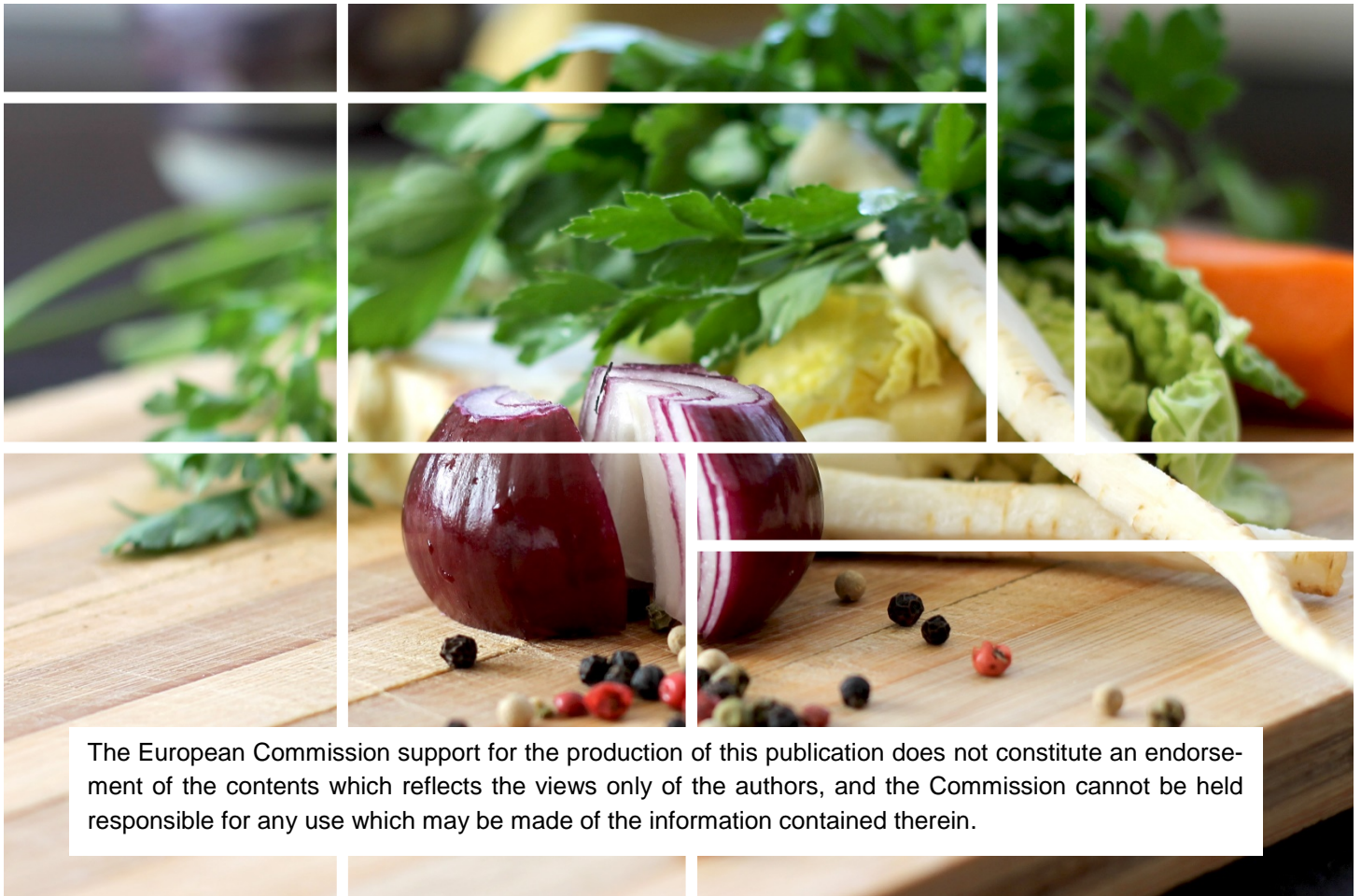




# PROJECT REKUK

Vocational Training for Chefs and Executive Chefs of Large-Scale Kitchens in Sustainable Food and Kitchen Management

## A Training Implementation Guide



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# Introduction

## Overall Goal

This Guide represents the complementary document (Intellectual Output 2) to the set of training materials (slides, script, handbook, training folder – Intellectual Output 1) providing the “recipe” for implementing the Vocational Training of Executive Chefs and Chefs of Large-scale Kitchens in Resource-sustainable Management in its five Modules: Energy Efficiency, Waste Management, Foods Use, Sustainable Menu Design, Communication & Marketing. Both Intellectual Outputs were produced within the Project 2016-1-AT01-KA202-016677 “Vocational Training for Chefs and Executive Chefs (ReKuK)” 2016 – 2018 co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

## Group Dynamics

While the training materials were, generally, to be extensively adjusted to the strongly differing national specifics of the participating countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Italy, Germany), the training structure as designed at the project beginning proved to be positively suitable in all of them. For this reason, the training structure recommended below is the same for all 4 countries. Variations in the sequence of alternating educational material and more/fewer additional exercises may be entailed solely by the state of knowledge of the concrete students participating in the training and thus by an individual group dynamics which cannot be predicted in its entire multitude of combinations. To this end, some general guidance is provided further below; in the same time, the trainers are expected to be, however, flexible enough, in order to swiftly respond to any specific situation in terms of an adjusted training structure.

## Target Group

The training course addresses fully-fledged chefs and executive chefs in large-scale kitchens, i.e. the knowledge provided in the standard training for these professionals is a prerequisite for the successful progress within the time and structure herewith suggested. Prospective chefs and executive chefs still in their standard training may find this course equally useful, they should eventually allow for a longer time for achieving the same progress, though.

## Knowledge Base

It should be also noted that the training contents and the therefrom resulting training structure have been based on the overall resource-efficiency orientation and agricultural diversity in the EU. Thus for EU member states, the recommended training structure will, generally, prove suitable as it is, as items, such as organic products, waste prevention, energy efficiency etc. either are already or are advancing to being an issue in the communal catering in the EU. As

the training course is uploaded (free of charge) in the internet and can be thus used also in countries outside the EU, trainers and users in the latter regions may wish to extend the training structure by several hours, in order to introduce an eventually required knowledge base prior to beginning with this course.

# Training Structure

## Basic Structure

The recommended training structure foresees **for each** of the following five Modules: Energy Efficiency, Waste Management, Foods Use, Sustainable Menu Design, Communication & Marketing the following general structure:

**20 minutes presentation of the situation in the own kitchen**

**30 minutes lecture, 15 minutes discussion chapter issues (Chapter 1 of module) incl. check understanding**

*15 minutes 1<sup>st</sup> break*

**30 minutes lecture, 15 minutes discussion chapter issues (Chapter 2 of module) incl. check understanding**

*10 minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> break*

**30 minutes lecture, 15 minutes discussion chapter issues (Chapter 3 of module) incl. check understanding**

*10 minutes 3<sup>rd</sup> break*

**60 minutes exercises**

**20 minutes wrap-up feedback on kitchen problems**

**TOTAL: 4,50 hours (270 minutes) per module**

The content of the training materials in each module is adjusted to this structure. The **maximum number of modules worked out on one day is two**, in order not to overload the students with too much information. The training itself can thus be completed within 2,5 days, the availability of the chefs and executive chefs provided. Such an intensive mode is suitable for e.g. school or university large-scale kitchens, as the training can be scheduled for the holiday periods without jeopardising the service process. For other large-scale kitchens (e.g. of companies), the training can be scheduled for periods when the majority of the employees are on holidays and/or the kitchen itself has a shutdown for the vacation of the own staff.

The training can be also held **during an entire week**. In this case, **1 module** is recommended to be **fully worked out every day/evening/morning**, depending on the availability of the chefs and executive chefs.

## Adjustment Options

The initially developed training course structure shown above has proved generally positively effective during the implementation of the training design & test (IO2). Some minor adjustments listed below regarding the sequence of lecture material and exercises and the rigidity of the time table may be useful when adapting to the individual group dynamics:

- It has proven beneficial to encourage the chefs and executive chefs to decide on the time for the training as this will help maximise the number of participants.
- It is highly advisable to keep the training oriented as much as possible towards its practical orientation, e.g. to lay the emphasis on as many as possible exercises and to encourage and/or initiate discussions and experience exchange, as the challenges are born in the practice and are to be solved there. From this perspective, the slides and the script (IO1) should be considered rather as “auxiliary” means towards achieving good and sustainable results in the practice. This approach has proved that chefs and executive chefs are highly enthusiastic and committed when challenged to find solutions regarding decidedly practical matters.
- The trainer/user may thus wish to integrate the exercises and discussion into the presentation, instead of allotting fixed time slots for them, while keeping, in total, the same timeframe for them. This is also an opportunity to adjust the lectures to the participants' level of expertise by choosing appropriate exercises from the exercise pools. Experience during this workshop design test (IO2) has shown that long sessions of frontal lecture are not necessarily an optimal approach to achieve best training results. From this point of view, the training folder (IO1) plays an essential role as a source of model tasks to be solved by the participants. This approach allows also for varying the monotony of the frontal presentation and thus for more intensively engaging the participants in the solution-finding process while helping them understand and retain the new information presented.
- In addition to the previous items, the proficiency can be judged by the trainer and derived from the introduction slot, in which measures already implemented in the own kitchen are presented. One more useful approach is to request the level of knowledge (“beginner”, intermediate”, “advanced”) of the participants at the moment the latter subscribe for the training course.
- The proficiency could be also estimated by supplying the prospective participants, when subscribing, with a small number of preparatory, “enrolment” questions, such as: “which regional agricultural products do you know”, or “what waste prevention measure have you successfully implemented in your kitchen?”, etc.. This way, the prospective participants are given food for thought prior to the course start.
- In the case of a distinct mix of “beginners” and “advanced”, the trainer/user should balance the discussions in a manner enabling the beginners to participate equally intensively in them. The background of this approach lays not only in the classical pedagogy (i.e. not to discourage a student from learning), but also because hardly a participant with absolute lack of any knowledge would subscribe, and the “beginner’s” level may allow for the desired distance to a problem and thus, by providing a fresh perspective to it and/or to suggest a simple and efficient solution.
- An adjusted approach is recommended also depending on the numerical proportion “chefs : executive chefs” in the training group. While the former’s demand is naturally



more intensively oriented towards practical solutions, some section on methodology may be shortened during lectures to the benefit of a higher number of exercises (cf. e.g. the Checklist for Module Energy Efficiency), and vice-versa.

- The duration of the training being recommended as 4,50 hours (270 minutes) per module may appear, for the reason mentioned above, too long for chefs (estimated optimum via feedback during IO2: 2 – 3 hours) compared to executive chefs. On the other hand, too widely omitted theoretical/methodological sections in the training can result, too, in risks regarding its practical implementation: when a chef chooses to optimise e.g. the energy consumption in his/her kitchen and thus employs the services of an electrician to conduct necessary measurements, the chef must be able to correctly instruct the latter as to what and when is to be measured. This knowledge is provided in the methodological sections of the training materials, structured to fit the training structure. An answer to this open-end question (the ideal balance) will be given during the implementation of the training course.
- Discussions should be given room to develop, especially when the participants start upon these in an impulsive manner. This gives participants the opportunity to compare notes and so to help each other regarding problems of the daily routine and to adapt good-practice approaches. Also, discussions may help to correctly identify a not necessarily obvious target group as communicators and multipliers (e.g. teachers in schools with own large-scale kitchens), in particular when the chef and the executive chef contemplate a significant change in the service (e.g. reduced meat share of the dishes).
- More complicated issues or concepts not commonly discussed in the kitchens (e.g. carbon footprint or units to measure energy) should be explained simply and ideally that should be supported by a small calculating exercise.
- Also, after the breaks, a warm-up profitable for continuing the lecture as intensive as required could be a small-group exercise. This may also serve as an option to better obtain the opinions and personal experience of the participants.
- Generally, group exercises have proved more effective for learning than individual exercises as during the former, as they provide a driving force towards motivation for coping with new knowledge and against discouragement. Also, the results tend to be more complete when more individuals contribute to the solution. Therefore, the maximum participant number advisable is suggested to be increased from the original five to up to ten participants, in order to provide a sufficient small-group numbers for exercises and to allow for group interaction to build and gain momentum.
- Should the trainings be held by an external trainer (i.e. not from this project team), it is recommended to send the materials to the external trainer at least one month before, in order to enable him to thoroughly prepare him- or herself and to harmonise expectations and goals. It may be also valuable to allow the external trainer to introduce small changes to the materials, depending on the concrete situation (e.g. extra data on the

prices of the appliances used in the specific kitchen as well as their energy consumption, etc.) and to adjust them to their presentation style.

- It is important to note that Waste Prevention and Energy Efficiency as well as Marketing & Communication are no common issues neither in the professional training of chefs and executive chefs nor later in their practice in large-scale kitchens, and, as a consequence, most of the former do not consider themselves obliged to assume responsibility for those aspects. When addressing these three modules, it is important to evoke not only interest in the participants but also to demonstrate that they can act towards a better resource-efficiency performance – and towards an optimal communication of the results to the best advantage for the kitchen. Last but not least, energy efficiency and an optimised waste management are not only possibilities for kitchens to act with more responsibility towards the environment and thus to attract more clients, they also enable considerable financial savings for the kitchens.
- All five modules provide the participants with a sound negotiation base for budget adjustments, e.g. to effect savings through waste prevention (and thus disposal fees) and for this, to invest e.g. in high-quality organic ingredients.
- All five modules should be considered of equal weight, as the four technical ones present the basis for a resource-efficient large-scale kitchen, and the fifth provides the means and methods how to communicate success and progress towards resource efficiency. As the vast majority of large-scale kitchens are strongly dependant on keeping a high level of customers, the fifth module supplies the final tool for achieving this goal.

## Certificates / Graduation

Since 2016, a process has been in progress in the EU member states towards harmonising their requirements on the level of competences, skills and knowledge obtained by each type of training in both the formal and the non-formal sectors, i.e. thus establishing a National Qualification Framework/European Qualification Framework (NQF/EQF level allocation process). This training course is preliminarily and still informally allocated Level 5 of the EQF and same within the NQF for Austria, Germany and Italy. As the Czech project partner is a university, the NQF level allocation in this case is subject to the regulations of the formal education sector in the Czech Republic.

Currently (August 2018 – project conclusion month), this process is not yet completed. Moreover, national requirements in terms of administrative specifics may prevail in each EU member state. Trainers from EU member states are thus advised to communicate with their respective National Authority on this matter, in order to receive guidance on how to offer this training in line with these new requirements.

Trainers/users outside the EU are advised to inform themselves on the requirements of their respective national legislation in the vocational educational sector.

A possible option for trainers/users from EU member states, in the meantime, is to employ e.g. confirmation certificates issued by the training institution. Such may be, unless otherwise stipulated in the respective national legislation for the non-formal educational sector:

- 1) a confirmation certificate upon successful assessment of the filled-in training folder. For obtaining a certificate, the filling in, the presentation of the training folder and its positive evaluation by the examiners are compulsory. To this end, after a short instruction, the training folder available for each module should to be filled for the elected modules (**at least 2**) and be successfully discussed during or within 1-3 months after the training. 2 modules are considered by the project team a minimum of competence the student should command. The examiners are the training team, responsible also for the issuing of the confirmation certificate

or

- 2) a confirmation of participation certificate, in case the student has merely attended the course but produced no filled-in training folder and participated in no discussion of it with the training team.

This approach is recommended to be followed in both training options, i.e. the “live” training and the self-study. A student having preferred the latter can obtain a confirmation certificate, too, only upon a positively evaluated discussion of his/her training folder with at least 2 filled-in modules.