



SKILLS 4CMT

Country report Estonia

Sector-Specific Skills Development in Coastal and Maritime Tourism: IO1 Occupational profiles

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May, 2021

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Introduction

European Commission highlights that limited awareness of the specific skill needs and a requirement for professional skills hamper coastal and maritime tourism (CMT) competitiveness at the European Union (EU) level. The European Strategy for More Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism states that education should be used to match the supply of skills with the demand of the labour market and brings out the challenges for Coastal and Maritime Tourism: knowledge gap, lack of skills and innovation, environmental pressures, access to EU funding, fragmentation and volatility. Therefore, the EU member states are invited to take into consideration challenges related to sector-specific skills development facing the EU tourism industry for taking advantage of new opportunities. In particular, the European Commission underlines the importance of closing skills gaps and promoting the development of the skills required for tourism professionals.

The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) strategy Tourism in the 2030 (UNWTO, 2020) states that tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to all 17 global sustainability goals (United Nations, nd), to 8th – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, to 12th – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, and 14th – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, in particular. Coastal and maritime tourism largely rely on healthy marine ecosystems, and tourism development must be a part of integrated coastal zone management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy.

Following the UNWTO and sustainable development goals Estonian long-term strategy (Eesti Meremajanduse Poliitika) for development of sea-related economy has placed the priority that coastal living and visiting environment is attractive, promoting the development of maritime tourism and local business, and the transfer of maritime cultural heritage. The importance of sustainable tourism development is also reflected in Tourism vision for Estonia that emphasizes the relevance of modern tourism education order to diversify rural entrepreneurship and promote value-added activities and areas.

In Estonia coastal areas and islands have been inhabited for centuries. Including islands, the coastal line is meandering in length of almost 4000km. Due to the historical territorial divisions, in addition to Estonians, other nationalities can be found in the coastal areas, especially on islands - Swedes, Latvians, Russians. This variety of cultures has created a rich set of traditions that are passed down from generation to generation. With its rich cultural background, history and unique nature coastal areas are highly appreciated by tourists these days.

Coastal tourism includes all the coastline, meadows, forests by the sea, birdwatching, historical villages, scenery views, coastal culture and fishing villages etc. However, natural resources are vulnerable when managed and exploited unsustainably. Exploring the nature on their own tends to become more popular. A good example would be the Baltic Coastal Hiking Route (Baltic ..., nd) that was created in partnership with neighbour country Latvia. This trail runs along the coast of the Baltic

Sea and is part of the European E9 hiking trail. The total length of the trail is 1,200 km, of which 580 km are in Latvia and 620 km in Estonia.

This report explores the necessary sector-specific skills and qualifications in CMT in Estonia. For understanding the skills and competences in coastal and maritime tourism, and identifying the skills gaps desk research, expert interviews and focus group discussion were conducted. The same research was undertaken in Finland, Estonia, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Ireland during spring 2021. In Estonia, representatives from coastline areas of North and West Estonia were included in the study.

The research activities contributed to the objective of the Erasmus + Strategic Partnership Skills4CMT project: to develop sector-specific skills and the quality and digitalisation of thematic higher education in CMT in European cold-water destinations. The objective were threefold:

- To increase comprehension about sector-specific skills and qualifications required in CMT, together with addressing gaps and mismatches in presently available skills.
- To develop a learning-outcomes-oriented curriculum to strengthen the strategic and structured cooperation of higher education institutions in CMT education.
- To increase the use of innovative digital technologies, methods and tools as well as open educational resources (OER) for skills development in CMT.

The final outcome of the project includes the creation of e-curriculas that are based on the occupational profiles of three sector-specific occupations.

Research Aim

The aim of the research was to increase understanding in sector-specific skills and qualifications required in CMT, together with addressing gaps and mismatches in presently skills. The research question is: What knowledge, skills and competencies are needed when a person works as a 1) resort manager, a 2) micro entrepreneur offering blue experiences or a 3) sustainability manager in the context of CMT?

In this project, occupational profiles corresponding the European Qualification Framework (EQF) levels 6 and 7 will be designed with a complete description of the knowledge, skills and competencies using the ESCO tool of European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations to increase understanding of the needed sector-specific skills and qualifications in CMT. These occupational profiles are a significant tool in curriculum and course design: they will be translated into a new curriculum and courses in the following phase of the project.

The key occupations selected for the development of occupational profiles are:

- 1) resort manager responsible for destination planning and development,
- 2) micro entrepreneur offering blue experiences, and
- 3) sustainability manager.

This project is based on the following job descriptions for those occupations:

- **Resort manager responsible for destination planning and development** operates on a destination level. She/he is responsible for strategic tourism management and development in a particular area and ensures that all tourism stakeholders have a common goal. She/he is in charge of managing and implementing the national/regional/local tourism strategies for destination development, marketing and promotion. She/he often works in municipalities or in destination marketing organisations.
- **Micro-entrepreneur offering blue experiences** identifies and exploits business opportunities and creates added value by using blue resources innovatively.
- **Sustainability manager** is an expert who works in an organisation committed to sustainability. In larger organisations, sustainability issues can be one's full-time job but in smaller organisations one might be responsible for a variety of different business activities, of which improving sustainability is just one of the duties. A sustainability manager working in the context of blue economy manages and improves organisation's environmental, social, and economic impact as well as ensures the sustainability of business practices.

In this report, a clear distinction is made between the roles, knowledge, skills and competencies of three occupations mentioned above. It is obvious that there will be some overlapping of the knowledge, skills and competences as sometimes in reality in smaller destinations under the one title there are many functions hidden. The occupational roles are more specialised and distinct in larger

destinations characterised with a rich variety of companies and with well-resourced professional managed Destination Management Organisations (DMO).

The occupational profiles help 1) tourism education and training providers to understand what skills the labour markets need, and 2) potential employers to better understand knowledge and qualification of students. It also supports higher education institutions in redirecting skills that help to adapt to the changing business environment and promote graduates' employability. In other words, the occupational profiles enhance higher education institutions' capacity to match skills and jobs and provides them labour market intelligence on current and future skills requirements.

Data Collection and Analysis Process

To fulfill the project aim the research was conducted by utilising three data collection methods – 1) desk research, 2) expert interviews, and 3) focus group interview.

1. Desk research. The aim of the desk research was to review the existing curricula, national and regional tourism strategies and potential previous project results in Estonia and map the knowledge, skills and competencies considered important to the occupations that are relevant for the project. Altogether 12 curricula, 6 related projects and 20 CMT related strategies were explored and analysed. The collected information was processed by qualitative content analysis, which allowed summarising collected keywords and later generalizing and interpreting the findings.
2. Expert interviews with stakeholders in the field of CMT. The purpose was to explore the views of DMOs and small and medium entrepreneurs (SME) concerning the present situation in CMT in Estonia, structure and effective governance of DMOs, as well as gather information on how sustainability is understood.

The sample consisted of 6 interviewees, while the interviewees were selected carefully to ensure that the whole Estonian coastline is represented as well as all that the stakeholders are related to the research target groups. The sample consisted of experts operating in northern and western coastal areas of Estonia and the western Estonian islands. Considering the small size of Estonia, large number of CMT entrepreneurs also operate in local DMO-s that are engaged in the development of the region as a whole. In order to obtain sufficient and extensive information, persons with experience in both fields were selected as experts.

- I1 – SME, DMO, tourism developer, project manager, Western Estonia coastal area
- I2 – DMO, NGO, destination development projects, Northern Estonia area
- I3 – SME, non-profit organisation, Northern Estonia, cultural heritage tourism
- I4 – SME, hotel manager and nature guide, island Hiiumaa
- I5 – SME, DMO, tourism developer, project manager, nature guide lecturer HEI, Western Estonia coastal area
- I6 – SME, event manager and guide, destination developer and promoter, North Estonia islands.

It is important to notify that in Estonia all of interviewees share different roles within their professional duties, for example, work for private companies and national governmental organisation (NGO) etc.

The expert interviews were conducted on-line from 01.03.2021 to 17.03.2021. All the interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed. The qualitative content analysis was used to extract the relevant information and to examine patterns in communication in a replicable and systematic manner. Additionally to identify the word frequencies, new ideas and observations were sought to support the design of the curricula related to this project.

The interview questions were compiled in a joint debate with project partners. The topics covered in the interview were introduced to the participants along with the invitation letter to participate, so the preparation for the interview would be more convenient for them. The interviewees were asked about the present situation as well as future vision in coastal tourism, what kind of specific knowledge, skills and competences are needed in the field, how has the pandemic situation shaped their activities and business, who should be responsible for destination development, and on what extent sustainability is considered in their everyday activities.

3. Focus group interview. Similarly to expert interviews the focus group interview was organized online on 01.04.2021. The participants were selected by the same criteria as for the expert interviews, from the 6 initially invited participants 5 could join:

- I1 – DMO, Pärnu county, destination development officer;
- I2 – NGO, sustainability officer, experienced tourism sales manager, whole Estonia;
- I3 – DMO, SME, destination development officer, island Kihnu;
- I4 – former DMO, destination development officer of Western Estonia, expert in international marine programs;
- I5 – DMO, tourism project manager, Western Estonia;

Similarly to expert interviews, the qualitative content analysis was used to identify, group and summarize the emerged topics regarding to the occupational profiles of the project.

Desk Research Results

Altogether 12 curricula, 6 related projects and 20 CMT related strategies were explored and analysed.

The findings indicate that there is no exact skills listed or clear descriptions of the tasks that the three above mentioned occupations should perform, but many indirect indications were found in documents and the analysis allowed to interpret the data and presume what kind of skills and competences are needed and required while working in maritime tourism. The figure about the categories of identified knowledge, skills and competencies in CMT was created (Figure 1).

According to the national and regional development strategies of Estonia tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to sustainable economic growth, consumption and production, and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources. From strategies it revealed that a well-trained and skilful workforce is crucial for tourism to prosper.



Figure 1. The categories of identified knowledge, skills and competencies in coastal maritime tourism.

As the society is now facing big changes, the new, different kind of professionals are needed, with a different competences and skills then before. "The way it always used to be" is perceived as the biggest problem in the sector.

There is a need for competent professionals, who think strategically, initiate developments, projects, and investments, plan, execute and manage the businesses in a sustainable way, to cooperate with different stakeholders and involving local communities in Estonian tourism.

The expectations for managers are very high. Tourism needs leaders with a "new way of thinking", with a vision, with a bold ability to initiate, create and design. The managers need to be business minded and see the "bigger picture" by thinking and acting internationally, cooperating locally, exchanging information with different parties, uniting, and engaging them to branding and promoting blue economy and multilevel international marketing the destinations together.

At the same time, the professionals working as managers are expected to have a deep understanding of tourism economy, global developments, changes, and trends; the principles of sustainable management and tourism development; ecosystem protection, environmental awareness, hygiene, maritime safety and preservation of maritime cultural heritage and traditions. The volatile tourism sector needs specialists who are able to face and react to economic and social changes, adapt to new circumstances, and create new possibilities to businesses.

Managers also need to master "soft skills" like communication, listening, open-mindedness, intercultural teamwork, leadership, and coaching. They should show a good knowledge of digital skills and competences.

The managers in maritime tourism sector are expected to have skills and competences to develop and design authentic, environmentally friendly products and services based on the specifics of the destination (conference, maritime, sports, experience, medical, rural, nature, cycling tourism, ecotourism).

Perspective for Resort Manager responsible for destination management

Desk research showed that there exists no specific occupation for resort management in Estonia, especially with destination management tasks. The tourism regions in Estonia are managed by NGO, and the regional distribution of DMO-s is being transformed, also by several unions and associations that are bringing together certain interest groups. Due to the small size of Estonia and the interconnectedness of agencies, associations, organizations and companies, the destination management seems to be the tacitly included to all parties and occupations involved in tourism. From the desk research revealed that destination management activities are included to several curricula in HEIs and vocational schools, the importance and necessity of destination management are reflected in the strategic plans for tourism development, as well as in the results of various projects. For this

project the skills, knowledge and competencies related to destination management, whether or not related to coastal tourism, were identified (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Skills, knowledge and competencies related to destination management.

In conclusion – with small specific additions, the general managerial knowledge, skills and competencies are expected from resort manager responsible for destination manager. The managers need to be business minded and see the “bigger picture” by thinking and acting internationally, cooperating locally, exchanging information with different parties, uniting, and engaging tourism both entrepreneurs and DMO-s to branding and promoting coastal maritime tourism together.

Perspective for Micro-entrepreneur designing blue experiences

Similarly to resort manager occupation the specific content related to micro-entrepreneur designing blue experiences could not be found. Therefore, documents related to business, entrepreneurship, marine ecology and nature conservation were used to identify the required and related skills, knowledge and competences. Besides the general entrepreneurial and tourism business management skills the more specific skills such as responsible and sustainable use of nature resources, recognizing and highlighting local heritage both cultural and nature, multi-sectoral networking, project management and tourism sociology are needed.

Since majority of micro-entrepreneurs act in small teams or have family businesses, the cooperation and networking with tourism and local organisations, joining related networks and utilise co-operation models that provide resources and support is vital.

The specific skills, knowledge and competencies related to micro-entrepreneur responsible for designing blue experience were identified as followed (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. Skills, knowledge and competencies related to micro-entrepreneur.

Micro-entrepreneurs face challenges to master all different skills that benefit their business, balancing between self-action, outsourcing, nature protection and handling the volatile and multicultural tourism market, therefore the variety of knowledge, skills and competencies is necessary to run the business effectively.

Perspective for Sustainability manager

As mentioned above the different roles are shared within professional occupations in Estonia, a lot of DMO officers work also as micro-entrepreneurs in tourism sector and SME-s are contributing in destination development. Such intertwining can be recognized also regarding to sustainability. Sustainability can be considered as a general competence in tourism business. The specifically named 'sustainability manager' could not be found in Estonian tourism sector, the sustainability manager (or

specialist) is used commonly in manufacturing sector for a person who is responsible for environmental issues in a company.

The specific skills, competences and knowledge for sustainability manager in coastal maritime tourism were therefore derived from different curricula, strategical documents and project reports that were related to environmental sustainability, also managing, improving, monitoring and reporting responsible business practices in an organisation.

The core knowledge, skills and competences include sustainable management in all dimensions (environmental, social and economic), environmental awareness, monitoring, communication and promoting sustainable activities, (strategic) environmental impact assessment, engaging stakeholders, creating comprehensive value chain in the blue economy. Additionally, protection and sustainable utilization of cultural heritage and natural resources in tourism destinations and conservation and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development can be highlighted.



Figure 4. Skills, knowledge and competencies related to sustainability manager.

Desk research revealed that integrating sustainability activities into strategic planning and daily operations of an organisation is tacit and no separate occupation for this could not be identified in Estonian tourism, yet.

Expert Interviews and Focus Group Discussion Results

Estonian seashore, islands and coastal areas are tourism attractions both for the international and domestic tourists. Interviewees described the coastal region as the part of the land affected by the proximity of the sea and the part of the sea affected by the proximity of the land and coastal tourism includes all the coastline, meadows, forests by the sea, birdwatching, historical villages, scenery views, coastal culture and fishing villages etc.

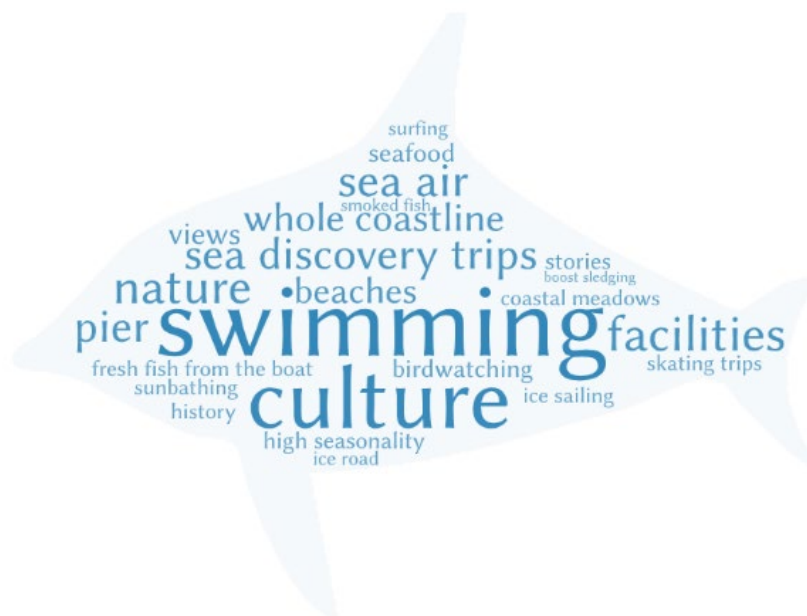


Figure 5. Distinction of the coastal maritime tourism.

Focus group complemented the coastal tourism with activities on the ice (ice road, skating trips, boost sledging, ice sailing), sea discovery trips and, fresh fish from the boat (see Figure 5). However, according to respondents, the majority of tourism enterprises in Estonia, are lacking skills to highlight and present these unique values. All interviewees agreed that CMT in Estonia deserves more attention and development.

Services offered by the coast and sea

Interviewees acknowledged that despite the opportunities there is not enough services or experiences offered on the open water. Entrepreneurs tend to design new services and tourism products only when customers ask for it. Focus group emphasized that coastal areas lack of services that are designed for international tourist, and probably it is due to the insufficient language skill. Several ideas for services

were presented in interviews such as fishing guide, sup and canoe trips, morning exercises on the water, storytelling about local life and traditions, geo hide-and-seek, virtual tours, web-courses, treasure hunt etc. The key findings related to coastal tourism services can be identified as followed:

- There is not enough attractions and services (blue experiences) offered by SME-s.
- The development of services becomes relevant only when customers become interested.
- Different activities are needed additionally to the accommodation.
- There is no accredited fishing guides available in coast.
- Guests are expecting authentic local experiences and services that are not "too polished".
- Local people have a lot of stories to tell but they don't know how to present and market themselves. Additionally, many of them have poor language skills.
- Local guides are not willing to be available all the time.
- Customers' holistic well-being is not addressed when designing the services.
- The main argument for not developing the business and services is lack of resources, especially time resources.

According to the informants the cultural heritage, nature and local traditions should be more actively exploited in designing tourism services. In rural areas customers do not expect to experience extremely polished and sterile services, they are looking for genuine and authentic experiences, local stories and contacts, that draw attention to beautiful sights that are not presented in maps or in Google.

From the interviews and focus group discussion it can be derived that there is the lack of capability in storytelling, lack of innovative approach to service design and creative thinking skills, and fears related to the maintaining of the service regarding to the services offered by the sea and coastal area. The opinion was expressed that beach, coastal area, nature, birds, sunset etc are considered to be such a natural part of everyday life that is forgotten to be presented as a value itself.

Impacts of COVID-19

Pandemic situation in 2020, followed by second and third wave in 2021, has increased the share of domestic tourism significantly. SME-s on the coastline of Estonia raised the volume of customers or at least it remained the same in summer 2020. Since seasonality has been a challenge for every tourism entrepreneur in Estonia, the question of how to increase tourism in off-season remains relevant also in post-pandemic situation. Most of interviewees acknowledged that pandemic situation has accelerated the necessity for developing and designing the services and products in tourism sector, for making changes in approaching the customers, for digitalizing the processes. And yet, according to focus group, the entrepreneurs expected support and guidance from governmental structures.

Some respondents pointed out that crisis and risk management, restructuring of the business operations, communicating and cooperation have become more relevant than ever before. In addition, the marketing of the destination as a whole was considered to be more beneficial to all stakeholders than ever before. Focus group admitted that entrepreneurs have been cooperative and open minded,

common concerns are unifying. In conclusion, all of the interviewees and focus group described the future rather as opportunities than difficulties.

Knowledge, skills and competences

Considering the necessary specific knowledge, skills and competence in CMT, the interviewees highlighted the following current deficiencies:

- Creativity
- Service design
- Understanding and creating a unified marketing concept (for the destination)
- Use of digital solutions
- Inspiration
- Digital skills
- Knowledge of hospitality
- Maritime knowledge, hydrology, navigation
- Weather specifics of the coast
- Basics of fishing
- Local culture
- Service culture
- Marketing - reaching target groups
- Foreign language skills

Focus group discussion revealed that targeted marketing and good communication skills are essential in CMT, as well as more specific knowledge of environment, balanced consuming of nature resources and cultural heritage. Considering the latest experience with the pandemic, focus group emphasized that the risk management, analysis, leadership and team motivation skills, and maintaining personal wellbeing are of particular importance in crisis situations.

In addition to all the skills mentioned above, general basic knowledge and skills in strategic and operational management, marketing, human resource management, finances and accountancy, organisational values and culture, etc. were emphasized by both the interviewees and focus group members.

Destination management

The interviews revealed that SMEs have an awareness of the development of the region as a whole, but in actions they tend to remain company-oriented. Creating common marketing concept as well as the common image for the region is considered to be a great challenge. The entrepreneurs perceive themselves as a part of a destination, however there is a number of non-profit or governmental destination organisations and unions, mostly small ones, which make the destination management activities fragmented. Moreover, the development of destinations and cooperation with DMOs and entrepreneurs could be called project-based development and soon after the project is completed, the activities subside. Focus group acknowledged jointly that in some cases destinations are not developed sustainably.

In conclusion, the destinations (regions) need unified development concept for businesses and destination developers to work and make consistent efforts together. Entrepreneurs are not fully aware

of the benefits for the companies that can be achieved in cooperation with the local government and other entrepreneurs at present.

Sustainability

There was no clear consensus among the interviewees and focus group on how sustainability needs to be interpreted, although there was a common understanding that sustainability happened quicker than expected. Mostly, sustainability was linked to the environmental issues – such as nature protection, recycling, nature preservation and nature education, local food and raw materials. Participants acknowledged that incorrect and incompetent management of coastal areas and nature resources may become harmful to the environment especially in case of excessive visits. Besides the environmental issues respondents described sustainability as followed:

- responsible management of cultural and nature heritage;
- the balance between nature protection and raising the attractiveness of the destination;
- proportions of untouched nature and public access to the area;
- balanced development of destinations (jobs, roads, recycling and waste management etc);
- balance and confrontation between major technological and infrastructural developments and the preservation of the natural environment and cultural heritage;
- reducing the consumption;
- involvement of the local community in the development of the region;
- sustainable business development in the region;
- focus on guest, entrepreneurship, environment and community;

Focus group indicated that the awareness of the customers dictates the sustainable behaviour of entrepreneurs, as well as the regulations by the government (no glass items in the beach area, special taxes for plastic items, cup circulation, etc). Clear indicator for measuring the burdens to the environment (including the sea) would also support the sustainable behaviour of tourism entrepreneurs, as well as manufacturers. Focus group was also concerned about whether the European Union subsidies will continue or not.

The respondents described sustainability as natural, and general way of thinking, that must be integrated into everyday activities and strategical plans, and into every job. No one of the interviewees could share the experience where sustainability manager had been hired as a separate occupation. The intertwining of tasks and occupations was particularly evident in the case of sustainability.

Cooperation with DMOs and community

Interviews revealed that although the cooperation is considered to be important, entrepreneurs tend to focus on their company, and an active and respected initiator is needed for cooperation. Respondents also pointed out that local community may be against the development of tourism. Thus, there was a common understanding that involving community is the key to the development of the destination and tourism enterprises, and usually the only option to achieve the goals.

Focus group shared the experience that development programs are usually more successful that are initiated and supported by locals. However, the locals often experience external pressure on development and in fact, the majority of development projects are money driven that means the goals of developers and locals do not match.

Another interesting thought was revealed from the interviews that theft of ideas is feared in businesses cooperation. However, cooperation is agreed for the satisfaction and service of the quest (if one do not have some particular service to offer).

A clear vision and goal, as well as support and guidance are expected from the DMOs. On the other hand entrepreneurs prefer to stay independent and make their own decisions. Finally, the focus group highlighted the fact that on 80% of cases profit is the driving force behind developments, and willingness to give back to society and nature is raising once personal business goals have been achieved.

Other findings

Interviewees indicated that the courses for entrepreneurs should be paid course, because it is more motivating to make efforts. There is a lot of courses or lectures free of charge, but the perceived value from these is smaller.

Finally, from the interviews revealed that entrepreneurs who are offering tourism services in the coastal area lack the willingness to register themselves as entrepreneurs due to tax liabilities and other administrative duties. In many cases people choose to offer services informally or not to be an entrepreneur at all.

Occupational Profiles

The research aim was to increase understanding of necessary sector-specific skills and qualifications in coastal and maritime tourism in Estonia to tackle skills gaps and mismatches. The study maintained a strong focus on coastal tourism to achieve the goal, although basic managerial skills were also identified as essential for successful management of tourism destinations and enterprises.

The occupational profiles were designed using pre-determined descriptions of occupations and, based on the survey, the profiles were filled with specific knowledge, skills and competences relevant to the job. This chapter presents the three occupational profiles (Table 1): a resort manager (destination level occupation), a micro-entrepreneur offering blue experiences and a sustainability manager (company or destination level occupation). In Estonia sustainability manager could not be identified as a separate occupation in coastal maritime tourism and the tasks of sustainability manager are more likely merged into other occupations and are considered to be general mind-set. Sustainability is guided and coordinated by DMO-s and NGO-s.

The findings indicate that there is no existing distinctive descriptions of the occupations in Estonia related to this project and professionals in CMT need to be business-minded, creative and see the “bigger picture” by thinking and acting internationally, cooperating locally, exchanging information with different parties, uniting, and engaging tourism both entrepreneurs and DMO-s to branding and promoting coastal maritime tourism together. The expected skills and competences vary depending on the size of the organisation and the level of operating in the organisation’s structure.

Further on in this project, based on the reports of project partners Latvia, Finland, the Netherlands and Ireland, occupational profiles will be summarised and merged into joint profiles covering the European cold-water destinations. The final phase of the project sets the task for creating new curricula for CMT professionals based on the occupational profiles.

Table 1. Occupational profiles for resort manager, micro entrepreneur and sustainability manager.

	Resort (destination) manager	Micro entrepreneur	Sustainability manager
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for strategic tourism management and development at the destination level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies and exploits business opportunities and creates added value by using blue resources innovatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages and improves organisation's environmental, social, and economic impact as well as ensures the sustainability of the business practices
Sector and occupation specific knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible and sustainable use of maritime resources; Service design principles; Tourism policies and regional development; Principles of sustainable tourism management; Cultural and nature heritage; Principles of destination management; Sustainability and circular economy; Stakeholders' theory and models; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism sociology; Service design principles; Principles of sustainable tourism management; Cultural and nature heritage; Event management; Multicultural awareness; Responsible and sustainable use of maritime resources; Occupational well-being; Storytelling; Sustainability certifications and regulations; Risk management; Creative thinking (gamification); Maritime knowledge, hydrology, navigation; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability principles (environmental, social and economic); Responsible and sustainable use of maritime resources; Stakeholders' theory and models; Strategic environmental impact assessment; Cultural and nature heritage; Regional development of sustainable business; EU subsidised programs for sustainability activities
Sector and occupation specific skills and competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted marketing; Cooperating with stakeholders; Ability to respond to change; Promoting destination; Leading interaction and managing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing and highlighting local heritage both cultural and nature; Multi-sectoral networking; Cooperating and networking with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing, improving, monitoring and reporting responsible business practices; Promoting sustainable activities;

	<p>relationship with community;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing new contacts and networks; • Monitoring regional developments; • Designing meaningful and responsible coastal tourism experience; 	<p>tourism and local organisations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing meaningful and responsible coastal tourism experience; • Recognizing target groups; • Integrating local culture and involving community; • Monitoring, reporting and communicating sustainability; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and sustainable utilization of cultural heritage and natural resources in tourism destinations; • Initiating and communicating sustainable behaviour and activities;
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Since the research tried to find the answer to the research question of what knowledge, skills and competencies are needed when a person works as a resort manager, a micro entrepreneur offering blue experiences or a sustainability manager in the context of coastal and marine tourism, it was essential to stay attentive and cautious to specifically address the educational gap in coastal context. However, it should be emphasised that all the general managerial skills and competencies are also of great importance and wide range of knowledge, skills and competences are required for professionals in a coastal and maritime tourism context.

Limitations

The process of reorganizing the geographical distribution of DMO-s in Estonia in ongoing and therefore the uncertainty in roles of DMO and the structure of tourism management in national level is present.

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