

## Wellness and Spa Tourism Sectoral Skills' Development – WeSkill

### NEWSLETTER 2

Programme: Erasmus +

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#### Partners

1. Institute for Training of Personnel in International Organizations (ITPIO), Bulgaria
2. Bulgarian Tourist Chamber (BTC), Bulgaria
3. Zemedelska profesionalna gimnaziya "Kliment Timiryazev" (ZPG), Bulgaria
4. Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational education and Training (CPI), Slovenia
5. Savinjsko-šaleška Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SSGZ), Slovenia
6. College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor (CHT), Slovenia
7. National Centre for Education (VISC), Latvia
8. Latvian resort's association (LRA), Latvia
9. Riga Style and Fashion Technical school (RSMT), Latvia
10. DIMITRA Education & Consulting SA, Greece
11. Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs (HATS), Greece
12. Serbian health, wellness and spa tourism cluster (ZVST), Serbia
13. Pharmaceutical - Physiotherapeutic School (FFS), Serbia
14. Tiber Umbria Comett Education Programme (TUCEP), Italy
15. FEDERTURISMO CONFINDUSTRIA (FC), Italy
16. GROUPE AFORMAC (AFORMAC), France
17. Union des métiers des industries de l'hôtellerie du puy de dôme (UMIH), France
18. Inthecity Project Development (Inthecity), Netherlands
19. World Federation of Hydrotherapy and Climatotherapy (FEMTEC), Italy

#### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF REPORT ON FINDINGS OF SKILLS GAPS RESEARCH IN EXISTING DATA SOURCES

The aim of the first report was to summarize the research carried out in the project partner countries, the analysed data carried out at the national and regional level on the existing skills and competences gaps in the spa and wellness sector in period from November 2020 till February 2021.

The first report "Report on findings of skills gaps research in existing data sources" was the first phase / activity of the "WeSkill working package 3" project, which will be followed by surveys of employers and VET providers on the skills, competencies and qualifications required at the workplace by companies in the spa and wellness sector.

Report on findings of skills gaps research collected from existing data sources (desk research) in 7 participating countries and, in addition, in 4 EU countries beyond the partnership.

The report summarizes in detail presently existing data (from national databases, projects' results, NRP, etc.) on skills gaps, occupational profiles, education programmes, curriculums and industry's needs in the wellness and spa sector in project participating countries.

Overall, in all the partner countries the most important shortages identified were in four groups of skills:

- A) Computer skills/digital skills/ICT skills,
- B) Communication skills/written and spoken communication/ telephone reception techniques/intercultural communication skills/multicultural communication skills,
- C) Foreign languages skills for the medical and spa personnel/English/multilingual skills/ knowledge of foreign languages/foreign language using professional terminology/Spa and Wellness terminology,
- D) Customer service/ customer-oriented service/ approach.

As we can see, the era of the digital economy dictates its own rules, and high quality and complicated digital knowledge and skills will be increasingly in demand.

In the Spa and wellness sector on the most important skills is the skill of communication. In this regard, one can draw parallels with the connection of various skills including digital communication skills, verbal communication and presentation skills. Multicultural communication skills are inevitably becoming more relevant, especially in light of the growth in the flow of foreign tourists into the European Union from Asian countries, Arab states with their religious and cultural characteristics.

Foreign language skills are vital and especially so in the Spa and wellness sector. Improved foreign language skills are required in the use of Spa and wellness terminology, medical terms, as well as overall improvement of foreign language skills including English and other languages, including the languages of Asian countries with a view to the future. In the Wellness and Spa sector customer-oriented service is extremely important.

In order to collate a more comprehensive volume of information to analyse within the territory of the European Union and in order for it to provide quality data about the skills and knowledge that employees in the Spa and Wellness need to improve, as well as analyse future trends and which knowledge and skills will be most sought after, various studies were analysed, which were conducted by international organisations like the OECD and CEDEFOP, in addition to which information was collated about the following international projects: WellTo, Cultour, Boosted and The Next Tourism Generation Alliance, which were supported by the European Union and focus on the requirements, developmental trends of the Spa and Wellness sector and the expectation of employers within the sector.

#### CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Currently, all project partners are working on work package 3 "Defining skills gaps and training needs" which is the research phase of the project. After desk research, surveys of employers and VET providers on the skills will be organized and report on survey findings, will be organization of focus groups and in-depth interviews with opinion leaders and experts. The results from them will be available soon.

For more information: <https://weskill.eu/>

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