



EPIG

EDUCATING PROFESSIONALS ON ISLANDS IN GASTROTOURISM

Final Seminar | Åland | 15-17.09.2022



Introduction

In connection with the Åland Harvest Festival 2022, EPIG arranged its Final Seminar on Åland. In this Final Seminar two of three projectpartners was present: Åland Vocational School (ÅYG) and Kuressaare Training Center from Saaremaa, Estonia (KAK). From the beginning, the project was planned to be a collaboration between Åland Vocational School, Gutegymnasiet on Gotland and Kuressaare Training Center on Saaremaa, but in the end it was completed by ÅYG and KAK.

The event objectives was to contribute to the general objectives of the EPIG project by:

- Building up the shared understanding of the EPIG project and its expected outcomes
- Taking a closer look at the lessons learned throughout the project
- Based on EPIG's developed curriculum: strengthening the participant's motivation and competence development by participating in study visits and workshops in order to get a deeper learning in gastrotourism.

The Final Seminar began with a presentation of the project and its results to stakeholders of the project (15.09. kl. 10:00-12:00). This part of the seminar was open to all interested persons. An invitation had been sent to decisionmakers for education on Åland, concerned teachers at Åland Vocational School (ÅYG) and Åland University of Applied Sciences (HÅ), project workers at ÅYG and HÅ and Kuressaare Ametikool (KAK), officials at ÅLR/Central Baltic, stakeholders from Saaremaa Island (Ösel), stakeholders from Åland (invited via Visit Åland and Ålands Näringsliv). This part was also streamed live on internet, and could be followed by anyone interested via you tube <https://youtu.be/LGBoJnvzQQc>. We had presentations from involved stakeholders, projectmanagers, teachers and students about their experiences of the project and of gastrotourism.

The Final Seminar lasted for three days for the project participants from ÅYG and KAK and included both practical and theoretical elements, which are presented below. In connection with the event, the project also held a steering group meeting.



FINAL SEMINAR 15TH OF SEPTEMBER

The Final Seminar, the general part, included following presentations:

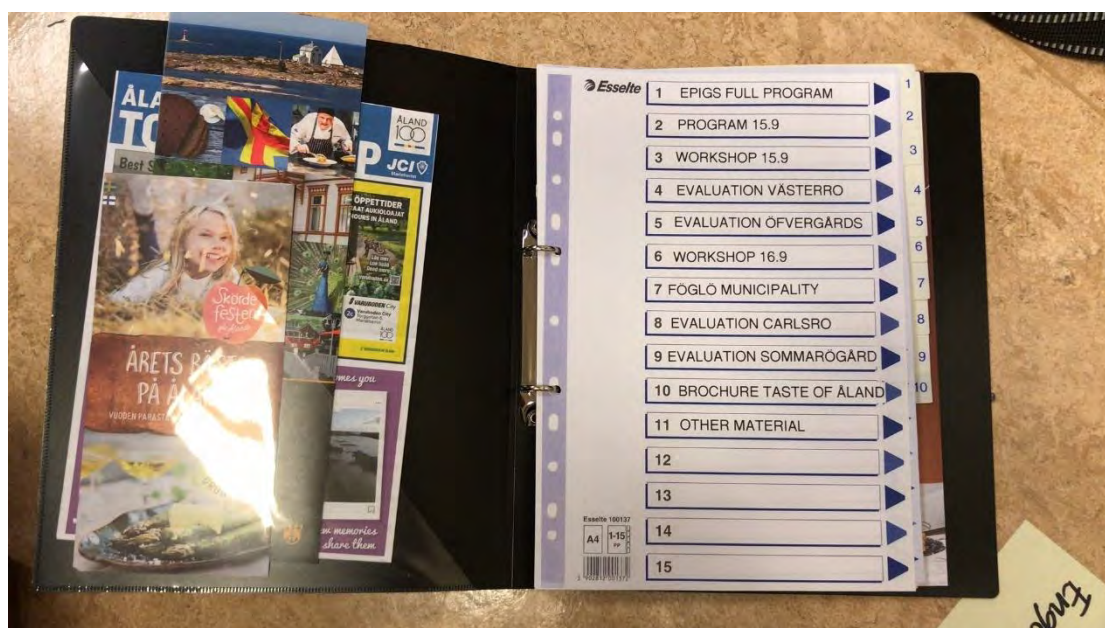
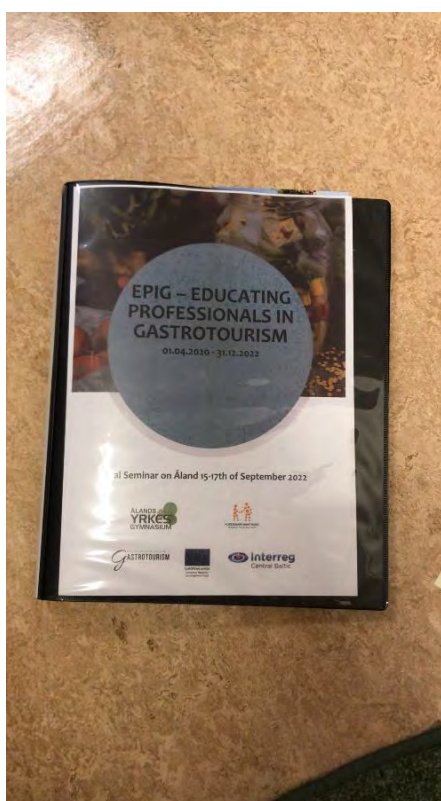
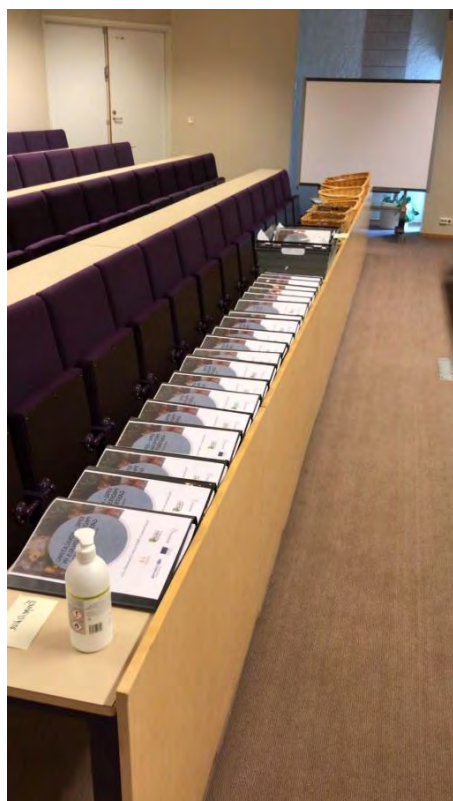
- Welcome and opening words by projectmanager Yana Jahren: What is your favorite food related experience? Why?
- Subsequently, Entrepreneur, consultant and teacher Harriet Strandvik gave her view of how to combine the pleasure of traveling with eating: What is gastrotourism?
- Lecturer Anna-Lena Groos, initiator of the project, gave us a look back at the start.
- After that we had a presentations from EPIGs leadpartner, Åland Vocational School (Projectmanager Yana Jahren), and from EPIGs projectpartner, Kuressaare Training Center on Saaremaa (Projectmanager Ave Paaskivi).





We also got a closer presentation of the curriculum in Gastronomic Tourism developed in the project by Joanna Salmén, teacher at the Åland Vocational School, Restaurant and Catering Industry and finally we got to hear the experiences of student Wilma Silfversten.

For the project participants from Estonia and Åland, the day continued with workshop and study visit. In the workshop the project participants discussed and evaluated the curriculum: objectives, central content, teaching methods and other practical conditions, knowledge requirements etc.





After the workshop, at 14:00, the project participants went to their first studvisit, to Västerra, a study visit to experience unique storytelling, [Västerra – Västerrö – ett litet paradis \(vasterro.ax\)](http://vasterro.ax).





3. Rate the quality of the reception that we received from the host. What was his/her storytelling like?

Mer information

Very good	10
Good	7
Okay	1
Less good	0
Badly	0





In the evaluation the projectparticipants rated Västerro as a GOOD gastronomic experience in a scale from very good-good-okay-less good-badly.

gastrotourism- experience
 key but plastic Good food servera varm och kommer open with the guests
 different food food Good guests att big group
 plates and forks friend place and the story things smaller groups
 table settings cool styl friendly and hospitality

The day ended with dinner at Kallas city restaurant where we also had the opportunity to listen to the restaurant owner Timo Vetrio's story about Kallas' business idea and what he think is important if you want your customers to have a gastronomic experience.





FINAL SEMINAR 16TH OF SEPTEMBER

Early wake up on Friday! We started from Mariehamn at 8:30 in a shared bus to our first study visit, Öfvergårds, a small applefarm in the countryside, in the village of Tjudö. The bus journey took approx 45 minutes. During the bus journey, with the help of a local guide born in Estonia, we got to know more about Åland, the Harvest Festival and especially the places we were going to visit this day. <https://ofvergards.ax/>

We got a very professional story told by the owners Jan and Anna Alm, how this business started (from a weather catastrophe with hail that ruined the apple harvest) with tastings, guided tours, picnic table in the apple orchard and the possibility for customers to rent a apple tree. Of course we also had tastings of their apple juices accompanied by nibbles of Åland flavours.



3. Rate the quality of the reception that we received from the host. What was his/her storytelling like?

Mer information

Very good	19
Good	1
Okay	0
Less good	0
Badly	0



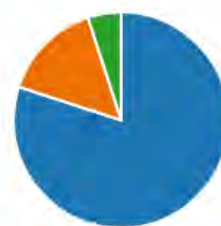
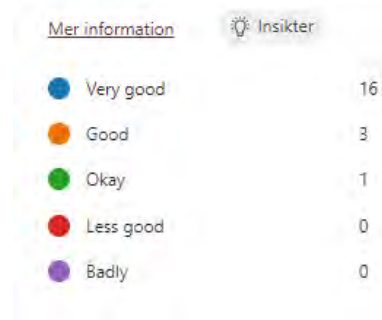






In the evaluation the project participants rated Öfvergårds as a VERY GOOD gastronomic experience in a scale from very good-good-okay-less good-badly.

9. Rate your gastronomic experience (the big picture)!



After Öfvergårds we took a trip to the viewpoint Soltuna and from there on to the next place, Bolstaholm.



Bolstaholm is a well-kept estate of 400 hectares, of which 75 hectares are arable land and 40 hectares are pasture for the farm's 50 beef cows of the Charolais breed.



Bolstaholm dates back to the 1400 century. It is a stately manor house that both Ålanders and tourists are happy to visit during the Harvest Festival. The Sundberg family with Ann, Henrik, Mattias and Alva lives and works at Bolstaholm. With the help of our guide Janne Kütimaa, we had the opportunity to listen to Götriks Sundberg who told us about Bolstaholm's history. Götrik Sundberg is Henrik Sundberg's father,



During the Harvest Festival there is a lots of other locally produced products to buy at Bolstaholm.





The main focus on Bolstaholm is meat animal production with farm thinkery. All meat produced is sold directly to the customer. We were served their own meat burgers.

In the afternoon it was time to test a more theoretichal method for learning about gastrotourism. The topic of the workshop was taste memories and taste sensations.

The purpose of the structure of this workshop was that the project participants together tried to develop proposals for measures that would have made a bad taste memory a good taste memory. After the workshop, we listened to a lecture on the theme **The taste of a place – the unique and marketable!** The lecturer was Harriet Strandvik, consultant in food crafts, Master of Education and Teacher in Home Economics.



In the evening we went to visit Stallhagen.



Stallhagen is a craft brewery in Åland with a pleasant family bistro. Promising beers, nice natural patio, good vibes! Johanna Dahlgren talked about Stallhagen's business concept. She also took the time to answer questions from our project participants!







FINAL SEMINAR 17TH OF SEPTEMBER

On our last day together, we visited different places on the island of Föglö in Ålands archipelago. We visited three places on Föglö: Enigheten, Carlsro and Sommarögård.



To our help, we had a guide with us that at the same time is an expert in educating in tourism.

Enigheten (The Unity) is a historic guesthouse in the village of Degerby, Föglö. It has been functioning as a guesthouse since the 18th century. It is a couple from Estonia that owns it today. They offer 10 comfortable rooms for 1-5 guests and 3 cosy log cottages for 1-6 guests. The guests have access to a beach with a grill cottage, a rowing boat and cooking facilities. Enigheten is an idyllic stay for families with children. In their garden they have a rope swing, trampoline and different lawn games to play.

Ainar, the owner of Enigheten, explained why he and his wife chose to move to Åland and what their business idea is, what experience they want to give their guests.





Lunch was taken at Föglös beach hotel Carlsro. There we also got to listen to an interesting presentation about how the owner developed the business idea, the experience they want to give their guests. It should feel like coming back to 1920s century in Denmark.







Our last visit in Föglö was to the farm Sommarögård. The farm's owner Veronika told us, during a "tractor safari", about their farm, their animal production, their rental cottages for tourists, etc. We were invited to "fika" and we also tasted samples of their homemade sausages.









In the evaluation the project participants rated Sommarögård as a VERY GOOD gastronomic experience in a scale from very good-good-okay-less good-badly.

9. Rate your gastronomic experience (the big picture)!

[Mer information](#)

Insikter

Very good	11
Good	4
Okay	1
Less good	0
Badly	0



Rate the quality of the reception that we received from the host. What was his/her storytelling like?

[Mer information](#)

Very good	14
Good	2
Okay	0
Less good	0
Badly	0



On the way back to Mariehamn we visited Skeppargården Pellas. The farm has an interesting story that was told by a descendant Freya Darby, today closer to 90 years old. In the house, a local wheat bread is baked for visitors, Ålands hemvete, a bread that many Ålanders eat for breakfast with a lot of butter on it and perhaps also locally produced cream cheese.







Finally, we visited a restaurant in Mariehamn with the name Compagniet. Fredrik, the head waiter, talked about the background to Compagniet's business concept, what they want the guest to experience. The vision behind Compagniet's food and décor is that it should be a given meeting place with many surprises, from indoor boules court to Bengal tigers and nice lounge hanging out. The idea is that Compagniet will be experienced as a bridge between Åland and the Far East with inspiration from the trading companies that brought the mysterious and beautiful to Europe. Compagniet should be a place where you can eat well and spend time with friends, family and colleagues in peace and quiet.

On the last night with “the EPIG gang”, gifts were handed out and speeches were given. EPIG has been about learning from each other (Åland and Ösel/Saaremaa) and seeking synergy effects, develop a curriculum for complementary education in GastroTourism and compile a teacher's manual. A main question in this work has of course been: what knowledge is important if you work with Gastrotourism? For two years, with challenges such as covid-19, two cultures have met, two schools, two different education systems. Experiences have been exchanged and ideas have been “hatched” on how to train professionals in gastrotourism. It will be exciting to keep in touch and see what has happened after 1-2 years.







Thank you to everyone who participated actively and helped me complete these three days in the spirit of gastrotourism!

Yana Jahren

Project manager and leadpartner