



SEASON READY



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COUNTRY REPORT TEMPLATE FOR FOCUS GROUP REPORTING

COUNTRY

Croatia

ORGANISATION THAT ORGANISED STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Date of the interview	Means of the interview (in person, telephone, Skype etc)	Name of the interviewee	Organisation + role in organisation	Stakeholder role
28/10/2019	Telephone	Ljiljana Čuček	Travel agency Lili Tour, owner	SMHE owner
28/10/2019	Telephone	Zlatko Puntijar	President of the Tourism and Hospitality Guild, Chamber of Trades and Crafts Zagreb	Tourism and hospitality association
29/10/2019	In person	Ivan Juras	Restaurant Stari Fijaker, owner	SMHE owner
29/10/2019	Telephone	Irina Tomić	True Tourism Consulting, owner	Tourism consulting agency
7/11/2019	Telephone	Natali Komen Bujas	Croatian Employers Association, director of tourism and hospitality association	Tourism and hospitality association
7/11/2019	In person	Krešimir Tomić	Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, Advisor for	Tourism and hospitality association/



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			Tourism and Hospitality	Policy maker
21/11/2019	In person	Monika Belle	Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education, Senior Expert Advisor for Tourism and Hospitality	Education authority/ Policy maker

INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT

Which steps did you take before conducting the interview?

We identified key stakeholders which we believed would contribute to this topic and contacted them. We concluded that, due to busy schedule and heavy workload, it would be easier and more beneficial to organise separate interviews, rather than the focus group meeting. After identifying the stakeholders, we contacted them and sent them the invitation together with topics and questions to be discussed and determined the time of the interview.

Which materials did you deliver to the interviewees?

We sent them the concept note we prepared, together with links to SeasonReady website, more specifically links to IO2 and IO3 deliverables.

Did you introduce the project to the interviewees before the interview?

When contacting them we introduced project aims and results. Some of them were already familiar with the project since they participated in earlier project activities (IO1, multiplier event).

INTERVIEW TOPICS

Write answers to the questions you use during the focus group and a general answer for the main topic, pointing out a few key conclusions.

1. The identification of the issue: the lack of skills and competences of seasonal staff/the lack of training system for seasonal staff in small and medium hospitality enterprises.

a) How much are workers' skills in the sector important and crucial for the prosperity of the sector?

Workers' skills are crucial for the tourism and hospitality sector. Whether it is a cook, a waiter, receptionist or housekeeper, the sector is highly dependent on



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the individuals. In this sector guests expect a certain level of service, which cannot be provided without the adequate skills and competences. Some of the interviewees pointed out that some of the key skills are not strictly related to the given profession but are more general skills such as ability to adapt to the working environment, motivation to learn and politeness.

Also, some of the interviewees pointed out that employers' criteria have lowered due to the lack of workers which often leads to employment of unskilled workers.

- b)** How important do you consider the quality in the hospitality sector and its impact on tourism development?

Interviewees agree that quality of service is very important. One of the interviewees pointed out the slogan "Tourism, are people" (who work in it).

- c)** Could you identify the consequences of employing seasonal workers without the necessary skills and competences for the job they perform?

While short term it has negative consequences for the SMHE, long term it can have very negative consequences for tourism in general. Workers who don't have necessary skills and competences will surely affect both the organisation of work and service negatively. This is also a structural problem, which is deeply integrated in our society and relates to high school education and the lack of practical experience students have after finishing their education.

- d)** Within the context of your country, are you familiar with the possible solutions of this issue: implementing WBL or other forms of training for seasonal staff in small and medium hotels, especially for waiters, receptionists and housekeepers?

In general, interviewees were not familiar with existing WBL trainings for seasonal staff. Interviewee from the Croatian Employers Association stated that they have been trying to make arrangements with Ministry of Tourism and Croatian Employment Service to enable measures for seasonal hospitality workers. To her knowledge, a similar measure for education and training of seasonal workers in the hospitality sector was introduced in 2018. However, it seems that this measure wasn't presented and promoted enough, as most people were never informed about it. Additional problem is the lack of time and resources in SMHE to implement this kind of training, in comparison to bigger hotels and companies.

Also, one of the interviewees pointed out that bigger hotels and companies have more interest in keeping seasonal workers which is why they invest more in their training. Also, to her knowledge Croatian Employment Service conducts



trainings for unemployed people, especially in deficit occupations. The problem which occurs is that it is not sure whether the people who attend and complete these programmes continue working in the same occupation.

2. Solving the issue: implementing WBL training in small and medium enterprises

- a) Do you consider this kind of training (WBL) of seasonal workers in small and medium hotels useful? Which benefits it could produce for employers, in-house trainers, seasonal workers, and the sector as a whole?

WBL training of seasonal workers in SMHE is very useful. In this regard it is very important that the in-house trainer is also trained and motivated in order to pass it on to his trainees. One of the interviewees noted that it is very important to provide training for in-house trainers rather than just giving them materials.

- b) In which way to motivate owners/managers of small and medium hotels to apply this kind of training in their hotels?

Information about this kind of training should be promoted through guilds and associations, with special emphasis on the benefits for SMHE owners and managers. All interviewees agree that the key aspect is to point out the benefits of the training, which would make SMHE owners and managers more open to finding time and resources to engage in this kind of training.

- c) In which way the public authorities (related to tourism or vocational training) responsible for the sector could help small and medium hotels in implementing this kind of training (e.g. advisory services, financial support and benefits, etc.)?

Firstly, by promoting tourism and hospitality occupations on the high school level, as well as in continuous training. This would attract more people to the sector and would return the image these occupations previously had.

Secondly, by organising trainings and educations.

Also, one of the suggestions was to think about possible projects for SMHEs through which external experts could be financed. Those experts could come to SMHEs and train and educate in-house trainers.

3. The long-term measures: recommendations for implementing the training for seasonal workers in small and medium enterprises.

Stakeholders should take initiative and organise trainings and educations for both in-house trainers and seasonal workers. More emphasis should be on the training of in-house trainers, as they are crucial for further training of seasonal workers. Also, interviewees agree that in-house trainers should have certain benefits for their efforts (i.e. annual reward, payroll bonus).



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Promotional activities should focus on the benefits of this kind of training, especially for SMHE owners and managers, as well as the impact on the whole sector. All relevant stakeholders should be included in promotional activities.

Collaboration between different stakeholders should be more visible and concrete results should be showed, for example, previously mentioned measures should be promoted in order to inform potential end users.

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Additional comments and conclusions.

SeasonReady WBL training was recognised as an effective tool in training both in-house trainers and seasonal workers. Positive feedback from the piloting in Croatia was also shared with interviewees and they were encouraged to further use and promote SeasonReady materials.