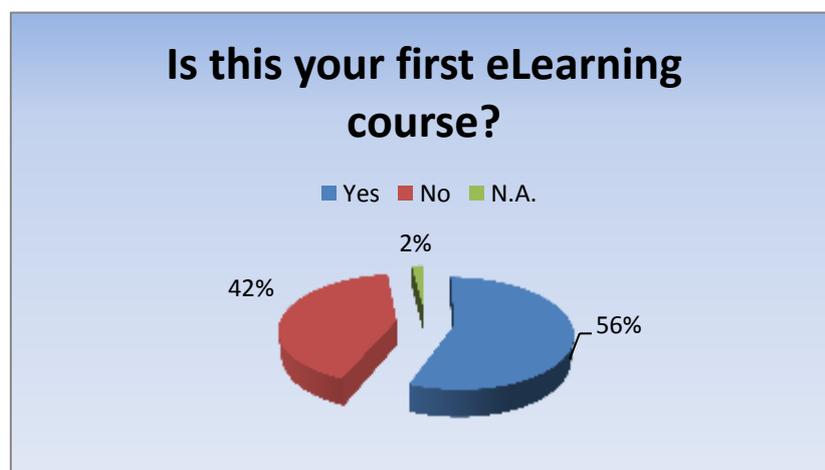
The evaluation was not based on a classical exam, but carried out as a customers' satisfaction analysis, of which the results are reported at three levels: overall, veterinarians and stakeholders.
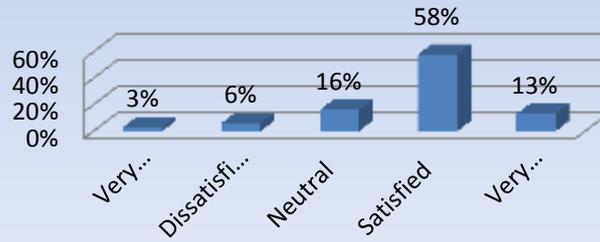
5. Overall analysis

Sixty-two questionnaires were filled out, which is a response rate of 73%, so that the results can be considered as being reliable compared to the 60% rule, mentioned before.

5.1.   Evaluation of the e-Learning aspects

The results are presented in the figures below. Despite the fact that 56% of the participants did not use e-learning before, 71% were satisfied with this experience. The advantages they (94%) see are: flexibility of location and time, economy of the costs for travel and subsistence, and autonomous selection of the e-learning path. However, 79% experienced also disadvantages, if compared with face to face training sessions: access to the website, availability of informatic programmes, use of email system, lack of direct contact with experts and participants, scarce dissemination of information, problems in communicating with tutors and experts, difficulty in managing the time to devote to study. This result seems to be contradictory to the answers related to the questions about "Functioning" and "Graphic interface", where no problems are reported.

In general terms, are you satisfied by this eLearning experience?
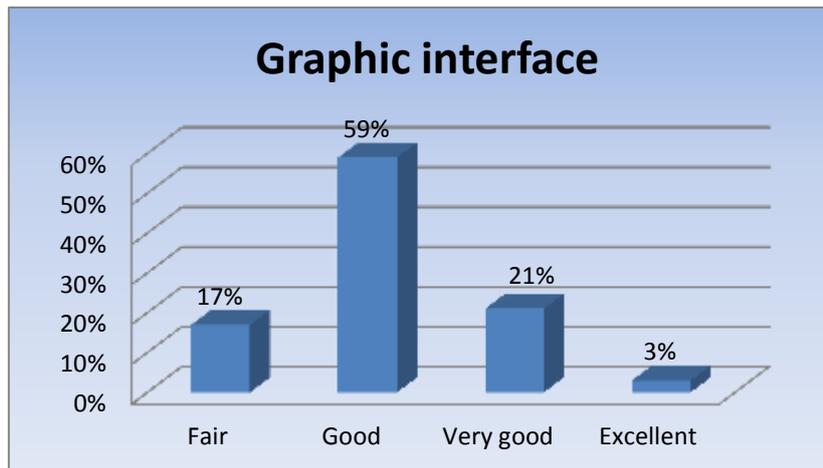
Very… 3%
Dissatisfi… 6%
Neutral 16%
Satisfied 58%
Very… 13%

Do you think there are advantages in eLearning, if compared with face to face…

■ Yes ■ No

6%
94%

Functioning

Fair 13%
Good 58%
Very good 21%
Excellent 8%

Graphic interface

Rating	Percentage
Fair	17%
Good	59%
Very good	21%
Excellent	3%
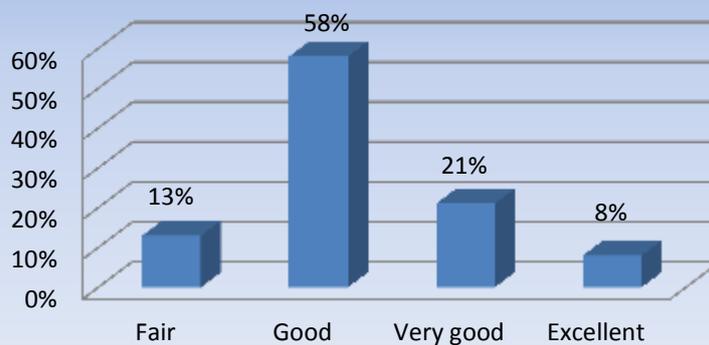
5.2. The learning process

The evaluation of the learning process was aiming to know whether or not the knowledge presented by the content of the course was transferred efficiently to the students. The answers received from the students seem to confirm the expectations based on the responses from the external evaluators collected during phase 1.

The learning method was perceived by 94% of the students as good for transferring the basic knowledge, while 79% evaluated the concept of the course as good to excellent, with 77% having no doubts or uncertainties about the validity of the teaching material used in the course. Nevertheless, only 64% found that the learning objectives could be achieved from good to excellent, which is in line with the 55% saying that their expectations were realized. This result is rather contradictory to the 90% claiming that they are going to apply the acquired knowledge in their work environment, and the 97% confirming their interest to follow new e-Learning courses on animal welfare, biosecurity, health risk, legislation and quality management.

Do you consider eLearning a good method for transferring basic knowledge to Official Veterinarians, Transport Companies and Control Post staff?

No 2%
No answers 4%
Yes 94%

The concept of the course is facilitating the learning process

- Unsatisfacto... 2%
- Fair 19%
- Good 53%
- Very good 19%
- Excellent 7%

Achievement of the learning objectives

- No answer 2%
- Unsatisfactory 3%
- Fair 31%
- Good 45%
- Very good 13%
- Excellent 6%

15

Do you think you will apply to your job the new knowledge /skills acquired within this training course?

No 8%
No answer 2%
Yes 90%
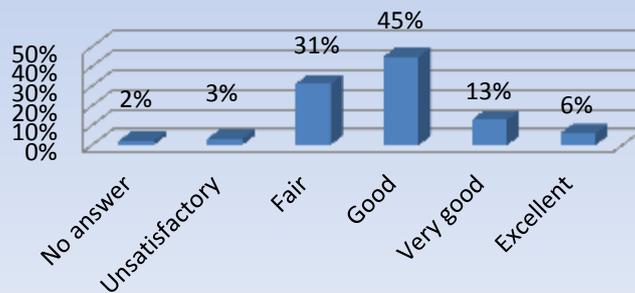
Do you have doubts or uncertainties about the content of teaching materials during the eLearning process?

No	Yes	No answer
77%	21%	2%

Prevalent feelings:

Open-mindedness, application, growth, development, enrichment, interest, utility.

Correspondence of the activities to your expectations

Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	No answer
5%	39%	34%	16%	5%	2%

Are you interested to be involved in future eLearning courses?

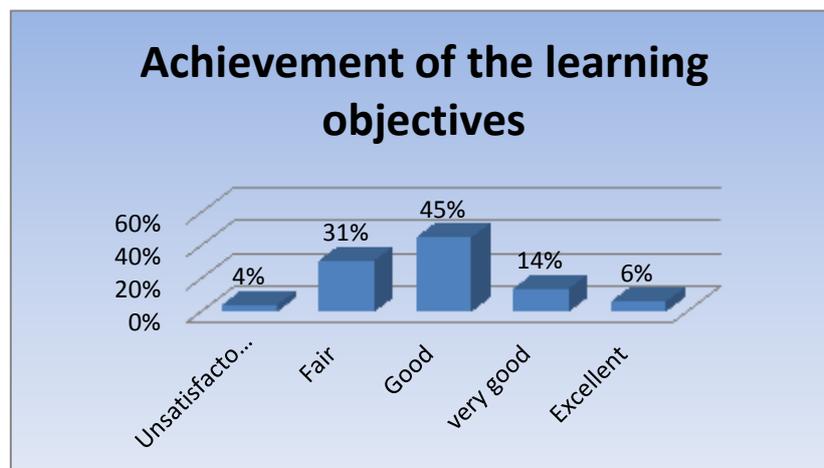| Yes	No	No answer
97%	2%	1%

5.3. *E-learning module for official veterinarians*

Fifty-one participants filled out the questionnaire, which is 86% of this sub-population. 57% followed for the first time an e-Learning course, and 96% considered it as a good method for transferring knowledge to veterinarians, so that 98% are interested to participate in other courses.

However, about the efficiency of knowledge transfer figures are somewhat lower, i.e. 76% were satisfied and 57% found their expectations being fulfilled, which is also reflected in the 65% finding the learning objectives being achieved from good to excellent. This might be explained by the mixed feelings about advantages (94%) and disadvantages (78%) related to the concept of e-Learning, with advantages being more related to practical aspects (flexibility of time and location, economy of costs of travel and subsistence, flexibility of the e-Learning path) and disadvantages to the transfer of knowledge, i.e. lack of direct contact with the experts and participants. Also 22% had doubts and uncertainties about the content of the teaching material used. These were related to open-mindedness, application, enrichment, interest, utility, development, growth, satisfaction.

Nevertheless, 92% claimed to apply the acquired knowledge and skills into their job.

Question	Yes %	No %	No answer %		
Is this your first eLearning course?	57	41	2		
Are you interested to be involved in further eLearning courses?	98	2			
Do you consider eLearning a good method for transferring basic knowledge to Official Veterinarians, Transport Companies and Control Post staff?	96	2	2		
Do you think you will apply to your job the new knowledge /skills acquired within this training course?	92	8			
Advances in e-Learning compared to face to face training?	94	6			
Disadvantages in e-Learning compared to face to face training?	78	20	2		

	Very dissatisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Neutral %	Satisfied %	Very satisfied %
Doubts or uncertainties about the teaching material?	22	78			
In general terms, are you satisfied by this eLearning experience?	2	6	16	62	14
	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
Correspondence of the activities to your expectations?	6	37	35	18	4

5.4.   E-Learning module for stakeholders

50% of these subgroup filled out the questionnaire, i.e. 7 on 14, which does not match the 60% rule. However, the majority of 57% had already experience with e-Learning courses. The current course was considered as 100% fine to transfer basic knowledge, so that 100% were in favour for participating in other courses (animal welfare and health, biosecurity, legislation, quality management), and 83% will apply the acquired knowledge in their daily working environment.

Nevertheless, with respect to the knowledge transfer itself, 50% claimed the learning objectives were achieved. In general terms only 33% were satisfied about the learning experience, and only 17% found their expectations being covered. These figures are in contrast with the statement that the transfer of basic knowledge was considered as good for 100%.

These results might be explained again by the mixed feelings about advantages (86%) and disadvantages (86%) of teaching via e-Learning. The same comments were formulated:

- advantages: flexibility of location and time, economy of the costs for travel and subsistence, autonomous selection of the elearning path

- disadvantages: lack of direct contact with experts and participants, scarce dissemination of information, problems in communicating with tutors and experts
- doubts and uncertainties about the content of the teaching material: 86%, with prevalent feelings as open-mindedness, application, growth, development, enrichment, interest, utility.

The formulated disadvantages and doubts are directly related to the process of knowledge transfer, and therefore very important. It might be explained by the fact that the modules for stakeholders were based on the module for veterinarians, without taking into account the specific requirements for stakeholders, e.g. lower education level, so that only 17% of the expectations were covered.

Question	Yes %	No %	No answer %		
Is this your first eLearning course?	43	57			
Are you interested to be involved in futher eLearning courses?	100				
Do you consider eLearning a good method for transferring basic knowledge to Official Veterinarians, Transport Companies and Control Post staff?	100				
Do you think you will apply to your job the new knowledge /skills acquired within this training course?	83	17			

	Very dissatisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Neutral %	Satisfied %	Very satisfied %
In general terms, are you satisfied by this eLearning experience?	17	17	33	33	
	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
Correspondence of the activities to your expectations?		83	17		

Achievement of the learning objectives

6. Conclusion

The evaluators, both the external evaluators during the development phase as the students evaluating the final product, were rather positive about the content of the module they have read. Response rates can be considered as moderate to very reliable.

The external evaluators in the explorative study were positive about the overall concept, and acknowledged that the learning activity and objectives could be realized by the test module they have evaluated. They formulated useful remarks and suggestions related to the content of the module for official veterinarians, the structure, specific knowledge that should be worked out or reduced, the need of practical examples or case-studies, rewording or typing errors.

Based on the students' evaluation, one can say that the final modules being development match the objectives defined by the project, and to a large extent do satisfy the students' expectations with respect to the learning activity and the learning objectives, as being expected based on the results of the first external evaluation. A response rate of resp. 67% (overall), 87% (veterinarians) and 50% (stakeholders) can be considered as having allowed to obtain unbiased results based on the 60% rule. The overall satisfaction ranges from 55 to 94% with respect to the main learning goals, while for veterinarians it was from 57% to 96%, and for stakeholders from 17 to 50%. There is also a group of undefined students, i.e. 19, of which 4 have answered the questions, which might explain the difference in rating between the overall proportions and those by the veterinarians and stakeholders. Nevertheless, one can conclude that the e-Learning course for stakeholders need further in depth evaluation, in order to know how the rate of satisfaction can be improved compared to the course for veterinarians. Scaling the modules on the education level of specific groups of students was also suggested by the external evaluators. A real exam might detect where the weaknesses are in the knowledge transfer, and so where the teaching material has to be improved.

Interests in subjects for further study are: animal welfare, biosecurity and health, legislation and quality management.

The positive aspects perceived by the students in relation to the concept of e-learning, are:

- Flexibility of location and time
- Economy of costs for travelling and subsistence
- Autonomous selection of the learning parts
- Open-mindedness, application, enrichment, interest, utility, development, growth, satisfaction.

The following points related to the concept of e-learning are less appreciated:

- Lack of direct contact with experts and participants
- Scarce dissemination of information
- Problems in communicating with tutors and experts
- Access to website
- Availability of informatics programs
- Use of e-mail system
- Difficulty in managing the time to devote to study.