

CURRICULUM OF BOOSTING TOURISM BUSINESS GROWTH

Supporting the Development of the Central Baltic Area
as a Coherent Tourism Destination





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Satakunnan ammattikorkeakoulu
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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is expected to increase its importance and continue its growth in the countries around the Baltic Sea. In particular, international tourist arrivals have recorded solid growth in the past years. Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, as the so-called Interreg Central Baltic Programme area, are experiencing an increasing number of foreign overnight stays and reaching new records. Tourism development has common characteristics in these countries. They have the same target markets as Russia, Germany and other neighbouring countries. In addition, the countries attract a growing number of Asian visitors. It is necessary to expand the range of all-season services with more memorable, high-quality experiences to attract niche markets in all these countries. Digital skills should be improved to increase the visibility of the products and to address the target groups more specifically. Furthermore, the national tourism strategies and plans emphasise the fact that a better balance between skilled labour supply and demand should be achieved.

Growth of tourism has an impact on the internationalisation of higher education. Several changes and developments require new skills and knowledge that enable graduates to cope with the changing circumstances in the tourism industry. Tourism employment will have a very different profile in the coming decades. As a result, new skills and knowledge are required and the nature of the content in tourism programmes needs to be renewed. If tourism is to contribute to economic regeneration and to the competitiveness of destinations and organisations, it is necessary to identify the relevant skills and knowledge and translate them into a curriculum and teaching processes.

This report presents a new, joint curriculum “Boosting Tourism Business Growth -Supporting the Development of the Central Baltic Area as a Coherent Tourism Destination”. Because tourism is expected to increase its importance and continue its growth, the purpose of the curriculum is to provide an aligned and relevant skillset and necessary knowledge to meet the challenges and possibilities of the tourism industry. In this programme students acquire specialized tourism business skills and knowledge relevant to various tourism-related sectors and actors for boosting the growth and competitiveness of the industry. It prepares students for coping with the changing circumstances in the tourism business especially in international tourism. The industry-driven curriculum was planned in cooperation by the professionals from Finland, Estonia and Latvia, and it is based on the future needs of the tourism industry.



The project BOOSTED (1.11.2016–31.10.2019) aims at providing an aligned and relevant skillset for the Central Baltic region to grow as a coherent tourism destination. It boosts tourism business competitiveness through higher professional education in Finland, Estonia and Latvia.

THE BOOSTED-PROJECT

is about

Identification and alignment of the skills in tourism business development

Designing a joint curriculum of advanced tourism business development

Implementing the curriculum as a joint study programme

SUPPORTING
THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE CENTRAL
BALTIC REGION AS A
COMMON TOURISM
DESTINATION!



BACKGROUND OF THE CURRICULUM

INTERNATIONALISING CURRICULA IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

The competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) is closely connected to the level of higher education. For the BSR to stay a globally competitive region, the countries need to internationalise and strengthen their educational system. According to an established target about 10% of tertiary education graduates should have studied a period abroad and within the Baltic Sea Region by 2020 and completed a minimum of 15 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits. Therefore, it is necessary to increase cooperation between educational institutions as well as between educational institutions and companies within the region. (Central Baltic Programme 2014–2020; European Commission, 2017.)

There are also challenges related to unbalance in the labour market in the European Union (EU) member states in the Baltic Sea Region. All the member states in the region have common problems with high youth unemployment but on the other hand, in particular, the SMEs experience a shortage of skilled workforce. In other words, education does not meet the needs of the labour market. For this reason, the skills needed in future jobs should be identified and necessary education and training should be organised to provide them. These competitive skills and future labour market needs must be translated into curricula and teaching processes. (Central Baltic Programme 2014–2020; European Commission, 2017.)

For a long time internationalisation of higher education in Europe focused on mobility as a response to the initiatives of the European Commission (EC) with the main goal of increasing the number of incoming and outgoing students within the EU (deWit & Hunter, 2015). However, now the emphasis is being shifted from physical mobility to the internationalisation of the curricula, because the growth of international tourism needs to be taken into account in higher education (Kem & Teichler, 2007; deWit & Hunter, 2015). Accordingly, more attention should be paid to the development of international curricula and learning outcomes, strategic partnerships and short-term credit mobility (European Commission, 2013; deWit & Hunter, 2015). As Munar (2007) states, according to the process of Bologna each institution has a major role in placing itself in the global arena of higher education. Cooperation between the higher education institutions is needed in order to translate the

necessary skills and knowledge into curricula supporting the growth and competitiveness of the tourism industry.

High quality education also requires the use of modern ICT and the learning opportunities. New technology has had a deep effect on the integration of education in Europe. The use of ICT has become an integral part of higher education. As a result, electronic internationalisation presents new possibilities for the development of international higher education curricula and supports novel forms of distance education (Callan, 2000; Svensson & Wihlborg, 2010). While the physical mobility of students will continue to grow, we can also expect an increase in virtual exchanges and collaborative international online learning (deWit & Hunter, 2015).

In higher tourism education, a curriculum is defined as a series of courses of instruction that lead to graduation or certification or a degree, diploma, or similar terminal award and as an educational experience packaged into a degree program (Gunn, 1998; Tribe, 2002). The curriculum can be filled with different knowledge, skills and attitudes according to the way in which the curriculum has been framed. In this report, a curriculum is defined as a series of courses packaged into a specialisation module of advanced tourism business skills and knowledge. This curriculum was developed by four higher education institutions in Finland, Estonia, and Latvia in a joint Interreg Central Baltic Programme project called BOOSTED. After the project, the curriculum will be integrated into the tourism degree programmes of the institutions.

When the curriculum is developed in international cooperation, the internationalisation of the curriculum is defined as the inclusion of an international dimension into the content of the curriculum and teaching and learning processes to meet the needs of an international student body (Haigh, 2002; Leask, 2011; Leask & Bridge, 2013). In this case, especially the international dimension of the curriculum content is emphasised. A successfully internationalised curriculum aims at preparing students for performing professionally and effectively in an international and multicultural context (Knight & deWit, 1995; Leask, 2001). It is about creating graduates who are capable of engaging in a work and communication culture which is becoming increasingly global (Sangpikul, 2009).

In addition, the internationalisation of a curriculum is seen as a way of internationalising programmes as products composed of international contents and designed for targeted students or defined professions with the aim of generating income and/or enhancing the international competitiveness of the graduates and institutions in global economy (Tagaki, 2015). The internationalisation of a curriculum is a process, which will lead to a product, an internationalised curriculum, which in turn will engage students in internationally informed research, cultural and linguistic diversity and purposefully develop their international and intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens (Leask, 2009).

TOURISM AS A PRIORITY AREA **IN THE EU STRATEGY FOR** **THE BALTIC SEA REGION**

Rapidly changing market demands make it necessary to combine efforts to improve professional skills and knowledge of the tourism sector in the Baltic Sea Region. This report applies the definitions of knowledge and skill by the European Commission (2014) used in European Qualifications Framework (EQF). According to this definition, knowledge means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a field of work or study. Knowledge is applied and put in use in skills. A skill is defined as an ability to apply knowledge and know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. The term skill refers typically to the use of methods in a particular setting and in relation to defined tasks. (European Commission, 2014.) In this report, knowledge is the body of facts, theories and practices related to tourism business. Skills refer to professional skills: the graduates' ability to apply knowledge, know-how and methods when working in the tourism industry.

In case of tourism, it is important to consider the geographical location of the destination and its part in a larger entity. Because the Baltic Sea Region with its destinations is facing growing global competition, the Policy Area Tourism is one of the thematic fields of action within an integrative framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). The overall aim of the Policy Area is to develop the region as a common tourism destination. It is a coherent market, where the tourism industry calls for similar professional skills to reach international markets jointly and to receive more international tourists from other parts of Europe and from the other continents. Thus, tourism education without borders should be promoted in the region.

The Implementation strategy for the sustainable blue growth agenda for the Baltic Sea Region (European Commission, 2017) defines the state of art in tourism. The core drivers and challenges for the development of tourism in the Baltic Sea Region include the seasonality of the demand that calls for diversification of products and services. Demographic change and new demand patterns require the development of new target group specific tourist products. Simultaneously, the quality of the experience is becoming more important. It is necessary to improve digital skills, because it opens new possibilities for selling and creating products and services. In addition, the most relevant strategic action fields have been identified to increase the growth and competitiveness of the region as a coherent tourism destination. The fields are: 1) product and service innovation, 2) cooperation of actors, destinations and segments, and 3) marketing and promotion. (European Commission, 2017.)

Product innovation is a prerequisite for international competitiveness. It helps to attract visitors with a higher purchasing power but it also prevents the Baltic Sea Region from losing existing clientele to other parts of the world. At the same time, data collection and use should be improved to analyse the consumer demand. In addition, investments are needed in digitalising offers and products, because the customers can make decisions on the basis of the digital offering before and during their travels. Digitalization can also create a new digitalised customer experience by using virtual and augmented reality. (European Commission, 2017.)

Further, new innovative marketing concepts are needed to ensure the sustainable growth of the tourism sector. This does not necessarily mean that the concepts should aim at quantitative growth but rather increasing the geographical and seasonal balance. Targeted marketing requires knowledge about the target group and its preferences. A diversification of promotion tools allows the user to address target groups more specifically. The strategic actions on visibility aim to make the whole Baltic Sea Region a destination more visible globally. On the other hand, they also aim at increasing the visibility of niche products with a potential to combat seasonality within the Baltic Sea Region. (European Commission, 2017.)

To achieve sustainable growth and to create local added value, it is necessary to build tourism strategies based on the interests of different local stakeholders. Horizontal cooperation between destinations and sites across the Baltic Sea Region helps to pool resources in order to generate international competitiveness. It is necessary to increase cross-cutting cooperation in order to link different development themes, for example nature, culture, well-being, and food to fulfil the needs of the visitors. (European Commission, 2017.)

TOURISM IN THE CENTRAL BALTIC AREA

International tourist arrivals in Europe grew by 5% in 2015. Europe was also the fastest growing region in absolute terms, with just over half of the world's total arrivals (51%). (UNWTO, 2016.) Tourism already contributes significantly to the economy of the Baltic Sea Region. In 2015, the records showed 82 million international arrivals to the eight EU member states in the Baltic Sea Region with a 37% increase compared to 2010. In the same year, 572 million overnight stays were recorded in these states. (European Commission, 2017.) However, tourism in the Baltic Sea Region will only be able to continue its growth in the long run, if the efforts will be oriented to international markets (European Commission, 2015; Baltic Sea Tourism Forum, 2015).

All three countries in the so-called Interreg Central Baltic Programme area, i.e. Finland, Estonia, and Latvia have an increasing number of foreign overnight stays (Table 1). These countries have Russia as one of the biggest inbound markets followed by Germany. Furthermore, the neighbouring countries themselves represent major inbound markets in terms of foreign overnight stays. In addition, overnight stays by visitors from Asia have been increasing fast.

The countries also share common challenges and possibilities. First of all, it is important to improve the quality of the tourism offer and expand the range of all-season services with more memorable, high-quality experiences. Digital skills should be improved to boost the visibility of the products and to address the target groups more specifically. All the countries focus on attracting niche markets. Moreover, a better balance between skilled labour supply and demand should be achieved.

Table 1. The number of foreign overnight stays in Finland, Estonia, and Latvia in 2016

| Finland 5.8 million | Estonia 4.0 million | Latvia 3.0 million |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Russia 12% | Finland 44% | Russia 14.5% |
| Sweden 9.5% | Russia 10.3% | Germany 11.5% |
| Germany 9.3% | Germany 6.7% | Lithuania 8.6% |
| The United Kingdom 8.6% | Latvia 5.4% | Estonia 7% |
| China 4.7% | Sweden 3.8% | Finland 6% |
| France 4.3 % | Lithuania 2.8% | The United Kingdom 5.5% |
| Growth 4.7% | Growth 6.6% | Growth 5.9% |

Finland

In Finland, tourism has grown more strongly and become more international at a faster pace than other sectors (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2015). In 2015, a total of €13.8 billion was spent on tourism in Finland, and the contribution of tourism to the GDP was 2.5%. Foreign overnights increased by 4.7% in 2016, accounting for 5.8 million overnight stays in total. The largest numbers of foreign overnights came from the neighbouring countries, Russia (12%) and Sweden (9.5%), followed by Germany (9.3%), the United Kingdom (8.6%), and China (4.7%). While the number of overnights by Russian visitors has decreased during the past three years, Finland's travel market has become more diversified with an increasing number of overnights from many other countries. (Visit Finland, 2017.) In fact, Finland receives the largest number of Chinese tourists in the Nordic countries during the winter season with a 36% market share. Interestingly, summer is the peak season in most Nordic countries, whereas Finland stands out as a winter destination. (Visit Finland, 2016.)

According to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (2015; 2017), international tourism is expected to increase its importance and continue growing in Finland in the near future. Thus, the Finnish Government has decided to invest in tourism to ensure continued growth (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2017). A number of strategic measures have been taken to promote and support the growth and renewal of the tourism industry for years 2015–2025 by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2015).

The goal is for Finland to be the number-one tourist destination in Northern Europe by 2025. At that time, the Finnish tourism offering will increasingly consist of unforgettable, high-quality experiences that offer good value for money. Service packages will be easy to find and buy. Finland will offer a competitive operating environment for companies aiming at growth and internationalisation. Investing in know-how and enhanced abilities in the tourism industry will have produced great results. Innovative customer-oriented solutions in marketing and sales as well as digital solutions will have increased the intensity of the travellers' experiences and improved profitability. Sustainable tourism, profitability, new collaboration models and quality management will be the key pillars in supporting success. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2015.) Furthermore, a new Travel 4.0 policy package, launched in autumn 2017, aims to intensify travel marketing efforts, improve the digital skills of tourism companies, expand the range of all-season services and improve the conditions for nature tourism and the regulatory environment. Another priority is to achieve a better balance between skilled labour supply and demand, because the tourism sector is already now experiencing shortage of labour. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2017.)

Estonia

In 2016, foreign overnight stays accounted for 4.0 million in Estonia. The foreign overnights increased by 6.6% in 2016 with most of the major inbound markets showing growth. The direct contribution of tourism to the GDP was 4.0% in 2016 (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017). The largest markets for foreign overnight stays were Finland (44%), Russia (10.3%), Germany (6.7%), Latvia (5.4%), Sweden (3.8%), Lithuania (2.8%), and the United Kingdom (2.7%). The overnights of Finnish, German and Latvian tourists reached a new record in 2016. In absolute figures, the greatest increase was in Finland among the foreign markets. In addition, German, Latvian, Lithuanian and Russian overnights contributed to the strong growth in foreign overnights. (Visit Estonia, 2017.) According to Statistics Estonia (2017), the number of tourists from Asia has increased rapidly. In 2016, altogether 14,000 tourists arrived from China and South-Korea and 24,000 from Japan. The Estonian accommodation sector has benefited from the direct flights which started between Helsinki and Tokyo in 2013. Compared to 2013, the number of tourists from Japan has doubled in Estonian hotels. (Statistics Estonia, 2017.)

According to the National Tourism Development Plan 2014–2020, the state will invest about 123 million euros in the development of tourism with the purpose of increasing the tourism sector by approximately a third. The export of tourism services will increase to 1.50 billion euros compared to 1.24 billion in 2012. The main strategic goals of the plan include the following: increasing awareness of Estonia as a travel destination, tourism product development and the development of tourism attractions of international interest. According to the vision of the plan, by 2020, Estonia is a welcoming, safe and well-known tourism destination with inspirational and memorable tourism products enabling visitor experiences with quality. Estonia is a country of inspirational events and interesting attractions that motivate repeat visits. In addition, Estonia is a leading conference tourism destination due to its innovativeness and an attractive maritime tourism destination with unique regional tourism products. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2013.)

Latvia

In 2016, foreign overnight stays increased 5.9% from year 2015, accounting for 3.0 million in Latvia. The direct contribution of tourism to the GDP was 4.0% in 2016 (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017). Strategically important countries are all the neighbouring countries and nearest Northern European and Western European countries. The biggest markets were Russia (14.5%), Germany (11.5%), Lithuania (8.6%), Estonia (7%), Finland (6%), and the United Kingdom (5.5%). Germany has been connected with the Baltic countries historically. Therefore, Germans are better informed of the Baltics and Latvia than other Western countries. Compared to the previous year, there was an increase in the number of foreign overnight stays from Poland, 8.6%, Lithuania, 8.5%, Germany, 6.7%, and the United Kingdom, 4.8%. (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2017; Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia, 2017.)

The overall goal of the Latvian tourism policy 2014–2020 is to ensure the sustainable growth of the Latvian tourism sector by facilitating the competitiveness of Latvian tourism services in export markets. Latvian tourism policy aims to increase the competitiveness of Latvian tourism supply that meets the criteria of sustainable tourism product development, encourages international competitiveness and reduces seasonal imbalance in tourism flows. Thus, several main challenges have been identified for the Latvian tourism industry: 1) improving education and skills in tourism, 2) combating seasonality, and 3) improving the quality of tourism offer. Latvia is being promoted as the place to slow down and enjoy calm, nuanced relaxation, new experiences and harmony. Latvia is not and possibly never will be a mass tourism destination. Thus, Latvian tourism products have to be based on quality, sustainability, individualization, high added value, involvement of tourists and gaining experience. (Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia, 2017.)

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROJECT BOOSTED

In the project, BOOSTED, the skills and knowledge in the tourism industry were identified and aligned in the Interreg Central Baltic Programme area (Figure 1) to support the development of the area as a common tourism destination. The project BOOSTED aims at providing an aligned and relevant skillset for the area to grow as a coherent tourism destination. It boosts growth and competitiveness by increasing advanced business skills and knowledge needed to benefit from the possibilities and to meet the challenges of the tourism industry. The tourism industry is defined very broadly in this project. It includes various sectors and actors such as the hospitality and restaurant sector, travel agencies and tour operators, tourist attractions, the events and adventure tourism sector, tourism coordinators, tourism information centres and different tourism developers.

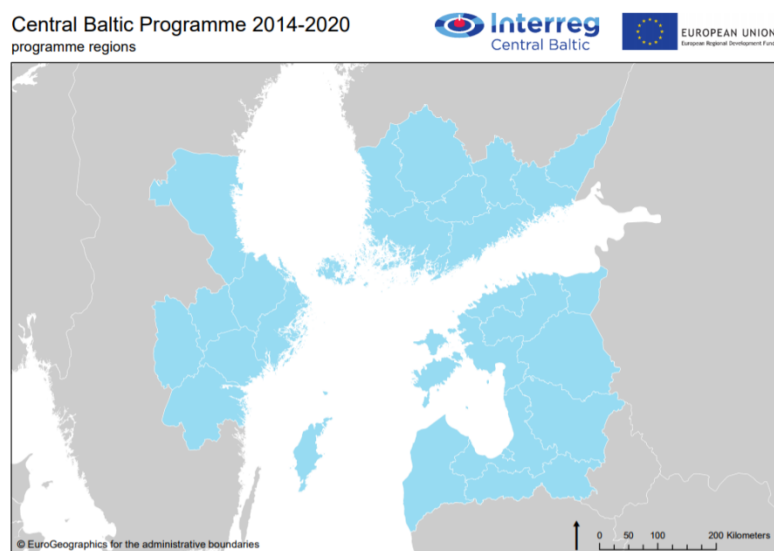


Figure 1. The Central Baltic Programme area (EuroGeographics)

In practice, the project aligns higher tourism education with the needs of the tourism industry and the labour market in Finland, Estonia, and Latvia in a new, joint curriculum and study programme (33 ECTS). In the project, the relevant, common skillset was identified and aligned by research activities. Then, it was translated into a joint curriculum and implemented as an online study programme. The curriculum includes eight courses in which students get credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Students get six ECTS credits from three core courses and three ECTS credits from five specialisation courses. The course descriptions and syllabi were developed to all courses with special attention to the details of teaching, learning, and assessment.

The curriculum was introduced to the higher education institutions providing tourism education in Finland, Estonia and Latvia. It is possible for all higher education institutions to adopt the curriculum and integrate it as a module into their existing curricula and degree programmes. Furthermore, the partner universities will include the curriculum as a module in their tourism and hospitality degree programmes after the project.

The novelty of the curriculum is in a jointly designed study programme with three states involved. National borders are blurred and the curriculum and the study programme are truly an initiative of these three countries. In this case, collaborative, online courses allow students to interact with students and teachers from a wider geographical area. In addition, the internationalisation of education is advanced by creating joint methods of virtual pedagogy.

This curriculum strengthens the quality of tourism education and fosters cooperation. Jointly developed courses increase awareness and visibility of education and appeal to students both nationally and internationally. In addition, eLearning courses based on the aligned needs of the tourism industry are a great tool for virtual mobility. The study material will also benefit the education system and industry as such.

COMMON SKILLS IN THE CENTRAL BALTIC AREA

First, a common and relevant skillset in advanced tourism business was identified by performing a secondary data review. An analysis was conducted on the content of national tourism development strategies and plans contributing to the tourism development, industry reports and previous research of the topic in Finland, Estonia and Latvia. In addition, a total of 17 tourism-related bachelor level study programmes were reviewed (Finland N=7, Estonia N=3, Latvia N=7) as well as a sample of students' internship reports.

For the tourism industry to grow and increase its competitiveness, it is important to understand the viewpoint of the industry and its current skill requirements. Therefore, primary data were collected by using semi-structured individual and group interviews and focus group discussions (FGD). Altogether 103 interviews were made in three countries by different means of communication. The informants represented various tourism sectors and actors: micro, small, and medium-size tourism enterprises, national and regional tourism development organisations (national tourism boards, regional councils, tourism clusters and tourism-related projects), local tourism information centres and municipal agencies responsible for tourism development, tourism-related associations, and tourist attractions. The data were analysed by using qualitative content analysis. Finally, the data

were reviewed, compared for similarities and differences, grouped into categories and given conceptual labels.

In the Interreg Central Baltic Programme project BOOSTED, the following skills were identified to be relevant for the growth and competitiveness of the area as a coherent tourism destination: 1) product and experience design and development, 2) multi-channel sales and marketing communication, 3) multi-sectorality, cooperation and networking, 4) cultural awareness and internationalisation, 5) managing business operations and entrepreneurial competence. Digitalisation and personal traits are the cross-cutting themes relevant to many of the skills categories mentioned above. In addition, language skills have great importance.

The main challenges in product and experience design and development are associated with creating unique, authentic and innovative tourism products and experiences without losing connection to local values. A broader view is necessary in order to identify the business opportunities in a multi-sectoral business environment and to develop competitive and versatile offerings from the interfaces of tourism and other fields (for example culture, nature and food). In addition, it is necessary to develop high-quality products for specific segments which exceed the customers' expectations as well as to tailor and adjust products. Sustainability, including its economic aspects, is seen as a key value in product and experience development. As seasonality is one of the key challenges in the tourism industry, it is important to highlight the role of product development for off-season and low season periods.

There should be a strong focus and priority on the skills in multi-channelled sales and marketing communication such as the use of digital channels, because the trends of digitalization and future technologies define tourism business and make it global. IT knowledge in marketing is critical for making tourism products visible and for selling them through online channels. Therefore, a variety of IT skills, from the use of social media and production of high quality virtual materials to creative design, should be strengthened among tourism students and tourism professionals of all age groups.

Different aspects of online visibility are very important, for example well designed, interactive websites, active social media accounts and useful mobile applications.

The bottlenecks in the tourism industry were created by lack of sales skills and knowledge of different sales channels. Sales skills refer to the proactive, goal oriented approach of the staff to increasing offline and online sales. It includes predicting and understanding the buying behaviour in tourism and offering and presenting products in a sophisticated manner. In addition, it is necessary to establish optimal systems for searching travel products online and for selling products in the context of multiple domestic and international sales channels and models.

The role of collaboration is indisputable in the bid to reach more international tourists. It explains the significance of the skills related to multi-sectorality, collaboration, and networking. The actors in the tourism industry don't have sufficient skills and knowledge of how to collaborate in practise. It is obvious that there is a need to establish new collaboration models and multi-sectoral cooperation. It is necessary to strengthen rational understanding of how to utilize strategic partnerships and cluster networks in tourism business development. The key skills include networking and establishing networks to enhance collaborative product development, sales and marketing activities to reach certain segments and markets jointly.

The skills in the category of cultural awareness and internationalisation include an ability to identify and reach diverse international target groups. It is necessary to understand the special characteristics of people from different cultures and their sensitivity to product offerings. Therefore, actors in the field of tourism need knowledge of the markets, especially of the Asian tourism markets. The increasing diversity of international tourists and their demands on international customer service also pose new skill requirements. As a result, the specific characteristics of different cultures and their influence on customer service should be highlighted. In addition, persons working in the tourism industry need knowledge of their own culture.

Table 2. The joint skills and knowledge needed in tourism business

| Product and experience design and development | Multi-channelled sales and marketing communication | Multi-sectorality, cooperation and networking | Cultural awareness and internationalisation |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing innovative and authentic tourism products and experiences of high quality • Designing and offering diversified products to specific segments • Developing versatile offerings from the interfaces of tourism and other fields; use of local natural and cultural heritage • Tackling the challenges of seasonality; offering off-season products • Using ICT as part of a tourism product • Strengthening economic sustainability in product development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding buying behaviour in tourism • Using digital tools to enhance online visibility of destinations and products: use of social media, mobile technology and interactive websites • Designing creative, high quality visual materials • Using thematic sales channels and models for searching and selling products online • Improving personal selling skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation between different stakeholders and different sectors • Theme-based cooperation • Establishing, managing, and evaluating cooperation • Using innovative cooperation models • Collaborative product development, marketing communication and sales | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying international target groups • Applying customer know-how and market knowledge • Understanding the special characteristics of different cultures and their impact on business activities • Enhancing international customer service skills • Knowledge of the special features of one's own culture |
| Digitalisation, personal characteristics, and language skills | | | |

Skills related to the management of business operations involve knowledge of operational and strategic management issues as well as skills in developing business operations in the SMEs. Many representatives of the tourism industry claim that there is a need for entrepreneurial competence. Entrepreneurial competence refers to the skills in running a profitable business and in increasing the competitiveness of an enterprise in a specific operational environment. Especially younger staff members need skills in team and human resource management. The staff should also have skills in risk management and financial skills including the basic principles of product pricing. In addition, it is necessary to intensify the overall usage of digital technologies in business operations. Significant strategic competence includes an ability to identify and interpret the changes in tourism business environments in the global and local context. In addition, it involves developing analytical foresight skills and awareness of trends as well as understanding tourism as a system.

The study showed that digitalisation, personal traits, and language skills are cross-cutting themes in all areas. Digitalisation including comprehension of the concepts and usage of specific tools is the biggest challenge in the industry. The needs in digitalisation-related skills are connected to marketing and sales as well as to competitive and unique product design. Personal traits are also emphasised when working in the tourism industry. The employees have to show a welcoming attitude, hospitality, openness, sense of empathy, civility, accuracy, and diplomacy.

Managing business operations and entrepreneurial competence

- Managing human resources, especially the younger staff members
- Understanding the key pricing factors and factors related to a profitable tourism business
- Implementing risk management strategies
- Identifying the operating environment with all its sectors and actors
- Developing analytical foresight skills and awareness of trends
- Developing an entrepreneurial attitude
- Using digital technologies in business operations

The informants referred to language skills as a highly important issue. Serving the tourists in their own language was regarded as excellent customer service and thereby the customer's expectations can be exceeded. In Finland, actors in the field of tourism should know also other languages than English (for example German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Russian), when the arrivals of international tourists are increasing and the travel market is diversifying. The Latvian informants stressed lack of Russian language skills as the biggest problem. It has disappeared from the toolbox of the young employees but it is extremely important as the market for Russian speaking people is wide and geographically in the neighbourhood. In all the countries, German is needed in addition to English. The joint tourism business skills and knowledge are summarized in Table 2.

CURRICULUM OF BOOSTING TOURISM BUSINESS GROWTH

FACTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

The title of the curriculum is “Boosting tourism business growth - Supporting the development of the Central Baltic Area as a coherent tourism destination”. Because tourism is expected to increase its importance and continue growing, the purpose of the curriculum is to provide an aligned and relevant skillset and knowledge necessary for meeting the challenges and possibilities of the tourism industry. The curriculum was designed and implemented in cooperation with the Finnish, Estonian and Latvian universities and it supports the growth and competitiveness of the whole area as a coherent tourism destination.

The extent of the curriculum is 33 ECTS credits and it consists of eight different courses. It is placed at level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The curriculum is targeted on the second, third, and fourth year tourism and hospitality bachelor degree students and students from other relevant degree programmes. In addition, the courses are offered for professionals as in-service training.

The curriculum takes a unique approach and offers a possibility to study in a truly international environment. When taking these studies, the students acquire specialised tourism business development skills and knowledge relevant to various tourism-related sectors and actors for boosting the growth and competitiveness of the industry. The module enables students to develop skills and knowledge needed in coping with the changing circumstances of tourism business, especially with the growth of international tourism in the area. The industry-driven curriculum was planned in cooperation with the professionals, and it is based on the future needs of the tourism industry.

The core courses aim at increasing the key skills and knowledge in designing experience-based products to deal with the challenges related to seasonality, managing marketing communication in tourism organisations and developing successful, multi-sectoral cooperation in destinations. In addition, the students acquire skills and knowledge in international customer service and develop sensitivity to cultural differences. They gain skills and knowledge in selling destinations, tourism products and services to meet specific customer needs. The students are introduced to different methods and tools to forecast global changes and their impact on tourism businesses. Additionally, the emphasis is on personal development significant for building careers in tourism, i.e. innovativeness, creativeness and proactivity.

The curriculum provides students with numerous learning opportunities that help them to prepare for their careers. The studies are mainly implemented online which increases the flexibility of studying. Students study in multicultural teams in an online environment and thereby also develop their intercultural competence. In addition, studies include meaningful and challenging real business cases. A variety of international study material is provided and the curriculum also includes an innovation camp in Estonia, where the students meet and exchange ideas about product development. The following table (Table 3) provides the most important details of the curriculum in a nutshell.

Table 3. Curriculum in a nutshell

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Title of the curriculum | Boosting Tourism Business Growth -Supporting the Development of the Central Baltic Area as a Coherent Tourism Destination |
| Extent of the curriculum | 33 ECTS credits |
| Curriculum level | EQF 6, Bachelor level |
| Duration of the curriculum | 1 year (autumn and spring semesters) |
| Target group | The second, third, and fourth year tourism and hospitality bachelor degree students, students from other relevant degree programmes, tourism professionals |
| Purpose | Because tourism is expected to increase its importance and continue growing, the purpose of the curriculum is to provide an aligned and relevant skillset and knowledge necessary for meeting the challenges and for using the possibilities of the tourism industry. When taking these studies, the students acquire specialised tourism business development skills and knowledge relevant to various tourism-related sectors and actors for boosting the growth and competitiveness of the industry. The module enables students to develop skills and knowledge needed in coping with the changing circumstances of tourism business, especially with the growth of international tourism in the area. The industry-driven curriculum was planned in cooperation with the professionals, and it is based on the future needs of the tourism industry. |

continues →

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| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Key learning outcomes | The core courses aim at increasing the key skills and knowledge in designing experience-based products to deal with the challenges related to seasonality, managing marketing communication in contemporary tourism organisations and developing successful, multi-sectoral cooperation in destinations. In addition, the students acquire skills and knowledge in international customer service and develop sensitivity to cultural differences. They gain skills and knowledge in selling destinations, tourism products and services to meet specific customer needs. The students are introduced to different methods and tools to forecast global changes and their impact on tourism businesses. Additionally, the emphasis is on personal development significant for building careers in tourism, i.e. innovativeness, creativeness and proactivity. |
| Course list | The curriculum consists of eight different courses, three core courses of six ECTS credits and five specialisation courses of three ECTS credits: Tourism Product and Experience Design, 6 ECTS Digital Marketing Communication and Content Management, 6 ECTS Increasing Competitiveness by Cooperation, 6 ECTS Boosting Sales in Tourism, 3 ECTS Cultural Competence in Customer Service, 3 ECTS Forecasting Tourism in the Age of Uncertainty, 3 ECTS Proactivity and Creative Performance, 3 ECTS Innovation Camp in Product Development, 3 ECTS |
| Study mode | The studies are mainly implemented online which increases the flexibility of studying. Students study in multicultural teams in an online environment and thereby also develop their intercultural competence. In addition, studies include meaningful and challenging real business cases. A variety of international study material is provided and the curriculum also includes an innovation camp in Estonia, where the students meet and exchange ideas about product development. |

CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM AND THE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The curriculum includes the most relevant skills and knowledge identified by conducting research in the project BOOSTED. The extent of the curriculum is 33 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits. In total, the curriculum includes eight courses. Students get six ECTS credits from three core courses and three ECTS credits from five specialisation courses (Figure 2). The core courses enhance skills and knowledge in tourism product and experience design, digital marketing communication, content management, cooperation and networking. The five specialisation courses improve skills and knowledge in boosting sales in tourism, international customer service, forecasting the

impacts of global change on tourism businesses and proactivity and creativeness. One of the specialisation courses is implemented as an innovation camp providing skills in active learning and product development in a multicultural setting.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Tourism Product and Experience Design, 6 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of innovation and co-creation in experience-based product design; niche markets in experience economy; trends in experience-based product design; natural and cultural heritage as a source of creative and competitive product design; seasonality and creative product design; "Local and seasonal" as a new competitive edge; differentiation, adaptation, and continuous innovation in product development; co-creation and repeat visitation; sustainable product pricing |
| <p>Digital Marketing Communication and Content Management, 6 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using internet as a communication tool in tourism; digital communication models; digital marketing mix (7P) and marketing communication; Internet audience, consumer behaviour and customer profiles; designing digital experience: web sites and mobile marketing; web site design, structure, aesthetics and navigation; content strategy, storytelling and copywriting; marketing in social media and its optimization; traffic building techniques and communication mix; online marketing metrics and analytics |
| <p>Increasing Competitiveness by Cooperation, 6 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies, advantages and objectives of cooperation; cooperation models, cooperation; tourism actors and stakeholders; establishing, managing and evaluating cooperation; multisectoral cooperation in destinations; role of trust building; characteristics and aims of thematic, resource-based, product- and market-related networks; local engagement in cooperation and producing visitor experiences |
| <p>Boosting Sales in Tourism, 3 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of selling in tourism; customer needs applied to selling tourism products for different target groups; planning and organization of a sales process; sales channels in tourism (traditional and new); digitalisation of sales channels; personal selling in tourism; selling techniques and instruments applied in tourism; new tendencies in destination selling |
| <p>Cultural Competence in Customer Service, 3 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer target markets and their cultures; customers' cultural differences related to values, beliefs, language, religion; cultural dimensions in different cultural theories; successful intercultural communication in customer service; value creation in customer journeys; high quality customer service as a competitive advantage in tourism business |
| <p>Forecasting Tourism in the Age of Uncertainty, 3 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism business in the context of global change; role of forecasting in the context of development strategies; critique of forecasting; different types of future predictions; sources of data for forecasting tourism trends; review of qualitative and quantitative methods of future research and scenario analysis; evaluation of the results of future forecasting research; dynamic modelling and practical application of forecasting in tourism development |
| <p>Proactivity and Creative Performance, 3 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept and role of proactivity in tourism; creativity as the product of an individual mind; real and imagined barriers; proactive behavior in different sectors of tourism; relationship between proactivity and creativity; different methods of training and evaluation; facilitating work environment; selling ideas in the context of proactivity; practical application of creativity in organizations |
| <p>Innovation Camp in Product Development, 3 ECTS</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An active learning method; project-based learning in a multicultural setting; case study approach; multicultural and multi-sectoral cooperation in product design and innovation |

Figure 2. The structure of the curriculum

COURSE 1:

Tourism Product and Experience Design, 6 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to enhance the theoretical and practical knowledge of the role of continuous innovation, creative and sustainable use of cultural and natural heritage and co-creation in experience-based product planning and development to overcome the challenges of seasonality.

Content

The role of innovation and co-creation in experience-based product design; niche markets in experience economy; trends in experience-based product design; natural and cultural heritage as a source of creative and competitive product design; seasonality and creative product design; "Local and seasonal" as a new competitive edge; differentiation, adaptation, and continuous innovation in product development; co-creation and repeat visitation; sustainable product pricing

Learning outcome

Student

- designs new innovative experience-based products and services by using insights from an innovation theory, service-design and a co-creation approach.
- recognizes different market needs in experience-based product development and innovates existing products based on the differentiated needs of the target markets.
- recognizes the innovative product design opportunities based on trends and seasonality and uses them creatively in new product design.
- identifies the elements of a competitive edge provided by local cultural and natural heritage and uses them creatively in product design.
- analyses comparable experience-based products locally and regionally and strengthens product and service competitiveness through product differentiation and networking.
- identifies opportunities for increased co-creation and uses them in sustainable product development and pricing.

COURSE 2:

Digital Marketing Communication and Content Management, 6 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to provide advanced knowledge, insights and practical skills needed in managing marketing communication in contemporary tourism organisations.

Content

Using internet as a communication tool in tourism; digital communication models; digital marketing mix (7P) and marketing communication; Internet audience, consumer behaviour and customer profiles; designing digital experience: web sites and mobile marketing; web site design, structure, aesthetics and navigation; content strategy, storytelling and copywriting; marketing in social media and its optimization; traffic building techniques and communication mix; online marketing metrics and analytics

Learning outcome

Student

- recognizes different consumer behaviour models in tourism and online consumer profiles
- develops a coherent, fully integrated and effective promotion strategy by combining the promotion tools of traditional and digital marketing
- develops a creative concept of marketing communication including visual expressions of ideas in creative design and creates stories to engage tourists and to induce valuable digital experience for tourists
- ensures that digital experiences are integrated with the rest of the business, and customer needs are translated into professional site design with content quality, aesthetic design, good navigation and clear structure.
- understands the relevance of social media to tourism business, is able to integrate social media into a communication strategy and develops an understanding of practical approaches to improve marketing on main social networks.
- assesses different options for traffic building and uses search engine optimisation, link building, affiliate marketing and display advertising as well as tests engaging paid media placements
- uses marketing metrics and analytics for analysing the benefits of online marketing communication

COURSE 3:

Increasing Competitiveness by Cooperation, 6 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to increase the competitiveness and growth of tourism destinations and organisations by establishing and managing successful cooperation.

Content

Strategies, advantages and objectives of cooperation; cooperation models, co-competition; tourism actors and stakeholders; establishing, managing and evaluating cooperation; multi-sectoral cooperation in destinations; role of trust building; characteristics and aims of thematic, resource-based, product- and market-related networks; local engagement in cooperation and producing visitor experiences

Learning outcome

Student

- understands the strategies, advantages and objectives of cooperation in different tourism organisations and destinations
- applies different cooperation models including co-competition and identifies the actors and stakeholders involved: visitors, tourism businesses, NGOs, tourism business developers, authorities and locals
- establishes, manages and evaluates cooperation and networks in destinations
- identifies multi-sectoral characteristics of cooperation in destinations
- understands the role of building trust in cooperation and in establishing tourism networks
- understands the characteristics and aims of different tourism networks: thematic, resource-based, product- and market-related networks
- encourages locals and local communities to cooperate and contribute to producing visitor experiences based on local cultural and natural heritage

COURSE 4:

Boosting Sales in Tourism, 3 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to gain knowledge of successful sales planning, process organization and selling techniques in tourism and to develop skills required in selling destinations, hospitality or event products and services proactively and in identifying specific customer needs.

Content

Principles of selling in tourism; customer needs applied to selling tourism products for different target groups; planning and organization of a sales process; sales channels in tourism (traditional and new); digitalisation of sales channels; personal selling in tourism; selling techniques and instruments applied in tourism; new tendencies in destination selling

Learning outcome

Student

- identifies and meets customer needs
- analyzes and chooses appropriate sales channels
- develops new selling ideas and techniques in a creative, proactive and goal orientated way
- boosts fundamental communication techniques, in particular, questioning and active listening of the customers
- communicates with the customer, chooses the right selling technique and correctly interprets the customer's requirements, applies sales techniques in response to a range of customer situations based on product knowledge
- uses new technological applications in selling processes

COURSE 5:

Cultural Competence in Customer Service, 3 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to increase the awareness and understanding of cultural aspects and their substantial impact on international customer service as well as to develop sensitivity to cultural differences.

Content

Customer target markets and their cultures; customers' cultural differences related to values, beliefs, language, religion; cultural dimensions in different cultural theories; successful intercultural communication in customer service; value creation in customer journeys; high quality customer service as a competitive advantage in tourism business

Learning outcome

Student

- recognizes and compares one's own culture to other cultures
- identifies the effects of cultural diversity on international customer service
- understands the customers' value creation process on the basis of cultural knowledge
- designs and develops services increasing international customer satisfaction
- implements high-level service by taking into consideration the customers' cultural origin

COURSE 6:

Forecasting Tourism in the Age of Uncertainty, 3 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to increase understanding of the impacts of global change on the operational environments of tourism businesses and to introduce students to different methods and tools to forecast these changes.

Content

Tourism business in the context of global change; role of forecasting in the context of development strategies; critique of forecasting; different types of future predictions; sources of data for forecasting tourism trends; review of qualitative and quantitative methods of future research and scenario analysis; evaluation of the results of future forecasting research; dynamic modelling and practical application of forecasting in tourism development

Learning outcome

Student

- recognizes the impact of global change on the different aspects of tourism business
- identifies the different forecasting methods and tools of tourism system development and is able to choose appropriate methodology
- gathers, selects and analyzes data to forecast future changes and challenges
- evaluates the results of future prognosis studies
- integrates the results of forecasting in the development scenarios, strategies and plans.

COURSE 7:

Proactivity and Creative Performance, 3 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to develop the students' personality, specifically, to boost two interrelated personal traits, i.e. proactivity and a creative mind set which are significant in every aspect of the professional life, in particular, in tourism.

Content

Concept and role of proactivity in tourism; creativity as the product of an individual mind; real and imagined barriers; proactive behaviour in the different sectors of tourism; relationship between proactivity and creativity; different methods of training and evaluation; facilitating work environment; selling ideas in the context of proactivity; practical application of creativity in organizations

Learning outcome

Student

- recognizes the importance of personal proactivity
- trains personal creativity and uses systemic inventive thinking techniques independently
- generates ideas creatively and implements them proactively
- establishes a proactive and creative work environment in an organization/group

COURSE 8:

Innovation Camp in Product Development, 3 ECTS

Purpose

The purpose of the course is to deepen the expected learning outcomes of the module in active exchange of ideas and constructive feedback in a multicultural setting. The course focuses on an active learning method in a multicultural setting by using a case study approach in project-based learning in product innovation.

Content

An active learning method; project-based learning in a multicultural setting; case study approach; multicultural and multi-sectoral cooperation in product design and innovation

Learning outcome

Student

- develops active learning skills through project-based learning.
- identifies opportunities and develops skills for product innovation through immediate idea exchange in a multicultural setting
- develops enhanced understanding of different target market expectations and needs towards experience based products and services as well as adapting product offerings sensitive to cultural differences.
- increases skills needed in competitive product design and recognizes opportunities for product development through international, regional and multi-sectoral cooperation
- enhances skills in how to involve local stakeholders in product design and development

SUMMARISING THE CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM

As stated earlier in this report, the following skills and knowledge were identified to support the growth and competitiveness of the Central Baltic Area as a coherent tourism destination: 1) product and experience design and development 2) multi-channelled sales and marketing communication 3) multi-sectorality, cooperation and networking 4) cultural awareness and internationalisation and 5) managing business operations and entrepreneurial competence. Digitalisation and personal traits are the cross-cutting themes relevant to many of the skills categories mentioned above. In addition, language skills have great importance.

In this curriculum, the three core courses of 6 ECTS credits were developed in product and experience design, digital marketing communication and cooperation to increase the key skills and knowledge identified in the research. These courses also relate to the following, most relevant strategic action fields in tourism development identified in the implementation strategy for the sustainable blue growth agenda for the Baltic Sea Region (European Commission, 2017): 1) product and service innovation, 2) cooperation of actors, destinations and segments and 3) marketing and promotion.

The four specialisation courses of 3 ECTS credits were developed in sales, cultural awareness and internationalisation, managing business operations and personal traits. Lack of sales skills and knowledge of different sales channels were identified as bottlenecks in tourism business development. Cultural awareness, especially international customer service skills, were considered vital as the number of international tourist arrivals increases. In this case, essential skills also include increasing understanding of the impacts of global change on the operational environment of tourism businesses and an ability to apply different methods and tools to forecast these changes. Personal traits were acknowledged as an important aspect in succeeding in a tourism career. Therefore, proactivity and creativity were chosen as course topics.

In the project BOOSTED, one of the specialisation courses is implemented as an innovation camp. Interaction, active exchange of information, experiences and best-practices were regarded as a meaningful experience for the students and lecturers. For this reason, an innovation camp in product development was included as one of the specialisation courses in the curriculum.

Table 4 shows the links between the skills and knowledge identified in the research and the courses designed in the curriculum.

Table 4. Skills and knowledge related to the courses

| | Tourism Product and Experience Design | Digital Marketing Communication and Content Management | Increasing Competitiveness by Cooperation | Boosting Sales in Tourism | Cultural Competence in Customer Service | Forecasting Tourism in the Age of Uncertainty | Proactivity and Creative Performance | Innovation Camp in Product Development |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Product and experience design and development | X | X | X | | | | X | X |
| Multi-channelled sales and marketing communication | | X | X | X | | | X | X |
| Multi-sectorality, cooperation and networking | X | | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Cultural awareness, internationalisation | X | | | | X | | | X |
| Managing business operations and entrepreneurial skills | | X | X | X | | X | | |
| Digitalisation | | X | | X | | X | X | |
| Personal traits | | | | X | X | | X | X |



Picture 1. The representatives of the partner universities in the project BOOSTED

THE FOLLOWING PERSONS

have contributed to the identification of the relevant skillset and
curriculum development:

Sanna-Mari Renfors, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

Tiina Garcia, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

Jaana Ruoho, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

Aija Van der Steina, University of Latvia

Kristine Berzina, University of Latvia

Ilze Medne, University of Latvia

Denize Pomomarjova, University of Latvia

Zane Zeibote, University of Latvia

Linda Välliverronen, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences

Ilze Grinfelde, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences

Zane Kudure, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences

Laura Fisere, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences

Kaia Eelma, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian Maritime Academy

Riia Nelis, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian Maritime Academy

Eeve Kärblane, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian Maritime Academy

Jana Raadik-Cotrell, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian Maritime Academy

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Visit Finland

Study in an international environment!

Study programme in

Boosting Tourism Business Growth

Why take the programme?

- You will study in a truly international environment with students and lecturers from six Finnish, Estonian, and Latvian universities.
- You will acquire skills and knowledge for boosting tourism business growth and competitiveness, especially in international tourism.
- You can participate in an innovation camp in Estonia with students from other countries.
- The programme is designed and implemented in cooperation with tourism industry professionals.
- The courses are conducted in a flexible online learning environment.

The programme takes a unique approach and offers you a possibility to study in an international environment. You will obtain specialized skills and knowledge for boosting tourism industry growth and competitiveness, with a focus on international tourism. Our courses

prepare you to cope in the fast-growing tourism sector. You will learn to design memorable experience-based products and improve your skills in digital marketing and communication. In addition to that, you will develop your competence in international customer service and your sensitivity to cultural differences. You will be able to sell tourism destinations and their products as well as learn how to manage cooperation successfully. You will be introduced to different tools for forecasting global changes and their impact on tourism businesses. A lot of emphasis is put on your personal development significant for building a career in tourism.

The studies are conducted mainly online. As you will work in multicultural teams, you can develop also your intercultural competence. Additionally, learning will take place by analysing meaningful and challenging real business cases. The programme includes an innovation camp in Estonia where you will meet and exchange ideas with students from around the Baltic Sea.



You can choose from eight different courses:

- Tourism Product and Experience Design, 6 ECTS (A)
- Digital Marketing Communication and Content Management, 6 ECTS (A)
- Increasing Competitiveness by Cooperation, 6 ECTS (S)
- Boosting Sales in Tourism, 3 ECTS (S)
- Cultural Competence in Customer Service, 3 ECTS (A)
- Forecasting Tourism in the Age of Uncertainty, 3 ECTS (S)
- Proactivity and Creative Performance, 3 ECTS (A)
- Innovation Camp in Product Development, 3 ECTS (S)

Take all the courses offered, or participate in the most interesting ones!

The application period for the autumn courses (A) is 1.3.2018–13.5.2018 and for the spring courses (S) 2.10.2018–1.12.2018.

You will be provided **an official certificate** after completion of each study course and **a separate diploma** if you have completed all the courses in the curriculum.

Please note that in each course participate students from several universities and there is a limited number of study places available.

For more information, contact your curriculum coordinator:

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... or go to the website <http://www.projectboosted.eu/student-corner/>

This report presents a new curriculum designed by four universities in collaboration in the Interreg Central Baltic project BOOSTED.

The purpose of the curriculum is to provide the students with an aligned and relevant skillset and necessary knowledge to support the development of the Central Baltic Area as a coherent tourism destination. The curriculum was designed together with various tourism professionals, and it is based on the future needs of the tourism industry.



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