



Black Sea Women Entrepreneurship Connection -
Empowering Women through Tourism
WETOUR / BSB1030



Common borders. Common solutions.

RESEARCH STUDY OF THE COMPETENCES AND NEEDS OF SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS IN TOURISM SECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

While female entrepreneurship is a real driving force in today's modern economy, it is also an emerging field in the global business environment. It is proven that women entrepreneurs have a big positive impact in the business world. They shape and redefine the workplace, business networks, financial institutions and culture. Unfortunately, in the Black Sea Region they also represent an unexploited potential. Entrepreneurship is generally seen as a key driver for economic success. However, statistics show that only 32% of the entrepreneurs are women. One of the reasons for the low percentage is the lack of initiatives targeted towards women. Opportunities are wasted at a time when sustainable economic growth figures high on the agenda of all governments in Europe. In fact, one of the main responsibilities of the European Union is the sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance, and individual freedoms.

Research show that travel and tourism have been proven to provide women with more opportunities for empowerment compared to other industries, giving the sector increased responsibility for the advancement of women. The business sector is disrupting, and new trends are emerging. Entrepreneurs need to keep their finger on the pulse. New elements are capturing the market. New destinations, new technologies and means of transport have caused major shifts in the industry. Early adoption of new trends is vital, and it is important to follow the current tourism trends in response to consumer behavior, after the coronavirus pandemic.

The countries around the Black Sea are using very different policy instruments and projects in order to increase the number of women entrepreneurs. However, few countries have adopted a clear policy to encourage and facilitate women to start their own business or to become more ambitious. Generally, women are under-represented in high growth sectors and they have fewer employees than men.

The project WE TOUR – “Black Sea Women Entrepreneurship Connection – Empowering Women through Tourism”, is closely related to the common challenges of the programme area. The project's overall objective is the creation of a Cross-Border Business Network in the Black Sea Basin Area for the Promotion of Women's Entrepreneurship, Life-long Cooperation, Training and networking. WE TOUR aims at strengthening, supporting, and developing female entrepreneurship through tourism, providing new economic and social opportunities to women in the Black Sea Basin area.

WE TOUR project is going to create a strong partnership in the field of women entrepreneurship, not only between the participating organizations but also among the countries that they represent.

Women's role in entrepreneurship must be supported by providing motivations and benefits to women who desire to enter in this field. Tourism is one of the most developed sectors in the region of Black Sea Basin, due to the natural resources it owns. For years the role of business owners and active entrepreneurs is undertaken by males. Women could provide knowledge, creativeness, elegance and innovative ideas in terms of development and further improvement and modernization of tourism sector.

This program aims at mapping the competences, skills and challenges for entrepreneurs and SMEs involved in tourism sector in Black Sea Basin region to start and manage their business and to promote their touristic products internationally.

For this purpose, a Survey was done in partner countries (Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Turkey) based on common Questionnaire, which is presented in Annex 1.

Based on the results from the survey will be developed a training program, that is going to teach the participants how effectively to manage and growth their business. Moreover, they will learn how to promote the region as attractive touristic destination by using digital technologies and innovative marketing tools.

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology includes the following:

1. Analysis of the Survey, which was carried out based on the Questionnaire (Annex 1).

The purpose of this survey is to:

- ✓ have a general overview of the current level of the main skills and competences of the target groups,
- ✓ have a perspective on the general training and development needs of the target groups,
- ✓ develop training materials aimed at raising the entrepreneurial skills and competences of women in tourism based on the survey results,
- ✓ gather suggestions for the future development of the project outputs.

The questionnaire consists of open, semi-open and closed questions.

The questionnaire includes about 50 questions, as well as 45 questions regarding the main skills. The number of respondents is 30. The survey was done both online and offline.

2. Desk research is done to find out the best practices of woman entrepreneurs in tourism sphere. In this part, women, who has a tourism business were interviewed and presented their expertise of establishing and developing tourism business. The number of participants is 3.

RESULTS OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

I. Understanding the respondents' profile

1. Age

The **47%** of participants were 36-50 years old, 20% were 51-63 years old, 13% were 26-35 years old and up to 25 years old, and only 7% were 64 and older.

Age of participants	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Up to 25 years old	4	13%
26-35 years old	4	13%
<i>36-50 years old</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>47%</i>
51-63 years old	6	20%
64 and older	2	7%

2. To the question ‘‘What is tourism according to you?’’ 30 from 30 people responded.

The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Temporary movement of people outside their place of residence for the purpose of rest and pleasure
- Tourism is a way for exploring new cultures
- Tourism is an important sector of the economy and an opportunity to make money
- Tourism offers a lot of job places and boosts the revenue of the economy
- Pleasant, meaningful organization of leisure time, relaxation, adventures.
- Tourism is way to earn money, while meeting many new people and exploring the world.
- Tourism represents an opportunity to discover different ways of life.
- Business, hobby, freedom;
- Intercultural exchange;

- Combining pleasure with business.
- A pleasant way for self-education
- A way to meet new people
- A business, that combines a lot of different activities and has a lot of innovative possibilities for the future
- Profitable business opportunity

3. Current business situation

Current business situation	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>established tourism business</i>	9	30%
planning to start a tourism business	4	13%
Other:		
Working for family business	2	7%
Working for people close to family or friends	5	17%
Working for travel company	8	27%
Studying	2	7%

9 respondents or 30% mentioned that they have established tourism business, none of them shared the year of starting the business. 4 people or 13% are planning to start a tourism business.

17 respondents mentioned other current business situation. Most of them (8 people, 27%) are currently working for a travel company to gain experience. 5 of the respondents, 17%, are working for people close to their families, or for friends, who have business in the tourism sector. 2 respondents are studying and again 2 people are working for family business.

It is important to mention that in the section for other current business situation, 6 respondents answered that they are temporarily working somewhere else or studying, so they can gain more experience and start their own business in the future. **Therefore, the number of respondents planning to start business is 10 in total.**

4. The reasons why women still have not an established tourism business

As mentioned above, the number of respondents planning to start business in the future is 10 in total.

They have mentioned the following reasons for which they still had not business. The most common answer was the lack of financial resources.

Reasons	Number of respondents (from 4 total respondents, who plan to start a business) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Lack of financial resources</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
Lack of entrepreneurial skills	5	50%
Lack of knowledge about tourism	2	20%
Lack of knowledge of foreign languages	1	10%
Legislation issues	4	40%
Issues connected with tax system	2	20%

The respondents could choose more than option when answering the reason, they have not started business. All 10 women shared that lack of financial resources is a reason to postpone the start of new business. Next most chosen option is the lack of entrepreneurial skills, 5 respondents mentioned that. While only 1 choose lack of knowledge of foreign languages.

5. Motivation to set up a tourism business

The respondents also mentioned their motivation why they have set up or are planning to start a business. The motivation for 100% of the people, who answered this question, was to earn money.

Reasons	Number of respondents (Total 9 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>To earn money</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>100%</i>
To preserve natural heritage sites and culture	3	33%
To create new jobs	3	33%
For personal reasons (change of lifestyle, tourism as a hobby, etc.)	2	22%

Other	0	0%
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6. The place of the business

The businesses are situated in Varna, as well as in the regions of Varna: Golden Sands, St. St. Constantine and Helen. 4 of the respondents answered, that their business is situated in the rural areas, but do not specified where exactly.

7. Sphere of the tourism business

The sphere of tourism businesses were mainly hotel services, food and beverage services and tour guiding. At least were transport services.

Sphere of tourism business	Number of respondents (Total 30 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Hotel services (in hotel, motel, B&Bs, etc.)</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>53%</i>
<i>Food and beverage services</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>53%</i>
Tour operating	5	17%
Tourism agency	5	17%
Transport service	4	13%
<i>Tour guiding</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>23%</i>
Other (please specify)	0	0%

8. Kind of services provided to tourists

Services	Number of respondents (Total 30 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Overnight stay</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Food and drink</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>87%</i>
<i>Nature sightseeing</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>57%</i>
Arts and crafts	10	33%
Fishing	8	27%

Hunting	8	27%
hiking	8	27%
Horse-riding	7	23%
Bird watching	8	27%
mountain-biking, cycling	8	27%
adventure sport	2	7%
visiting historical-cultural sites	4	13%
music and dance	9	30%
boating	3	10%
rafting	3	10%
beekeeping	1	3%
harvesting	0	0%
agricultural works	0	0%
master classes on cooking local food	2	7%
tour guiding	3	10%
organizing excursions	3	10%
tour package developing and selling	1	3%
selling air-tickets	1	3%
booking services	1	3%
other (please specify)	0	0%

The most common services were overnight stay, food and drinks, nature sightseeing, arts and craft.

9. Tourism business as the main or complementary source of income

30 respondents, who have or plan to start a business, answered whether the business is or will be the main source of their income. For 60% of respondents the business is their main source of income.

Source of income	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>Main</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>60%</i>

Complementary	12	40%
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10. Seasonal or all year-round tourism business

The business of 57% all year round.

Type of tourism business	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Seasonal	13	43%
<i>All year round</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>57%</i>

11. Tourism business being advertised through any tourism networks (local, regional, international)

Advertisement	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>Yes</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>53%</i>
No	14	47%
Other	0	0

53% mentioned that their tourism business is being advertised through tourism networks, the other 47 % said that it is not advertised.

People have mentioned the networks of advertisement: Booking.com and Facebook.

12. To the question “What is tourism marketing according to you?” 19 people responded.

The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Different activities of planning, developing, promoting the sale of tourism services or products and attracting new customers
- All the tools and strategies in marketing that a travel company needs to promote in the market.
- Art of selling products and services a lot of different marketing strategies used by businesses within the tourism industry policies in business -both private or public tourism organizations
- Strategic Approach presents a variety of practical application tools, skills, practices, models, approaches, and strategies
- Tourism marketing is a term which is used to refer to that business discipline by which the visitors are attracted to a particular location coming to terms with the character and intrinsic qualities of place-products systematic and coordinated execution of business policies by the both private or public and public sector tourism organizations

13. To the question ‘‘What is digital tourism marketing according to you?’’ 15 people responded. The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Marketing through digital technologies and social networks
- A tool for “inspiration” - inspiring a traveler to visit a location, inspiring travel plans in customers and encouraging them to buy travel deals
- It helps having reviews about the offered services, as well as attracting new customers when reading them.
- Makes communication with customers easier and helps having some feedback
- Using tourism marketing trend and digital tools
- Using the vast possibilities of the Internet to promote tourism and services
- Online marketing in the tourism industry can help marketers to communicate with customers and show them the tourist sites and tourism services and hotels
- It is a way to inform the public about the tourism services, to inform about its potential, to attract tourists.
- It encourages people to travel
- It helps finding and targeting new customers
- Using digital marketing strategy to keep good online presence and high reviews, which helps attracting new customers Promotion on social media networks,
- Internet marketing,
- Digital marketing, in my opinion, is the advertisement for the right products, for the right segment, placed on the Internet, on various websites,
- Make digital information available to existing and potential customers by using digital technologies,
- Digital marketing is social networks, platforms, applications, etc., which, as a marketing result, influence the development of tourism,
- Organizing a marketing campaign through digital technologies (social networks, websites),

14. Using internet in tourism business

The majority of respondents (67%) use or plan to use internet in their business every day.

Internet in tourism business	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
I never use it	0	0
<i>Every day</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>67%</i>
Once a month	0	0
Few days in a week	10	33%

Other (often)	0	0
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15. Participation at any training in the business field (management, marketing, finance, etc.) before starting the tourism business

The majority (63%) have never participated at any training in the business field.

People, who has ever participated, mentioned that the trainings were in universities, and different courses organized by various organizations.

Participation at trainings	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>No</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>63%</i>
Yes	11	37%

16. Degree in tourism

Degree	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Bachelors	3	10%
Masters	4	13%
PhD	1	3%
Vocational training	3	10%
<i>No degree</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>63%</i>

The majority (67%) has no degree in tourism.

17. Work experience in tourism sphere before starting the business

Work experience in tourism sphere	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
<i>No</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>60%</i>
Yes (please specify where and how many years of experience)	4	40%

The majority (60%) had no work experience in tourism sphere before starting their business.

Some of the respondents mentioned that they had worked at a hotel (3 people), took different jobs in tourism sector (2people) and worked as a waiter (1 people).

They did not mentioned years of experience.

18. Gaining business skills for running the business

The majority has gained business skills for running the business on the job training (73%).

Gaining business skills	Frequency (Total 11 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
At school	4	36%

<i>On the job training</i>	8	73%
At work	5	45%
Through consultants	0	0
Online courses	0	0
Other (tour-guide courses)	0	

19. Platforms for business promotion

The majority (80%) uses or plans to use own social media platform for their business promotion.

Platforms for business promotion	Frequency (Total 25 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Own website</i>	25	100%
<i>Own social media platform</i>	18	72%
Tourism magazines	0	0%
Tourism offices	1	4%
Local, regional, national networks	0	0%
Local, regional, national newspapers	0	0%
TV	0	0%
Radio	1	4%
Online booking/reservation systems (Booking.com, Airbnb, Tripadvisor, Expedia, Hotel.am, Allhotels.am, etc.)	8	32%

20. Social media platforms for business promotion

The majority uses Facebook and Instagram for their business promotion.

Social media platforms	Frequency (Total 18 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Facebook</i>	17	94%
<i>Instagram</i>	15	83%
Twitter	7	39%

LinkedIn	4	22%
Pinterest	6	33%
YouTube	5	28%
Snapchat	3	17%
WhatsApp	3	17%
Signal	0	0%
Google	0	0%
Telegram	0	0%
I do not use any social media platform	0	0%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

21. Foreign languages for communicating with tourists

The majority may communicate in English, Russian and German.

Foreign languages	Frequency (Total 21 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
I do not know any foreign language	0	0%
<i>Russian</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>81%</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>100%</i>
German	8	31%
Spanish	0	0%
Italian	0	0%

22. Running business on their own

The majority of the respondents (90%) run their business on their own.

Running business on their own	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
<i>Yes</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>90%</i>
No, I am the owner, but I have a manager	0	0

Other (family business)	1	10%
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23. Responsibility for the financial activities of the business

Most of the respondents (40%) have an employee, who is responsible for the financial activities of the business.

Responsibility for the financial activities	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
Myself	3	30%
<i>I have an employee(s) for that</i>	4	40%
My family members	3	30%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

24. Responsibility for the management activities of the business

Most of the respondents (60%) have a family member responsible for the management activities of the business.

Responsibility for the management activities	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
Myself	4	40%
I have an employee(s) for that	0	0%
<i>My family members</i>	6	60%
Other (please specify)	0	0

25. Responsibility for the marketing activities of the business

The majority of the respondents (70%) is responsible for the marketing activities of the business herself.

Responsibility for the marketing activities	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
<i>Myself</i>	7	70%
I have an employee(s) for that	1	10%
My family members	2	20%
Other (other private company)	0	0

26. Participating in decision making process as a staff member

The people who are participating in decision making process are only 4% more than the respondents who do not participate.

Participating in decision making process	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>Yes</i>	11	37%
No	10	33%

I am the owner	9	30%
Other (please specify)	0	0

27. As a staff member being aware of the business policy, financial flows of the business
From the 21 respondents who are not the owner but a staff member, only 4 are aware of the business policy, financial flows of the business.

Being aware of the business policy, financial flows	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Yes	4	13%
<i>No</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>57%</i>
I am the owner	9	30%
Other (please specify)	0	0

28. Marketing steps for attracting national and international tourists
100% of respondents advertise his/her business on the internet, only 8% I print booklets and distribute them at the airport and other places and 0% does nothing.

Marketing steps	Frequency (Total 24 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
I do nothing	0	0%
<i>I advertise my business on the Internet</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>100%</i>
I advertise my business on social networks	12	50%
I advertise my business at national and (or) international booking systems	2	8%
I print booklets and distribute them at the airport and other places	1	4%
I participate in national and (or) international exhibitions	2	8%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

29. Being aware of the characteristics of international tourists (of different nationalities), their needs
Half of the respondents are aware of the characteristics of international tourists, 37% is partly aware.

Being aware of the characteristics of international tourists	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
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Yes	15	50%
No	4	13%
I do not know how I can be aware of that	0	0
Other (partly)	11	37%

30. Cooperation with other bodies in connection with the business activity

60 % of respondents cooperate with private sector in connection with their business activity.

Cooperation with other bodies	Frequency (Total 30 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Local self-government bodies</i>	7	23%
National tourism authorities (Tourism Committee)	0	0%
Public administration bodies	2	7%
Non-governmental organizations	3	10%
International organizations	0	0
<i>Private sector</i>	18	60%
Other (please specify)	0	0

31. Participation in international grant programs

Half of participants have never participated in international grant programs.

Participation in international grant programs	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
Yes	5	50%
No	5	50%
I am going to apply	0	0%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

32. Number of people working in the business

67% of respondents had employed staff. The employed staff members varied from 1 to 10.

Number of people working in the business	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Myself	0	0%
<i>Myself and my family</i>	7	23%
<i>Employed staff (please state how many)</i>	23	67%

33. Staff training problems

Only 30% had staff training problems. The staff training problems related to the disinterest of the staff for trainings.

Staff training problems	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>Yes (please specify)</i>	3	30%
No	7	70%

34. Functions of human resource management being accomplished in tourism business

The most popular function of human resource management was Performance management, Learning & development and Material incentives – all with 89%.

Functions of human resource management	Frequency (Total 9 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
I do nothing	1	11%
Recruitment & selection	2	22%
<i>Performance management</i>	8	89%
<i>Learning & development</i>	8	89%
Career development	7	78%
<i>Material incentives</i>	8	89%
Non material incentives	7	78%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

35. Business development problems

The most common problem for business development are marketing (100%) and financial (100%) problems.

Business development problems	Frequency (Total 9 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
I have no problems	0	3
<i>Financial problems</i>	9	100%
<i>Marketing issues</i>	9	100%

Lack of knowledge on tourism business	6	67%
Problems connected with staff training	6	67%
Problems connected with the use of the Internet and computer technologies	3	33%
Problems connected with the community infrastructures	5	56%
Legislative issues	3	33%
Tax issues	4	44%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

36. Being involved in decision-making process (connected with tourism sphere) at the local or state level in policy developing or other processes

37% of the respondents is partly involved in decision-making process at the local or state level, while 33% are not involved. However they did not mention the reasons.

Involvement in decision-making process	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Yes (please indicate how often, what kind of decisions)	9	30%
No (please specify why)	10	33%
<i>Other (partly; sometimes)</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>37%</i>

37. Being a member of any tourism association

More than a half of the respondents - 60 %, are not a member of any tourism association.

Membership at any tourism association	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
Yes (please specify)	12	40%
<i>No</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>60%</i>
Other (please specify)	0	0

38. To the question “What is a business-plan and what sections it usually consists of?” 22 people responded. The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Business idea and setting the way to develop it
- SWOT Analysis
- Mapping the steps to start a business, setting of goals

- First steps to start a business. It focuses mainly on: marketing plan, operational plan, financial plan,
- Written document describing a company's core business activities, objectives, and how it plans to achieve its goals.
- Sequence of steps to start a business, setting of goals, describing a vision.
- Business idea, key resources, value proposition, customer segment, business processes, key partners, market research, relationships, ways, costs, beneficiaries, social issues.

39. Developing a business plan for the business

60% of the participants have developed a business plan for their business.

Developing a business plan	Frequency (Total 10 respondents)	Percent
<i>Yes</i>	6	60%
No	4	40%
I do not have business plan development skills	0	0%
There was no need to develop a business plan	0	0%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

40. Innovations for developing the business

100% mentioned that they need Innovations in marketing activities, 67% mentioned Innovations in business model

Innovations	Frequency (Total 9 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Innovations in business model</i>	6	67%
<i>Innovations in marketing activities</i>	9	100%
Innovations in staff management	3	33%
Innovations in financial management	4	44%
New technologies	4	44%
Innovations in service process	3	33%
New products	2	22%

I do not need any kind of innovations	0	0%
I do not know	0	0%
Other (please specify)	0	0%

41. The role of Information technologies in the business development

100% mentioned that information technologies may help to do better marketing and 90% think that it will make their work easier.

Information technologies in the business development	Frequency (Total 10 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
To make the work easier	9	90%
<i>To do better marketing</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
To attract new partners	8	80%
To attract new tourists	8	80%
I do not know	0	0
Other (please specify)	0	0

42. Marketing steps for business promotion

100% mentioned that for business development they need promotion through social networks and advertising. Only 30% believe that influencer marketing would promote their business.

Marketing steps	Frequency (Total 30 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
<i>Advertising</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Promotion through social networks</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100%</i>
Advertising with the help of celebrities (influencer marketing)	3	30%
Price discounts	4	40%
Development of new products	7	70%
Other (please specify)	0	0

43. To the question “What are the positive impacts of tourism?” 29 people responded.

The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Tourism offers a lot of jobs
- It boosts the economy
- It offers interactions between people with differing cultural backgrounds, attitudes and behaviors, and relationships to material goods
- Tourism generates income for a variety of businesses and creates a wide range of employment opportunities.
- Tourism encourages the protection and conservation of our built and natural environment.
- Local traditions and customs are kept alive
- Preservation of historical buildings and monuments

44. To the question “What are the negative impacts of tourism?” 23 people responded. The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Jobs are often seasonal (based on the time of year) and are poorly paid
- Prices increase in local shops as tourists are often wealthier than the local population
- Congestion and overcrowding
- Congested human and vehicle traffic
- It can be bad for the environment because of the increased traffic and use of airplanes, cars, buses, etc
- Damage to the natural environment, habitats destroyed to build hotels

45. Applying the principles of sustainable tourism in tourism business

89% mentioned that they pay attention to environmental issues and use resources rationally.

78% contribute to local culture.

Principles of sustainable tourism	Frequency (Total 9 respondents) (they could choose more than one option)	Percent
I do not apply them at all	0	0
I am not aware of the principles of sustainable tourism	0	0%
<i>I pay attention to environmental issues</i>	8	89%
I contribute to the development of local culture	7	78%

I contribute to local employment growth	6	67%
<i>I use resources rationally</i>	8	89%
Other (please specify)	0	0

II. Assessment of skills and competences

46. To the question “What do you think are the most important skills to run a tourism business, and why?” 20 people responded.

The summary of the most frequent answers is the following:

- Excellent Communication Skills
- Good time management skills
- Hard work
- Perfect planning
- Ethic
- Customer experience
- Focus on details
- Strategy & Innovation
- Administration skills
- Systematic planning
- Internet skills
- Organizational skills

47. Need to develop competencies and skills in order to make the business more successful

All participants think there is a need to develop their (their staff) competencies and skills.

Need to develop competencies and skills	Frequency (Total 30 respondents)	Percent
<i>Yes (please specify what kind of skills or knowledge do you need most?)</i>	30	100%
No	0	0
Other (please specify)	0	0

The respondents mentioned the following skills and knowledge that they need to develop:

- communication skills
- marketing
- financial management
- customer service
- customer relations
- technological skills
- advertising
- teamwork
- staff management

48. Evaluating the level of skills

N	Skills	How would you rate the level of your skills? (Total 30 respondents)					Percent					Average rate
		1-very bad	2-bad	3-medium	4-good	5-excellent	1-very bad	2-bad	3-medium	4-good	5-excellent	
1.	Skills for developing long- term strategies for my tourism business	0	0	12	17	1	0	0	40.0	56.7	3.3	3.63
2.	Skills for developing a business plan for my tourism business	0	1	8	20	1	0	3.3	26.7	66.7	3.3	3.70
3.	Financial management skills to operate the tourism business (knowledge of sources of finance, pricing, financial planning, profit and loss, cash flow, etc.)	0	0	6	16	8	0	0	20.0	53.3	26.7	4.07
4.	Marketing skills (knowledge of 7 P's)	0	0	10	18	2	0	0	33.3	60.0	6.7	3.73
5.	Market research skills (SWOT, Benchmarking, competitor analysis, etc.)	0	4	9	16	1	0	13.3	30.0	53.3	3.3	3.47
6.	Management skills to run the business successfully	0	0	10	14	6	0	0	33.3	46.7	20.0	3.87
7.	Skills for building partnerships	0	0	12	17	1	0	0	40.0	56.7	3.3	3.63
8.	Networking and negotiation skills	0	0	5	20	5	0	0	16.6	66.7	16.7	4.00
9.	Knowledge of laws and regulations of the sphere	0	3	20	6	1	0	10.0	66.7	20.0	3.3	3.17
10.	Computer skills (MS office)	0	0	6	18	6	0	0	20.0	60.0	20.0	4.00
11.	Digital marketing skills	0	0	9	16	5	0	0	30.0	53.3	16.7	3.87
12.	Using web tools for business promotion (online booking, TripAdvisor, etc.)	0	0	8	17	5	0	0	26.7	56.7	16.7	3.90

13.	Using social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc.) for business purposes (communication, marketing, networking, etc.)	0	0	6	12	12	0	0	20.0	40.0	40.0	4.20
14.	Ability to use online tools for business promotion (placing adverts on internet, using e-mails, blogs, forums, etc.)	0	0	10	19	1	0	0	33.3	63.3	3.3	3.70
15.	Ability to use mobile applications related to tourism	0	0	15	13	2	0	0	50.0	43.3	6.7	3.57
16.	Knowledge of foreign languages	0	0	4	20	6	0	0	13.3	66.7	20.0	4.07
17.	International marketing skills	0	1	26	3	0	0	3.3	86.7	10.0	0.0	3.07
18.	Exploring and understanding customer needs and motivations	0	0	19	9	2	0	0	63.3	30.0	6.7	3.43
19.	Understanding USP (unique selling point) and UBR (unique buying reason)	0	16	10	4	0	0	53.3	33.3	13.3	0.0	2.60
20.	Skills of creating unique selling point	0	12	14	4	0	0	40.0	46.7	13.3	0.0	2.73
21.	Tourism services providing skills	0	0	1	13	16	0	0	3.3	43.3	53.3	4.5
22.	Communication skills (to be able to communicate with a tourist, listen to him/her, understand his/her problem, explain or persuade him/her something, etc.)	0	0	9	18	3	0	0	30.0	60	10.0	3.80
23.	Problem solving skills	0	0	2	23	5	0	0	6.7	36.7	16.7	3.10
24.	Administrative skills (making contracts, monitoring, etc.)	0	0	6	22	2	0	0	20.0	73.3	6.7	3.87
25.	Risk taking skills	0	0	16	12	2	0	0	53.3	40.0	6.7	3.53
26.	Team-building skills	0	0	2	26	2	0	0	6.7	86.7	6.7	4.00
27.	Time management skills	0	0	11	19	0	0	0	36.7	63.3	0	3.64
28.	Decision-making skills	0	0	4	21	5	0	0	13.3	70.0	16.7	4.07

29.	Knowledge of sustainable tourism principles	0	0	13	16	5	0	0	30.0	53.3	16.7	4.27
30.	Knowledge of tourism ethics	0	0	0	19	11	0	0	0	63.3	36.7	4.37
31.	Awareness of local culture and values	0	0	1	17	12	0	0	3.3	56.7	40.0	4.37
32.	Ability to get involved in local community programs, events	0	0	19	9	2	0	0	63.3	30.0	6.7	3.43
33.	Knowledge on how to support the local economy and ability to do it	0	0	21	9	0	0	0	70.0	30.0	0	3.33
34.	Ability to engage local communities in business	0	5	24	1	0	0	16.7	80.0	3.3	0	2.87
35.	Knowledge on how to build on local strengths	0	0	16	14	0	0	0	53.3	46.7	0	3.47
36.	Academic knowledge in tourism	0	9	10	1	10	0	30.0	33.3	3.3	33.3	3.40
37.	Knowledge on tax policy of the sphere	0	0	1	18	11	0	0	3.3	60.0	36.7	4.33
38.	Skills for creating innovative tourism policy	0	0	9	15	6	0	0	30.0	50.0	6.7	3.90
39.	Cooperation skills (with all stakeholders)	0	0	11	14	5	0	0	36.7	46.7	16.7	3.80
40.	Fundraising skills	0	1	13	15	1	0	3.3	43.3	50.0	3.3	3.53
41.	Knowledge on tourism statistics and statistical recording	0	7	14	9	0	0	23.3	46.7	30.0	0	3.07
42.	Entrepreneurial skills	0	0	6	18	6	0	0	20.0	60.0	20.0	4.00
43.	Knowledge on social entrepreneurship	0	0	20	10	0	0	0	66.7	33.3	0	3.33
44.	Social entrepreneurship skills	0	0	20	10	0	0		66.7	33.3	0	3.33
45.	Tourism product developing skills	0	0	12	18	0	0	0	40.0	60.0	6.7	3.60

Need to improve the skills

N	Skills	Would you like to improve these skills? (Total 30 respondents)			Percent		
		yes	no	I do not know	yes	no	I do not know
1.	Skills for developing long- term strategies for my tourism business	18	12	0	60.0	40	0
2.	Skills for developing a business plan for my tourism business	2	27	1	6.7	90.0	3.3
3.	Financial management skills to operate the tourism business (knowledge of sources of finance, pricing, financial planning, profit and loss, cash flow, etc.)	27	3	0	90.0	10.0	0
4.	Marketing skills (knowledge of 7 P's)	10	6	14	33.3	20.0	46.7
5.	Market research skills (SWOT, Benchmarking, competitor analysis, etc.)	3	12	15	10.0	40.0	50.0
6.	Management skills to run the business successfully	23	7	0	76.7	23.3	0
7.	Skills for building partnerships	17	5	8	56.7	16.7	26.7
8.	Networking and negotiation skills	13	9	8	43.3	30.0	26.7
9.	Knowledge of laws and regulations of the sphere	10	15	5	33.3	50.0	16.7
10.	Computer skills (MS office)	11	5	14	36.7	16.7	46.7
11.	Digital marketing skills	10	6	14	33.3	20.0	46.7
12.	Using web tools for business promotion (online booking, TripAdvisor, etc.)	18	0	12	60.0	0	40.0
13.	Using social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc.) for business purposes (communication, marketing, networking, etc.)	8	14	8	26.7	46.7	26.7

14.	Ability to use online tools for business promotion (placing adverts on internet, using e-mails, blogs, forums, etc.)	9	9	12	30.0	30.0	40.0
15.	Ability to use mobile applications related to tourism	19	10	1	63.3	33.3	3.3
16.	Knowledge of foreign languages	21	9	0	70.0	30.0	0
17.	International marketing skills	0	16	14	0	53.3	46.7
18.	Exploring and understanding customer needs and motivations	9	11	10	30.0	36.7	33.3
19.	Understanding USP (unique selling point) and UBR (unique buying reason)	14	3	13	46.7	10.0	43.3
20.	Skills of creating unique selling point	13	4	13	43.3	13.3	43.3
21.	Tourism services providing skills	21	0	9	70.0	0	30.0
22.	Communication skills (to be able to communicate with a tourist, listen to him/her, understand his/her problem, explain or persuade him/her something, etc.)	11	0	19	36.7	0	63.3
23.	Problem solving skills	11	7	12	36.7	23.3	40.0
24.	Administrative skills (making contracts, monitoring, etc.)	0	19	11	0	63.3	36.7
25.	Risk taking skills	0	20	10	0	66.7	33.3
26.	Team-building skills	0	16	14	0	53.3	46.7
27.	Time management skills	10	6	14	33.3	20.0	46.7
28.	Decision-making skills	14	2	14	46.7	6.7	46.7
29.	Knowledge of sustainable tourism principles	27	0	3	90.0	0	10
30.	Knowledge of tourism ethics	8	12	10	26.7	40.0	33.3
31.	Awareness of local culture and values	10	7	13	33.3	23.3	43.3

32.	Ability to get involved in local community programs, events	8	8	14	26.7	26.7	46.7
33.	Knowledge on how to support the local economy and ability to do it	12	10	8	40.0	33.3	26.7
34.	Ability to engage local communities in business	14	5	11	26.7	16.7	36.7
35.	Knowledge on how to build on local strengths	7	12	11	23.3	40.0	36.7
36.	Academic knowledge in tourism	14	11	5	46.7	36.7	16.7
37.	Knowledge on tax policy of the sphere	12	0	18	40.0	0	60.0
38.	Skills for creating innovative tourism policy	20	0	10	66.7	0	33.3
39.	Cooperation skills (with all stakeholders)	12	0	18	40.0	0	60.0
40.	Fundraising skills	17	0	13	56.7	0	43.3
41.	Knowledge on tourism statistics and statistical recording	7	10	13	23.3	3.33	43.4
42.	Entrepreneurial skills	20	1	9	66.7	3.3	30.0
43.	Knowledge on social entrepreneurship	17	13	0	56.7	43.4	0
44.	Social entrepreneurship skills	19	11	0	63.3	36.7	0
45.	Tourism product developing skills	12	0	18	40.0	0	60.0

49. To the question ‘‘What additional skills or knowledge do you need to develop your business?’’ the following answers were gathered:

- Negotiation & Persuasion skills
- Project management Skills
- Communication skills
- Developing creative skills
- Proactivity

50. To the question ‘‘What are your expectations from the upcoming training course?’’ the following answers were gathered:

- To develop new skills in the field of digital tourism
- To learn how to write and implement digital marketing strategy
- To learn more about sustainability in the field of tourism
- Development of knowledge and skills
- Expand my business and develop it
- Creating business connections
- To learn about trends in tourism and possible implementation
- Increased knowledge
- To understand how to have active social media presence and good reviews online

DESK RESEARCH

Mironka Todorova – VILLA JOY

Mironka Todorova has gone through the long and difficult journey of a woman entrepreneur in the field of tourism, having started it during the previous regime in one of the most prestigious hotels of that time. At Grand Hotel Varna she started in the innovative IT field - as a director of the computer department, later working for a French company, where she participated in the development of its own software.

Based on this experience, Mironka founded an Association of owners of small guest houses, which aims to promote this type of tourism in its infancy - mainly with accommodation in private bases, villas. Emphasis on advertising and participation in



international tourism exhibitions. She later set up a tour operator with several private entrepreneurs. It manages to attract guests from Serbia and to become the first company to work with the hitherto unknown market. They organized bus shuttles for several years, until the introduction of visas for Serbian citizens to enter Bulgaria, which killed businesses.

The kind-hearted ladies do not give up easily and continue the company's activities, opening several offices and offering accommodation in houses, villas and hotels throughout the country. They try to attract Russian tourists, but only individual packages succeed.

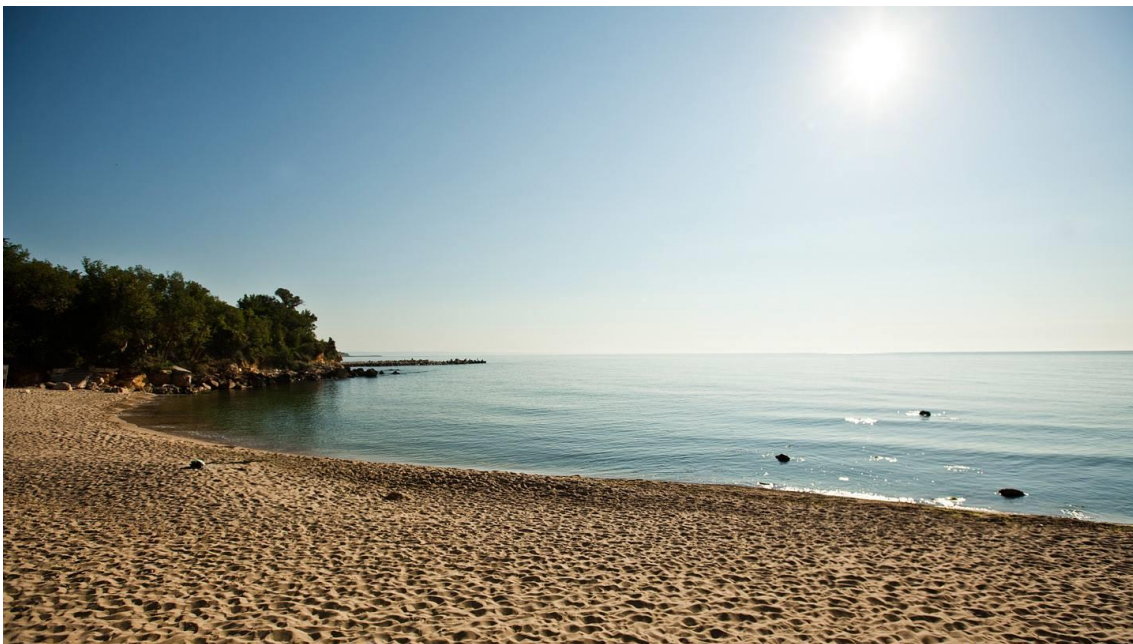
The problems - this is what the experience of the entrepreneur from Varna shows. Over the years, I have become convinced that there is a ceiling for small business, a measure from which you cannot rise. If you do not have the opportunity for more serious investments, you can not rise.

The other big problem is that Bulgaria is not advertised at the government level. When we go to tourist fairs abroad, we have to pay for everything, and representatives of many countries are supported by their country in this regard.

With the restrictions on the covid pandemic, the situation with small companies has worsened and her agency has failed to pay even the obligatory tour operator insurance.

Now Todorova offers a family summer villa, which she inherited and turned into a small paradise with a beautiful garden near the sea in the resort of St. St. Constantine and Helena near Varna. Villa Joy is visited by both Bulgarians and foreigners, mostly families with children looking for peace, quiet and fresh air.

<https://www.facebook.com/villajoyvarna>



Ventsislava Ivanova – Venci's food

My name is Ventsislava Ivanova and I am a Rent a Chef, a still not very popular profession in Bulgaria. Currently, in addition to preparing for private parties and events, I have a bistro in the popular restaurant on the beach in Varna. There I prepare non-standard food, the recipes for which I have been looking for a long time and I try to charm the audience.

The beginning was not easy, I all started cooking almost „by force”. I had graduated in law in Bulgaria when I got married and moved to Greece, on the island of Rhodes.

My husband's family had an old building that served as a rented restaurant. That's where everything started once I could develop it. I love to cook, but I've never done it professionally. I put a lot of enthusiasm and work, in the beginning it was on the principle - trial and error. We went through the fire and the water, it was difficult to adjust to the delicious meetings and people from a foreign culture. After a lot of work, we managed to become one of the best and most popular restaurants on the island. I keep a picture of the day I saw 42 people waiting in line in front of Jacks, that was the name of the restaurant.

In 2017, however, I was diagnosed with cancer and my life changed dramatically. I left the island, broke up with my husband and returned home.

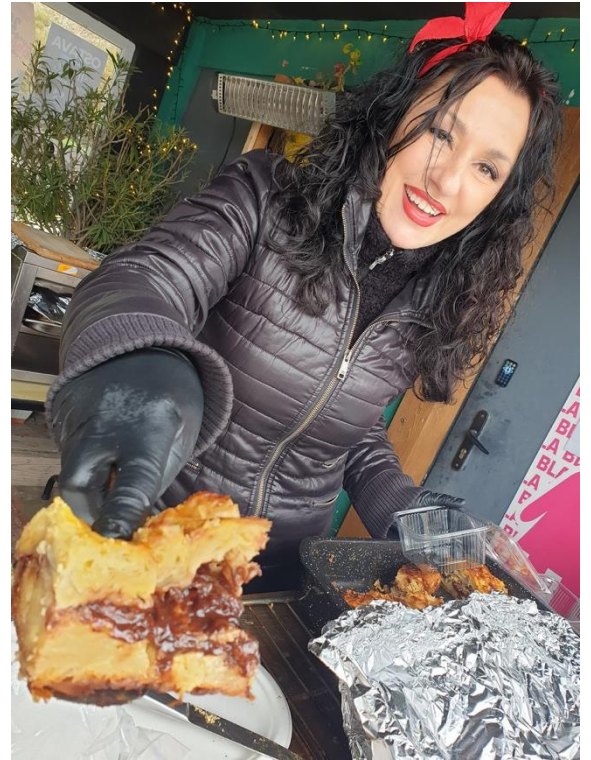
I needed time to heal and get used to the conditions. I started with what I can do best - prepare, now professionally. I started with tasting dinners, cooking at home, making cakes, pastries, orders for catering and private parties. The bistro opened in a busy place next to the station, but due to the Covid pandemic I closed it, it is not stored after several openings and closures.

This provides an opportunity for another bistro, this time by the sea where I am now.



I like the moment I serve the food to the people, the completion of the process. I also like when I give a portion to a client who was a little skeptical, so to speak.

His fascination with the hitherto unknown, say food. I am always looking for a smile, a swell of tension, this almost invisible moment of peace.



Donka Georgieva – AB TRAVEL

My name is Donka Georgieva and I have been in tourism all my life. As a child, I stood at the front desk because my father was a hotel manager - from the old guard, those who put their heart into the work. I graduated with a degree in International Tourism from the University of Economics in Varna, which gave me the chance in those days to develop a more modern worldview.

Coming to the Marketing Department of the management of the Golden Sands resort, I participated in negotiating the accommodation base of the complex with foreign tour operators in almost all European and Middle Eastern markets. Then I did the same in the Grand Hotel Varna and the Sunny Day complex. After this experience in host tourism, I turned to outbound tourism.

I worked for 6 years in a travel agency specializing in outbound tourism. So I had the opportunity to look at the industry from different angles. This gave me a good foundation to start my own business.

A little late - in 2005, I was already 45 years old. I had a hard time deciding, but I wasn't alone. Then I had 2 partners - Maya Ivanova / now a teacher at the College of Management / and my sister.



I will never forget how we issued the first plane ticket with Maya and how we collected money to pay for it. The beginning is not forgotten. We started with the organization of corporate events, seminars and conferences - a field in which I was known as a professional. We were trusted by big companies, for which I am grateful. We gradually established ourselves in this market.

We started to enrich our portfolio - plane tickets, hotel accommodation around the world, package travel. I realized that in order to survive in our highly competitive business, you must first be recognizable, second - you can not rely on just one product, third - you must have qualified personnel.

Over the years, we have had to change our portfolio many times in order to survive.

Internationally, large companies have turned to global service providers, and there is very little business left locally for companies like ours. In addition, many specialized conference tourism companies were set up to fight for their bread.

This forced us to focus more on travel abroad - individually and in groups.

We used global B2B service providers around the world - hotels, excursions, additional services. We became an authorized agent of IATA for the sale of single tickets.

Together with our partners we have organized charter programs to Rhodes, Italy - Liguria and Tuscany, Spain-Barcelona and Malaga, France-Paris and the Loire Castles and other destinations.

But as in any business, the competition of the big tour operators from Sofia has its say.

Gradually, charter programs were distributed among several major operators, who negotiated preferential prices with airlines and suppliers. This is a natural process in business and you have to adjust.

So a new specialization was needed - small groups, boutique programs, individual packages. This is complemented by our work as an agent who offers programs to the big ones.

The Covid crisis boiled over everyone unprepared. We have suffered serious losses. I am grateful that we survived these 2 years, as we managed to recover the amounts due to customers.

It was an extremely stressful period when we did not know what awaited us tomorrow.

Now we are somehow used to this uncertainty. We were saved by loyal customers who mainly buy plane tickets, sales on charter programs of major tour operators who took the risk to work in this complex situation and the few individual trips.

The crisis has taught us tolerance, endurance, understanding, and I hope that soon we will have the opportunity to work and create freely again.

<https://www.facebook.com/AB.TRAVEL.VARNA>

<http://abtravelbg.com/>



Galina Todorova – HOTEL ACROPOLIS

The family hotel "Acropolis" is located in a quiet and peaceful place in the most prestigious district of Varna - the Greek quarter, whence its name, says the famous owner Galina Todorova. Only 50 meters from Varna beach and the beautiful Sea Garden.

I have been managing the hotel for 25 years, since its establishment in 1997. We started as a joke, the idea was born spontaneously and came of its own accord - a boutique hotel in the heart of Varna. I work with three receptionists and a maid.



The hotel offers 10 double rooms, with a courtyard immersed in greenery, it is quiet and peaceful with us, guests come from all over the world. I will not forget the first ones - from the Chinese embassy, good start. The contact with another culture, far from ours, is interesting. Over the years we have had guests from Australia, New Zealand, Japan. I also have regular guests who come regularly and do not "cheat" on us, says Galina with a smile.

Russians, for example, who prefer us, say they like intimacy and coziness and run away from all-inclusive complexes.

The biggest problems, apart from the covid crisis, are rising prices and competition. Costs are rising, and it is not good to raise prices. The state does not help us, we do not think enough about business.

My work in the field of tourism is interesting, meetings with people from different cultures, energy and the desire to know the kind of city have always used me.

Despite all the difficulties, I would not replace my job with anything.



CONCLUSIONS

The survey results indicate that it is not easy for women to start a business in the field of tourism. Not to mention that only 30% from the respondents have already established a business in tourism. Many problems related to business development, staff management, implementing innovations, keeping active marketing campaigns, using digital tools to attract tourists, etc., arise when females are starting their business, or even if they are working as an employee in the field of tourism.

The survey reveals that the respondents rate their skills level at a medium rate. However, the majority wants to gain new knowledge. The surveyed want to improve their skills for business strategies, marketing and digital marketing, communication, staff & financial management, analytics, and others.

Therefore, based on the survey, the main modules of the BSB1030 WeTOUR project will be targeted to providing knowledge and skills which are in need for the female entrepreneurs who want to start a new or further develop their business in tourism.

The Desk Research shows some experiences by female entrepreneurs in Bulgaria, in the field of tourism. The success stories may be a good example and motivation for those who plan to start a tourism business.

Annex 1

Questionnaire for mapping of the competences and needs of sustainable entrepreneurship and women entrepreneurial skills in tourism sector

I. Understanding the respondents' profile

1. Age

- Up to 25 years old
- 26-35 years old
- 36-50 years old
- 51-63 years old
- 64 and elder

2. What is tourism according to you?

3. Your current business situation

- Established tourism business (Please indicate the year you started your business)

- Planning to start a tourism business
- Other (please specify) _____

4. If you still do not have your tourism business, please mention the reason(s) (you can choose more than one option)

- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of entrepreneurial skills
- Lack of knowledge about tourism
- Lack of knowledge of foreign languages
- Legislation issues
- Issues connected with tax system
- Other (please specify) _____

5. What was your motivation to set up a tourism business?

- To earn money
- To preserve natural heritage sites and culture
- To create new jobs
- For personal reasons (change of lifestyle, tourism as a hobby, etc.)
- Other (please specify) _____

6. Where is situated your business (please indicate the name of the region, city, or village)?

7. Please indicate the sphere of your tourism business

- Hotel services (in hotel, motel, B&Bs, etc.)
- Food and beverage services
- Tour operating
- Tourism agency
- Transport service
- Tour guiding
- Other (please specify) _____

8. What kind of services do you provide to tourists (you can choose more than one option)?

- Overnight stay
- Food and drink
- Nature sightseeing
- Arts and crafts
- Fishing
- Hunting
- hiking
- Horse-riding
- Bird watching
- mountain-biking, cycling
- adventure sport
- visiting historical-cultural sites
- music and dance
- boating
- rafting
- beekeeping
- harvesting
- agricultural works
- master classes on cooking local food
- tour guiding
- organizing excursions
- tour package developing and selling
- selling air-tickets
- booking services
- other (please specify) _____

9. Is your tourism business the main source of your income?

- Main

- Complementary
- Other (please specify) _____

10. Is your tourism business seasonal or all year round?

- Seasonal
- All year round

11. Is your tourism business advertised through any tourism networks (local, regional, international)?

- Yes (please specify which one) _____
- No
- Other (please specify) _____

12. What is tourism marketing according to you?

13. What is digital tourism marketing according to you?

14. How often do you use internet in your business?

- I never use it
- Every day
- Once a month
- Few days in a week
- Other (please specify) _____

15. Have you ever participated at any training in the business field (management, marketing, finance, etc.) before you started your tourism business?

- No
- Yes (please specify what kind of training you had) _____

16. Do you have any degree in tourism?

- Bachelors
- Masters
- PhD
- Vocational training
- No degree
- Other (please specify) _____

17. Have you gained any work experience in tourism sphere before started your business?

- No

- Yes (please specify where and how many years of experience) _____

18. How have you gained business skills for running your business?

- At school
- On the job training
- At work
- Through consultants
- Online courses
- Other (please specify)

19. Which platforms do you use for your business promotion? (You can choose more than one option)

- Own website
- Own social media platform
- Tourism magazines
- Tourism offices
- Local, regional, national networks
- Local, regional, national newspapers
- TV
- Radio
- Online booking/reservation systems (Booking.com, Airbnb, TripAdvisor, Expedia, Hotel.am, Allhotels.am, etc.)
- Other (please specify) _____

20. Which social media platforms do you use for your business promotion? (You can choose more than one option)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- YouTube
- Snapchat
- WhatsApp
- Signal
- Google
- Telegram
- I do not use any social media platform
- Other (please specify) _____

21. Which foreign language you may communicate with tourists?

- I do not know any foreign language
- Other (please specify) _____

22. Do you run your business on your own?

- Yes
- No, I am the owner, but I have a manager
- Other (please specify) _____

23. Who is responsible for the financial activities of your business?

- Myself
- I have an employee(s) for that
- My family members
- Other (please specify) _____

24. Who is responsible for the management activities of your business?

- Myself
- I have an employee(s) for that
- My family members
- Other (please specify) _____

25. Who is responsible for the marketing activities of your business?

- Myself
- I have an employee(s) for that
- My family members
- Other (please specify) _____

26. If you are not the owner of the business, but a staff member, are you engaged in decision making process?

- Yes
- No
- I am the owner
- Other (please specify) _____

27. If you are not the owner of the business, but a staff member, are you aware of the business policy, financial flows of the business?

- Yes
- No
- I am the owner
- Other (please specify) _____

28. What marketing steps are you taking to attract national and international tourists? (You can choose more than one option)

- I do nothing
- I advertise my business on the Internet
- I advertise my business on social networks
- I advertise my business at national and (or) international booking systems
- I print booklets and distribute them at the airport and other places
- I participate in national and (or) international exhibitions
- Other (please specify) _____

29. Are you aware of the characteristics of international tourists (of different nationalities), their needs?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know how I can be aware of that
- Other (please specify) _____

30. Which bodies do you cooperate with in connection with your business activity? (You can choose more than one option)

- Local self-government bodies
- National tourism authorities (Tourism Committee)
- Public administration bodies
- Non-governmental organizations
- International organizations
- Private sector
- Other (please specify) _____

31. Have you ever participated in international grant programs?

- Yes (please specify which one, when) _____
- No
- I am going to apply
- Other (please specify) _____

32. How many people work in your business?

- Myself
- Myself and my family
- Employed staff (please state how many) _____

33. Do you have staff training problems?

- Yes (please specify) _____

- No

34. What functions of human resource management do you accomplish in your business? (you can choose more than one option)

- I do nothing
- Recruitment & selection
- Performance management
- Learning & development
- Career development
- Material incentives
- Non material incentives
- Other (please specify) _____

35. What kind of business development problems do you have? (You can choose more than one option)

- I have no problems
- Financial problems
- Marketing issues
- Lack of knowledge on tourism business
- Problems connected with staff training
- Problems connected with the use of the Internet and computer technologies
- Problems connected with the community infrastructures
- Legislative issues
- Tax issues
- Other (please specify) _____

36. Are you involved in decision-making process (connected with your activity sphere) at the local or state level in policy developing or other processes?

- Yes (please indicate how often, what kind of decisions) _____
- No (please specify why) _____
- Other (please specify) _____

37. Are you a member of any tourism association?

- Yes (please specify) _____
- No
- Other (please specify) _____

38. What is a business-plan and what sections it usually consists of?

39. Have you ever developed a business plan for your business?

- Yes
- No
- I do not have business plan development skills
- There was no need to develop a business plan
- Other (please specify) _____

40. What kind of innovations do you need to develop your business? (You can choose more than one option)

- Innovations in business model
- Innovations in marketing activities
- Innovations in staff management
- Innovations in financial management
- New technologies
- Innovations in service process
- New products
- I do not need any kind of innovations
- I do not know
- Other (please specify) _____

41. How can information technologies contribute to your business development? (You can choose more than one option)

- To make the work easier
- To do better marketing
- To attract new partners
- To attract new tourists
- I do not know
- Other (please specify) _____

42. What kind of marketing steps do you need for your business? (You can choose more than one option)

- Advertising
- Promotion through social networks
- Advertising with the help of celebrities (influencer marketing)
- Price discounts
- Development of new products
- Other (please specify) _____

43. What are the positive impacts of tourism?

44. What are the negative impacts of tourism?

45. How do you apply the principles of sustainable tourism in your business? (You can choose more than one option)

- I do not apply them at all
- I am not aware of the principles of sustainable tourism
- I pay attention to environmental issues
- I contribute to the development of local culture
- I contribute to local employment growth
- I use resources rationally
- Other (please specify) _____

II. Assessment of skills and competences

46. What do you think are the most important skills to run a tourism business, and why?

47. Do you think there is a need to develop your (your staff) competencies and skills in order to make your business more successful?

- Yes (please specify what kind of skills or knowledge do you need most?) _____
- No
- Other (please specify) _____

48. Please mention the level of your skills and choose whether you need to improve those skills or not

N	Skills	How would you rate the level of your skills?					Would you like to improve these skills?		
		1-very bad	2-bad	3-medium	4-good	5-excellent	yes	no	I do not know
1.	Skills for developing long- term strategies for my tourism business								
2.	Skills for developing a business plan for my tourism business								
3.	Financial management skills to operate the tourism business (knowledge of sources of finance, pricing, financial planning, profit and loss, cash flow, etc.)								
4.	Marketing skills (knowledge of 7 P's)								
5.	Market research skills (SWOT, Benchmarking, competitor analysis, etc.)								
6.	Management skills to run the business successfully								
7.	Skills for building partnerships								
8.	Networking and negotiation skills								
9.	Knowledge of laws and regulations of the sphere								
10.	Computer skills (MS office)								
11.	Digital marketing skills								
12.	Using web tools for business promotion (online booking, TripAdvisor, etc.)								
13.	Using social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc.) for business purposes (communication, marketing, networking, etc.)								

14.	Ability to use online tools for business promotion (placing adverts on internet, using e-mails, blogs, forums, etc.)								
15.	Ability to use mobile applications related to tourism								
16.	Knowledge of foreign languages								
17.	International marketing skills								
18.	Exploring and understanding customer needs and motivations								
19.	Understanding USP (unique selling point) and UBR (unique buying reason)								
20.	Skills of creating unique selling point								
21.	Tourism services providing skills								
22.	Communication skills (to be able to communicate with a tourist, listen to him/her, understand his/her problem, explain or persuade him/her something, etc.)								
23.	Problem solving skills								
24.	Administrative skills (making contracts, monitoring, etc.)								
25.	Risk taking skills								
26.	Team-building skills								
27.	Time management skills								
28.	Decision-making skills								
29.	Knowledge of sustainable tourism principles								
30.	Knowledge of tourism ethics								
31.	Awareness of local culture and values								

32.	Ability to get involved in local community programs, events								
33.	Knowledge on how to support the local economy and ability to do it								
34.	Ability to engage local communities in business								
35.	Knowledge on how to build on local strengths								
36.	Academic knowledge in tourism								
37.	Knowledge on tax policy of the sphere								
38.	Skills for creating innovative tourism policy								
39.	Cooperation skills (with all stakeholders)								
40.	Fundraising skills								
41.	Knowledge on tourism statistics and statistical recording								
42.	Entrepreneurial skills								
43.	Knowledge on social entrepreneurship								
44.	Social entrepreneurship skills								
45.	Tourism product developing skills								

49. What additional skills or knowledge do you need to develop your business?

50. What are your expectations from the upcoming training course?
