

Curriculum of

Coastal and Maritime Tourism **in** European Cold-Water Destinations

20 ECTS credits

Intellectual Output 2

Background

The beauty of the nature, cultural richness and diversity of the European Union's coastal areas, have made them a preferred destination for many holidaymakers in Europe and abroad. In fact, coastal and maritime locations are the biggest attractive factor in European tourism. Coastal and maritime tourism is also the biggest maritime sector in the EU in terms of the Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment. In addition, most tourism expenditure takes place in coastal regions at the EU level. Over half of the EU's tourist accommodation establishments are in coastal areas and 30% of overnight stays are at beach resorts. Around 2.8 million people were directly employed in the sector in 2018. Therefore, coastal and maritime tourism is of major importance in European economy as the competitiveness of the sector is a driver for sustainable growth, jobs, and social cohesion.

Coastal and maritime tourism consists of sea-related tourist activities in the coastal and maritime areas including landside facilities and services necessary for tourism. In cold-water destinations, it is a sustainable economic activity for which the proximity of the cold-water resources is an advantage, and which focuses on creating unique blue experiences for niche markets and increasing human well-being in coastal and marine locations. It provides growing potential for the economic use of the cold-water resources in developing specific added-value, experience-based products. Indeed, cold-water destinations have rather different issues in tourism development than their warm-water cousins.

The cold-water destinations include the following competitive assets: strong natural environment and direct encounters with nature, unusual terrestrial and marine wildlife, unique geologic and atmospheric features, scenic values, local culture, and special interest activities. These destinations are defined by small-scale tourism, and the nature of tourism is described as active, because people visit the destinations to engage in specific activities. Visitors usually value the quality of services more than cost-effectiveness. Due to low population and the low level of tourism penetration, the added value per tourist is greater than in warm-water destinations and the economic impact of tourism is important even with low figures. Cold-water destinations' appeal and attractiveness from the customer's point of view is based on similar features in Europe, which requires harmonising skills in European countries.

Due to all these features, a thematic and aligned curriculum is needed concentrating on the specific characteristics of coastal and maritime tourism in cold-water destinations. At present, there are extremely few offers for a sector-specific curricula and courses in coastal and maritime tourism in Europe as well as limited awareness of the specific skill needs. The lack of professional skills hamper tourism

competitiveness. For this reason, 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. It is important to close the skills gaps and match the supply of skills with the demand of the labor market. This means that tourism education and curriculum development must take much more thematic approach to coastal and maritime tourism to increase educational offering, which is currently missing.

Skills development, in turn, stimulates regional economy, job creation and maintaining in coastal communities. It promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth ensuring also sustainable consumption and production patterns as well as sustainable use of marine resources. It increases economic importance and competitiveness of the CMT sector, its destinations, and businesses at all levels. Countries, regions, destinations, and SMEs will be able to capture the growing potential of blue resources to foster blue growth, to create and seize entrepreneurial opportunities.

Curriculum

The curriculum makes a fundamental change to sector-specific skills development and the quality of thematic higher education in coastal and maritime tourism. It supports European cold-water destinations to grow as a coherent tourism destination and concentrates to their specific features, multi-sectoral nature, and its niche products and markets. The industry-driven curriculum meets the evolving labor market needs as it is designed in collaboration with tourism professionals.

The purpose of “the Curriculum of Coastal and Maritime Tourism in European Cold-Water Destinations” is to provide an aligned and relevant skillset and knowledge necessary for meeting the challenges and for seizing the opportunities of coastal and maritime tourism in European cold-water destinations. When taking these studies, learners acquire specialised knowledge, skills, and competencies relevant to develop and manage coastal and maritime tourism in cold-water destinations. In this case, by cold-water destinations are meant the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, and the Atlantic Isles in Europe.

The key learning outcomes are related to understanding the fundamental concepts of coastal and marine tourism, its resources and legislation. The curriculum provides learner with applicable knowledge, skills, and competencies for designing and management of sustainable destinations and designing coastal tourism products. The learner develops the ability to identify and exploit business opportunities, and to create value by using blue resources in an innovative way. The curriculum also provides

learners knowledge, skills, and competence on how to manage and improve organisational level sustainability. In sum, the learning outcomes relate to designing and managing sustainable coastal tourism destinations, operating tourism businesses in this context as well as designing coastal and marine tourism products and services for different segments in a sustainable way.

Stakeholder cooperation and sustainability are the cross-cutting themes. The importance of collaboration and identification of the key stakeholders and their role are the key themes in the curriculum. The principles and practices of sustainability are explored within the context of individual businesses operations and from a destination perspective. All aspects of sustainability are included: economic, social, and environmental as well as understanding the interconnection between nature, business, and society in the coastal and marine surroundings.

The extent of the curriculum is 20 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits. It consists of four separate courses, each 5 ECTS credits. The curriculum is placed at level 6 in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF 6) equivalent to bachelor level studies in European higher education institutions. The curriculum can be integrated in the bachelors' degree programmes as a 20 ECTS credits specialisation module or a minor. It can be delivered during one academic semester.

The courses are the following:

1. Introduction to Coastal and Maritime Tourism
2. Coastal and Maritime Tourism Sustainability Management
3. Coastal and Maritime Destination Design
4. Designing Blue Experiences

The introductory course number 1 focuses on the basics of coastal and marine tourism while the three following courses from 2 to 4 are thematic specialisation courses covering the key themes of coastal and maritime tourism. See the course descriptions in the next pages.

The target group of the curriculum are first, second, and third-year tourism and hospitality bachelor level students as well as tourism industry stakeholders. In particular, tourism entrepreneurs, destinations managers, and sustainability managers are encouraged to participate as the curriculum provides value for the industry. All interested learners not depending on their background can participate in the introduction course to learn basics of tourism in coastal and marine cold-water destinations.

The curriculum is implemented as an international online curriculum that increases flexibility of studying and provides learners with intercultural competences. The curriculum uses innovative digital technologies, methods, and tools as well as open educational resources for skills development. The courses of the curriculum can be studied in a digital platform at own pace with pre-recorded lectures, a variety of contemporary online activities, and academic sources.



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The following table 1 summarises the curriculum in a nutshell.

Title of the curriculum	Coastal and Maritime Tourism in European Cold-Water Destinations
Extent of the curriculum	20 ECTS credits
Curriculum level	EQF 6, Bachelor level
Duration of the curriculum	1 semester
Target group	First, second, and third-year tourism and hospitality bachelor level students as well as tourism industry stakeholders. In particular, tourism entrepreneurs, destinations managers, and sustainability managers are encouraged to participate. All interested learners not depending on their background can participate in the introduction course to learn basics of tourism in coastal and marine cold-water destinations.
Purpose	The purpose is to provide an aligned and relevant skillset and knowledge necessary for meeting the challenges and for seizing the opportunities of coastal and maritime tourism in European cold-water destinations. When taking these studies, learners acquire specialised knowledge, skills, and competencies relevant to develop and manage coastal and maritime tourism in cold-water destinations.
Key learning outcomes	<p>The curriculum aims at increasing understanding about the fundamental concepts of coastal and marine tourism, its resources and legislation. The curriculum provides learner with applicable knowledge, skills, and competencies for designing and management of sustainable destinations and designing coastal tourism products. Learner develops the ability to identify and exploit business opportunities, and to create value by using blue resources in an innovative way. The curriculum also provides learners knowledge, skills, and competence on how to manage and improve organisational level sustainability.</p> <p>In sum, the learning outcomes relate to designing and managing sustainable coastal tourism destinations, operating tourism businesses in this context as well as designing coastal and marine tourism products and services for different segments in a sustainable way.</p>

	<p>Stakeholder cooperation and sustainability are the cross-cutting themes in the curriculum. The importance of collaboration and identification of the key stakeholders and their role are the key themes in the curriculum. The principles and practices of sustainability are explored within the context of individual businesses operations and from a destination perspective. All aspects of sustainability are included: economic, social, and environmental as well as understanding the interconnection between nature, business, and society in the coastal and marine surroundings.</p>
Course list	<p>The curriculum consists of four courses, 5 ECTS credits each. The introductory course includes the basics of costal and marine tourism while three thematic specialisation courses cover the key themes of costal and marine tourism in European cold-water destinations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to Coastal and Maritime Tourism (5 ECTS credits) 2. Coastal and Maritime Tourism Sustainability Management (5 ECTS credits) 3. Coastal and Maritime Destination Design (5 ECTS credits) 4. Designing Blue Experiences (5 ECTS credits)
Study mode	<p>The curriculum is implemented as an international online curriculum that increases flexibility of studying and provided learners with intercultural competences. The curriculum uses innovative digital technologies, methods, and tools as well as open educational resources. The courses of the curriculum can be studied in a digital platform at own pace with pre-recorded lectures, variety of contemporary online activities, and academic sources.</p>

Course descriptions

1. Introduction to Coastal and Maritime Tourism

Purpose	The course is an informative starter pack of the coastal and maritime tourism sector and its key issues. It provides learner with an understanding of the fundamental issues, concepts, and resources available in coastal and marine tourism.
ECTS Credits	5 ECTS
Competence	By passing this course, learner understands the fundamental issues, concepts, and resources in coastal and marine tourism from tourist's, tourism businesses', and destination's point of view.
Content	Introduction to Tourism and Coastal and Marine Tourism; Coastal and Marine Tourism Components and Resources; Responsible and Sustainable use of the Resources; Impacts of Tourism; Blue Tourist Wellbeing; Tourism Marketing; Tourism Entrepreneurship; Responsible and Sustainable Tourism; Tourism Policy and Regulations
Learning Outcomes	On completion of the course, learner will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the key practices in coastal and marine tourism. • Identify the component elements involved in the development of coastal and marine tourism at a destination. • Interpret the practices of sustainable development within a coastal and marine destination. • Classify the topical areas of coastal and marine tourism. • Summarise the elements and impacts of the blue tourism experience in the coastal and marine tourism industry. • Explain the appropriate regulations and legislation relating to coastal and marine tourism.

2. Coastal and Maritime Tourism Sustainability Management

Purpose	The course develops competencies of transdisciplinary sustainable management in coastal and maritime tourism organisations. It focuses on sustainability matters in the context of blue economy and provides learners knowledge on how to manage and improve the organisation's environmental, social, and economic impacts. The course also provides skills of sustainability communication targeted at internal and external stakeholders.
ECTS Credits	5 ECTS
Competence	By passing the course, learner develops knowledge and expertise to become an expert who works in a tourism or leisure organisation committed to sustainability in coastal and marine areas.
Content	Sustainability Management and Development in Coastal and Maritime Tourism Organisations; UN's Sustainable Development Goals, Circular Economy within Tourism Organisations; Climate Change and Tourism; Co-operation and Communication for Sustainable Tourism; Sustainability Certificates for Tourism Organisations
Learning Outcomes	On completion of the course, learner will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the UNs sustainable development goals (SDG's) in tourism destinations and businesses. • Determine the interconnectivity between tourism and climate change. • Integrate sustainable development and circular principles within tourism destinations and businesses. • Monitor and measure sustainable development in tourism destinations and businesses. • Communicate sustainable practices towards stakeholders, especially to customers.

3. Coastal and Maritime Destination Design

Purpose	The purpose of the course is to provide learner with applicable coastal and maritime tourism sector-specific knowledge, skills, and competencies in designing and managing sustainable destinations.
ECTS Credits	5 ECTS
Competence	By passing the course, learner gets knowledge and practical tools to understand and apply the principles of holistic destination development. Blue destination manager sees the big picture and far horizon simultaneously recognising micro level aspects that could become turning points.
Content	Stakeholder Relations; Co-Creation (Facilitation, Consulting); Tourism Impact on Destination; Destination Design; Criteria, Characteristics, and Challenges of Competitive and Sustainable Destinations; Tourism Trends; Sustainable Destination Development and Its Challenges Process, Impact Factors and Carrying Capacity); Seasonality Management
Learning Outcomes	On completion of the course, learner will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe characteristics and challenges of sustainable and competitive coastal and maritime destinations. • Identify the role of key stakeholders and their interconnectedness in blue destination development. • Analyse the current situation of a coastal destination for sustainable development • Create a future vision for sustainable development of a coastal destination.

4. Designing Blue Experiences

Purpose	The course provides learner with knowledge of tools for designing coastal tourism products, to develop the ability to identify and exploit business opportunities, and to create value by using blue resources in an innovative way. This course also increases skills to find creative sustainable solutions for the development of business in the coastal tourism sector and to apply the principles of design thinking in designing blue experiences.
ECTS Credits	5 ECTS
Competence	By passing this course, learner develops creative thinking skills, learns to create sustainable solutions for the development of business in the coastal and marine tourism sector, and to apply principles of service design in designing blue experiences. The course provides knowledge of the principles of collaboration and co-creation and the application of these principles in service design.
Content	Collaboration, Process and Strategies; Stakeholders Mapping Techniques; Coastal and Maritime Resources; Blue Tourist Profile; Product Development Process (incl. market segmenting); Tools for Coastal Tourism Services; Safety in Coastal and Maritime Tourism; Innovative Digital Solutions; Storytelling
Learning Outcomes	On completion of the course, the learner will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of collaboration, identify, and discover key stakeholders of the coastal and marine tourism business. • Understand the characteristics of blue tourism services (incl. safety, seasonality, resources) and integrate these efficiently in the development and design of innovative coastal and maritime tourism experiences. • Determine the customer segments relevant to the business and designs the persona for a segment. • Select proper service design tool for the development tourism products and applies it for the sustainable development of the business. • Study local traditional or content related stories and to create, modify, integrate and interpret them with other services of the business.

- Identify and exploit business opportunities and create value by using blue resources in an innovative way.



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