

WP 2 Needs Analysis



Lifelong Learning Programme

Key Activity 2: Languages

Project No: 531009-LLP-2012-BG-KA2-KA2MP



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

TellMeAStory Needs Analysis Report

Introduction

The objective of the questionnaire was to gather information about the status of the tour guides mainly in some rural areas of Europe, their level of command of foreign languages, their interest in foreign languages, the means by which they prefer to study these languages and if they already use short stories or legends in their daily work.

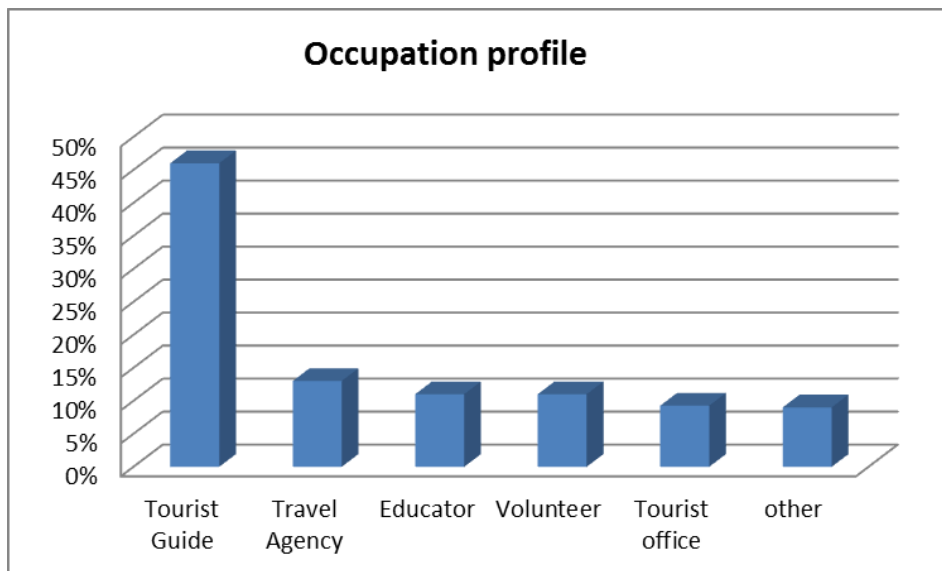
The data for the TellMeAStory needs analysis was collected from Bulgaria, Romania, The Netherlands, Austria, Italy, The UK, France and Spain and very selectively in Cyprus, Portugal, Malta and some other countries outside Europe. The main target groups which we addressed with our questionnaire were above all the tour guides, people who work for travel agencies or tourist offices, educators in the tourist industry, volunteers and as well as other people who work in the tourist industry and deal with tourists and guided tours.

There were two ways of filling out the questionnaire, which was translated into various languages, either online or face to face.

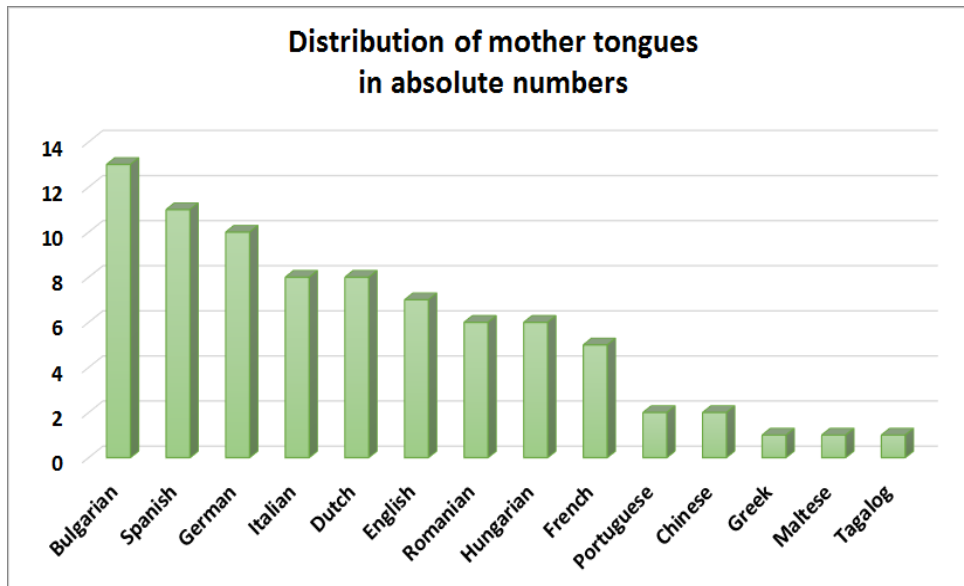
Type of participants.

A total of 81 people have filled in the questionnaire with the following percentage rates: 46% tourist guides, 13% people who work for travel agencies, 11 % educators of the tourist industry, 11% volunteers and tourist office as well as others each 9%.

The aim to reach the most important target group of the tourist guides is herewith fulfilled.

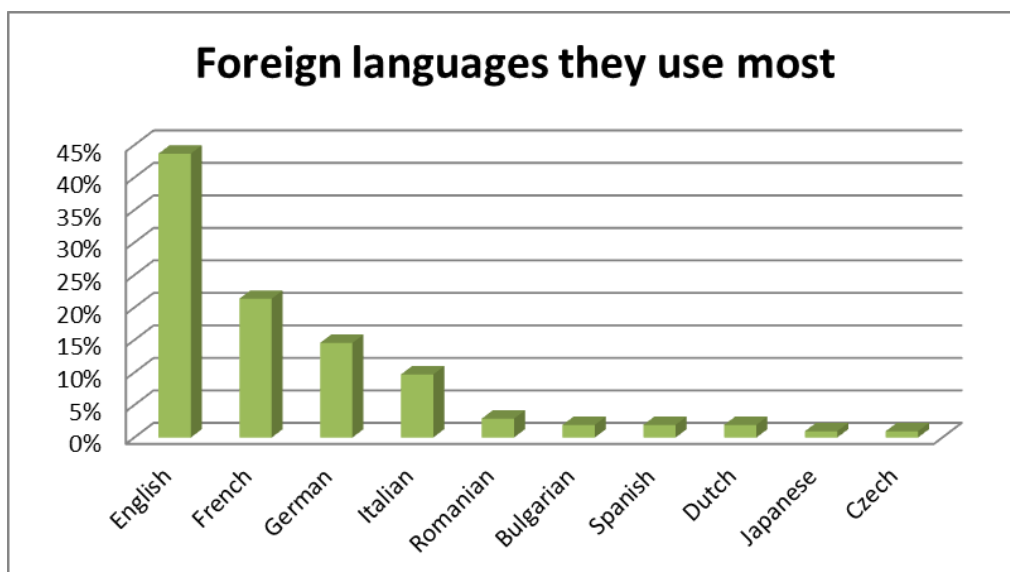


An interesting fact is that these 81 survey participants represent 14 different mother tongues.



Foreign languages used on guided tours

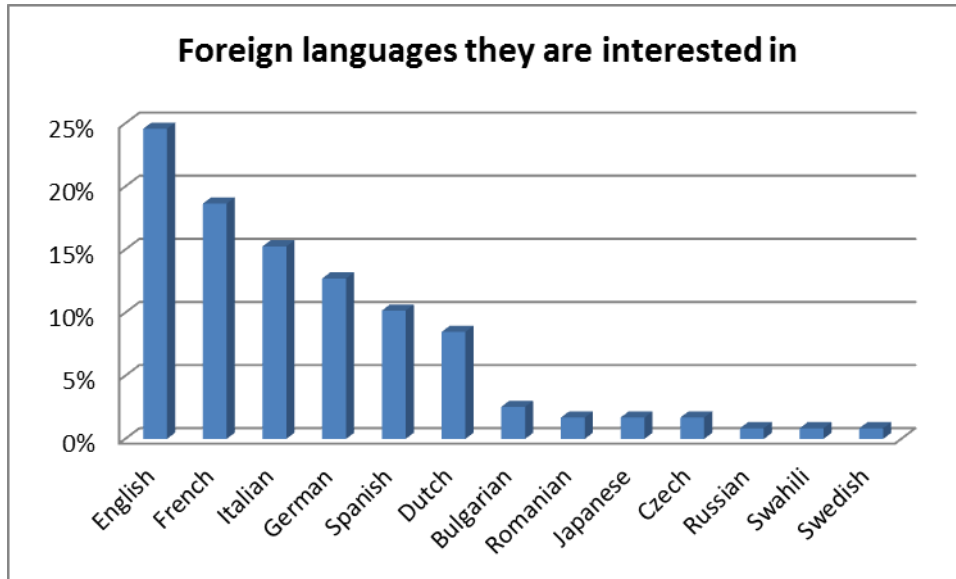
The following chart shows the foreign languages used in their daily work. It's not a surprise that the "big-four" languages in Europe English, French, German and Italian come first. However it's a surprise that Spanish hasn't been more widely used as this language is regarded as one of the top three languages in the world nowadays. Maybe one answer could be that Spanish speaking tourists haven't yet reached the areas where the questionnaire was made.



Foreign languages they are interested in

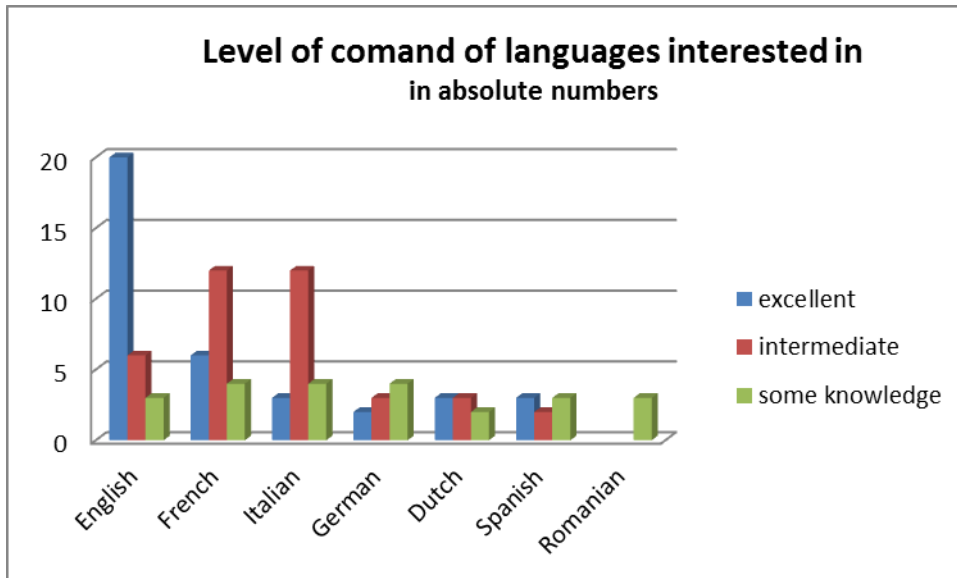
One thing is the languages they use and another thing the languages they are interested in, this is important for the TellMeAStory project.

When we asked the participants what languages they are most interested in, the picture changes a little bit. Again the “big-four languages” lead the list, but Spanish joins the tier 1 group, all of them have a double digit percentage rate followed by Dutch with 8%. The rest of the languages oscillate between 3% and 1%.



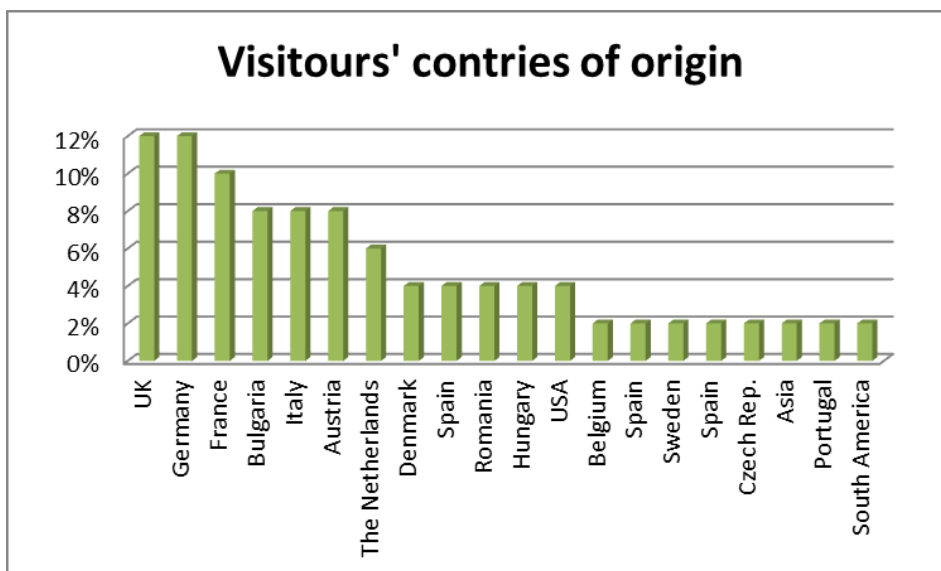
Even though 44% of the participants use English in their daily business, 25% are still interested in this language, which shows that English is definitely a must in the tourist industry.

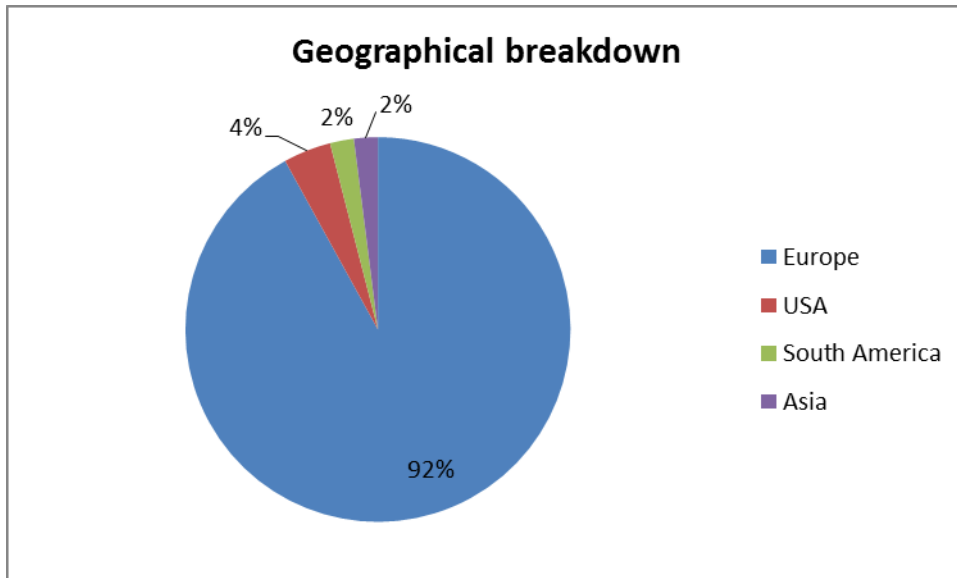
On the next chart the different level of command of the languages is shown. What stands out clearly is the number of participants with an excellent level of English followed by the intermediate level of French and Italian. The other languages are all on a much lower level.



Origin of the tourists

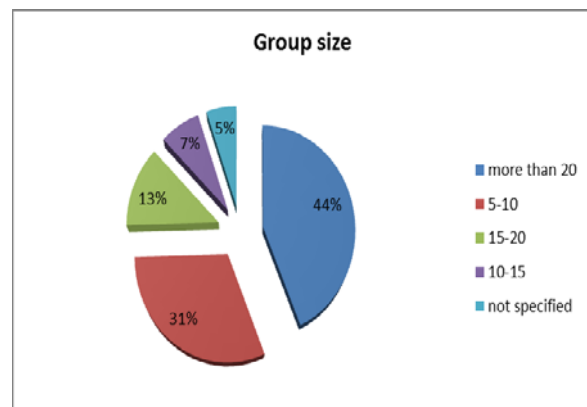
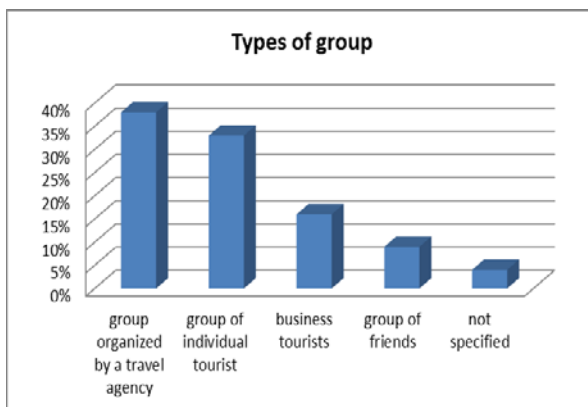
When asked where the tourists come from, the result shows undoubtedly that the rural regions the project focuses on have a staggering 92% of tourists from Europe, but only 4% from the USA, 2% from South America and 2% from Asia. In other words there is still a big potential for these regions to increase their share of incoming tourist from the USA, Asia and South America in the future. Especially the latter two regions represent many emerging countries which haven't been hit by recession for the financial crisis as the majority of the European countries.





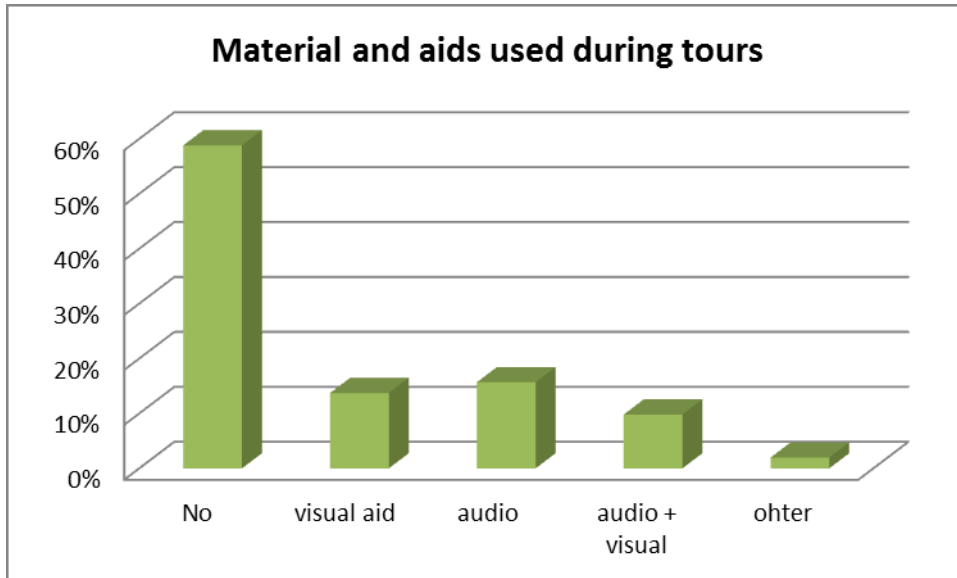
Type of groups and group size

As expected the majority of the tourists travel in groups organized by travel agencies, followed by small groups of families or friends and business tourist.



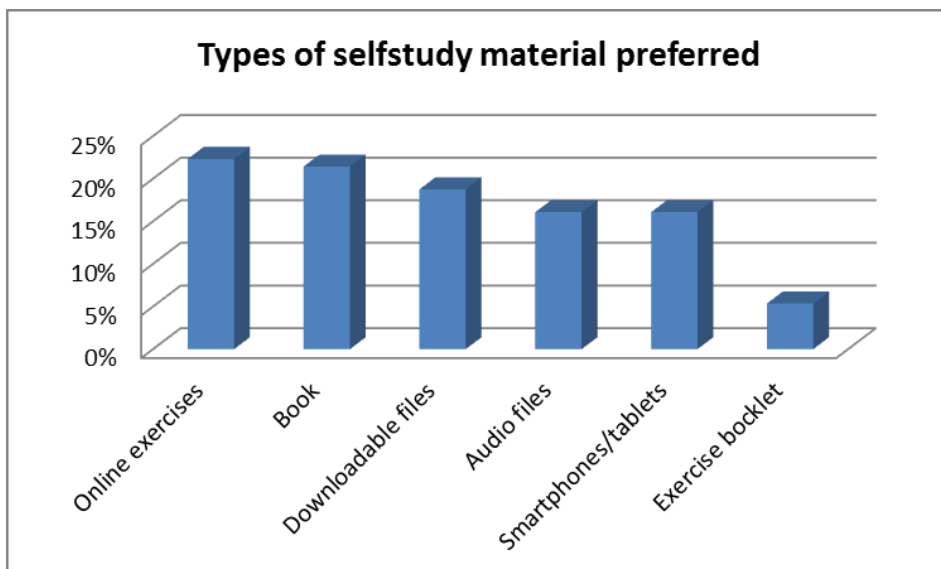
Material and aids used during guided tours

Even though we live in a communication era where our lives are influenced by all sorts of communication tools, 59% of the participants don't use any material like visuals, audio files or any other aid at all on their tours. It seems that the majority of guides stick to traditional pattern of guiding. Everybody has seen groups of tourists with a guide in the middle explaining something and some people standing a little bit further away, because there isn't enough space, trying desperately to understand what was being said.



Importance of foreign languages and self-study material

96% of the participants stated that improving their foreign language competence is important. Regarding their preference of self-study material digital technology is accepted. The percentages oscillate between 22% and 16%, completely off is the exercise booklet with only 5%. Especially in foreign language learning digital technology offers great advantages for the learners. It can combine written, interactive, speaking, audio and visual elements, with the new devices that are easy to handle and the learners are independent, they can study when and where they want to. This is an important aspect because tourist guides are very often not at home or office for a long period of time.



Speaking, listening and reading comprehension of the foreign language

The target group stated undoubtedly that speaking is the most important part of the language competence, it counts for 73%, followed by listening 15% and reading 12 %. It's obvious tourist guides need all the above speaking capabilities for their job. The tier 1 group of languages (English, French, Italian, German and Spanish) plus Dutch count for 91% of the interests including speaking, listening and reading.

Business jargon

A little bit more than half of the participants, to be more exact 54%, expressed that the need for specific words of the tourist industry (business jargon) in middle, whereas 33% said it's high compared to 13% which regards this topic as a low value.

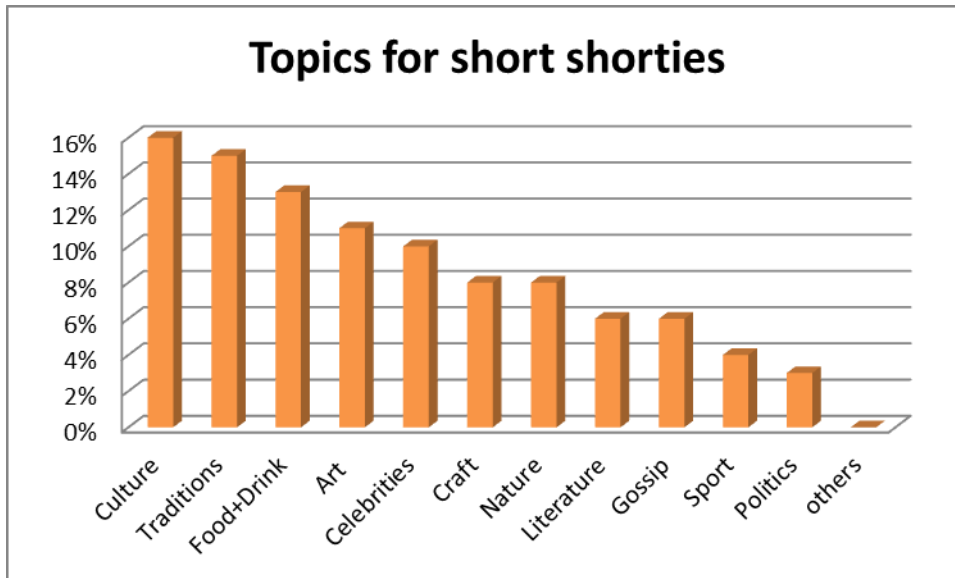
Characteristic of the guided tours

A big surprise was when the target group was asked if they thought traditional guided tours were focused too much on monuments and historical events: 73% think this is true. This is what the majority of the people feel when they go on guided tours. However, 90 % of the survey participants stated that they already use short stories or legends in their tours. Which shows some sort of a discrepancy or they find themselves in a dilemma that they have a lot of historical facts about all the places but not enough "non-historical" material which they can use..

That's where the objective of the TellMeAStory project comes in: producing real life foreign language material based on interesting, amusing short stories and legends combined with modern technology for language learning will make the guided tours more attractive to tourists.

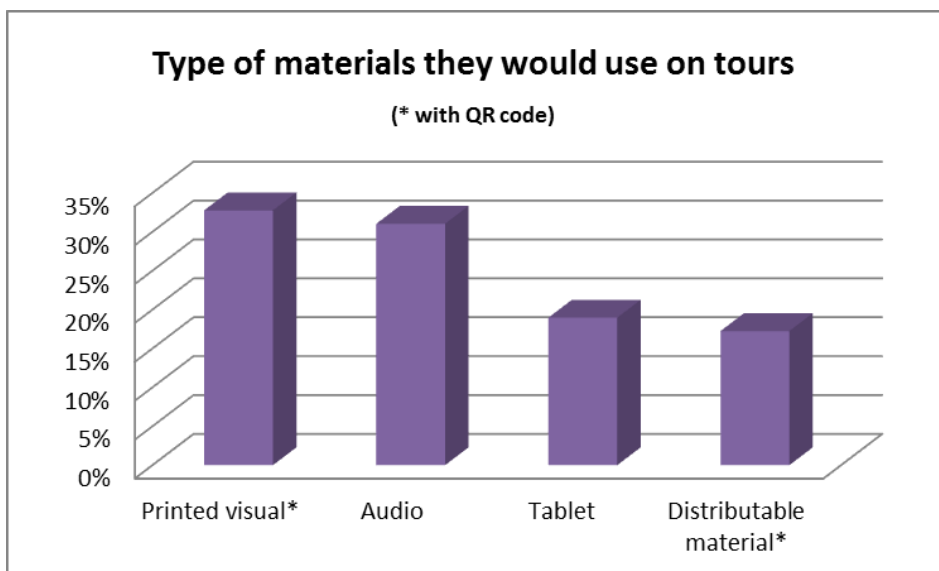
Topics for short stories and legends

During this survey the participants were asked to select from over 11 proposed topics for short stories or legends which would be the most interesting ones for them. Culture (16%) and traditions/customs (15%) are on the first two positions followed by food + drink (13%), art (11%) and celebrities (10%). The rest of the topics oscillate between 8 % and 3%.



Type of materials they would use on guided tours

The participants expressed that printed visuals with QR codes and audio files are their first choice; materials they can put on their tablets is the second choice and at the last position is any other distributable material with QR codes. QR codes are quick response codes which can be read by smart phones using a specific app to get more information about any topic on the internet – this is widely used by consumer goods companies.



Conclusion:

The conclusions of this survey which are relevant for the TellMeAStory project are as follows:

- The foreign languages they are interested in are (in order of importance):
 - English
 - French
 - Italian
 - Spanish
 - Dutch
 - Bulgarian
 - Romanian
 - Japanese
 - Czech
 - Russian
 - Swahili
 - Swedish
- The speaking capabilities is the absolute top issue for the tourist guides. All the material which is going to be produced must focus on this aspect. It must clearly help to improve the speaking of the learners, it needs to have a correspondence to reality, adapted to the needs of the tourist guides and practicality in the usage.
- The learning material must include new technology like web-based interactive exercises, downloadable files, audio files, applications which can run on smart phones or tablets as well as a book. Maybe the latter can be a digital book which can be download and printed out on demand.
- Business jargon isn't very important. However, when provided it is welcomed.
- The proposed topics for short stories and legends according to the survey and their importance are:
Crafts

- The material which the guides would use on their tours are:
 - Printed visuals with QR codes. Collaboration with local entities, see below.
 - Audio files
 - Applications which can run on a tablets. This could include photos, plans, a simple presentation, animated presentation with audio, auto files, films, etc.
 - Distributable material with QR codes. For this material a collaboration with local entities can be thought which could sponsor this type of material. So they can advertise their products, services or their company and at the same time collaborate in one the proposed topics e.g. food + drink.

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