

"MINDS into MATTER - the "Book of Business" sustainable training tool in the tourist industry"

Project number 2016-1-IS01-KA202-017090

Mapp & rapp the tourist field in Estonia





The Republic of Estonia is a state in the Baltic region of Northern Europe. It is bordered to the north by the Gulf of Finland, to the west by the Baltic Sea, to the south by Latvia, and to the east by Lake Peipsi and the Russian Federation.

The territory of Estonia covers 45 227 km². However, only 1.3 million people live in Estonia. Such a small population density has enabled to preserve the natural environment better than in densely populated West European areas. Forests and mires make up more than half of the territory of Estonia.

As usual in the temperate zone, a clear seasonal rhythm characterizes the climate of Estonia. The warmest month is July, while the coldest month is February. The highest temperature measured in Estonia is +35 °C and the lowest -43 °C. The ice covers inland water bodies usually in December and melts during April.

Estonia is characterized by white nights of the northern counties, forest massifs, extensive bogs, and 3800 kilometer coastal line. More than 2,500 km of it is made up of the shoreline of about 1500 islands and islets. West Estonian coasts are very diverse; the real treasure of North Estonia is the limestone cliff.

The natural river system can be regarded as one of the most important values of Estonian nature. Above all, this involves riverine and riparian habitats. There are about 1500 lakes of considerable size in Estonia. In addition, thousands of smaller ponds and bog pools can be counted. The area covered by lakes in Estonia occupies over 2000 km², two thirds of which is Lake Peipsi the fifth biggest lake in Europe.

Driving around Estonia there is the possibility to get acquainted with the diverse nature, see different sightseeing objects, taste the dainties of local hostesses, rest on homey soft beds, upon a wish spend holidays actively.

According the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, every year, approximately three million foreign tourists (with accommodation) and over three million one day visitors travel to Estonia. Tourism plays an important role in Estonia's economic development, forming – together with indirect impact – approximately 7% of Estonia's gross domestic product and even 27% of exports.

Tourism development will also support the achievement of the goals set out in the Estonia 2020 competitiveness program, by increasing Estonian exports, employment, decreasing unemployment among young people and contributing to the establishment of international transport connections. The entity responsible for the implementation of tourism policy is Enterprise Estonia (<https://www.mkm.ee/en/objectives-activities/construction-and-housing-sector/tourism>)



Estonian Rural Tourism

Non-profit non-governmental organisation Estonian Rural Tourism was set up in January 2000. Its objective is to represent the common interests of rural tourism service providers in order to support the development of countryside tourism in Estonia.

Accommodation providers have joined the organization. 45% of the total number of Estonian countryside accommodation providers are members of Estonian Rural Tourism organisation.

There are about 300 members in NGO at the moment. List is on

<http://www.maaturism.ee/index.php?id=liikmete-nimekiri>

There are Holiday villages, B & B, Holiday houses, Hostels, Guesthouses, Motels, Hotels and Guest apartments among NGO members.

Rural tourism companies have family packages, camps for children, seminar and conference rooms, they provide Hiking, Cycling, Birds watching, Canoeing, Sea Kayaking and Boat Trips.

Non-Profit Organisation Estonian Rural Tourism

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tel: +372 600 9999

eesti@maaturism.ee

www.maaturism.ee

**Non-profit organisation Estonian Rural Tourism is member of the
European Federation of Rural Tourism**

<http://www.eurogites.org>



QUALITY SYSTEM OF ESTONIAN ACCOMMODATION ENTERPRISES

Since 2006, home accommodation, guesthouse, holiday house, holiday village and holiday camping enterprises that are registered in **the National Economic Register**, can apply for a rural accommodation quality rank.

The necessity of the rural accommodation quality system:

- ▶ the rank of the accommodation enterprise gives the client information of the level of the accommodation service and the quality;
- ▶ for the provider of accommodation service the using of ranks will help to increase the credibility of the enterprise;
- ▶ ranking requirements are helpful for entrepreneurs, who only plan to establish an accommodation enterprise;
- ▶ ranking requirements help the entrepreneur to better determine the needs and expectations of the target group of clients;
- ▶ working and accepted ranking system enhances the credibility of the tourism destination point and increases the competitiveness of entrepreneurs.

The right to assign the ranks of accommodation enterprises was given to Eesti Maaturism (Estonian Rural Tourism Association) until 2010 and takes place according to the confirmed rules. The rank is given to the accommodation enterprise for three years. After the expiration of the term the enterprise needs to renew the rank.

The rank of the accommodation enterprise is marked with a stylized image of the national flower:



- third rank accommodation enterprise
- second rank accommodation enterprise

No first ranks were given during this stage.



Some places to visit

SA Vastseliina Piiskopilinnus

E-mail: linnus@vastseliina.ee

WWW: <http://www.vastseliina.ee>

Contacts: Ivar Traagel, +372 509 6301

Historical Piiri Inn is located near the castle, beside the historically important trade route Riga – Pskov. The Inn with the horse post station has been mentioned on the road atlas in 1695. In the inn the products of local estate were sold and it was a place where the travellers could stop and rest. The activity of the Inn livened up in the second half of 19th century in connection with the development of distillation of vodka. In the Soviet period the building was used for different purposes. The Inn was re-opened as a restaurant and entertainment place in the beginning of 1990s.

Obinitsa Seto Muuseumitarõ

E-mail: obinitsamuuseum@setomaa.ee

WWW: <http://www.obinitsamuuseum.ee/>

Contacts: +372 78 54 190

The Obinitsa Seto Museum House was founded on the initiative of Liidia Sillaots, a local researcher of local lore. In 1995 the permanent exposition introducing the way of life of the Setos of the Obinitsa area in 1920-1940ies was opened. This period was revolutionary for the Seto people who had lived in the Pskov Province, Czarist Russia for centuries. In 1920, this part of the Pskov region was united with Estonia, based on the Tartu Peace Treaty. Large-scale reorganizations took place: land reform, family names were given, Estonian-language churches and schools were opened

Saaremaa Wool

E-mail: karenallas253@hotmail.com

WWW: www.knowsheep.eu

Contacts: Karen Allas, tel. +372 5551 1664

Sheep and woolen products have always been favored in Saaremaa. On the second floor of the Marketplace is the Sheep Resource Centre, which includes all information about producing and using wool in diverse ways. Additionally possible to learn about mutton, sheep skin and maintenance of the landscape.



Accommodation providers

http://www.infactoproject.eu/index.php?id=members&cat_id=12

Pidula Manor

Region: Saaremaa

E-mail: janne.vakker@pidula.eu

WWW: www.pidula.ee

Contacts: Janne Vakker, tel. +372 586 679 79

The main building of the manor is about 300 years old and satisfies the tourist looking for luxurious rural accommodation. In addition to the historical park there is a Herb Garden from which the herbs are used to flavour local organic food.

The Viking village

Region: Urva, Saula küla, 75117, Kose vald, Harju county

E-mail: info@viikingitekyla.ee

WWW: www.viikingitekyla.ee

Contacts: Steve Hindrikson, tel. +372 5664 2528

The Viking village is designed to give visitors a sense of what life was like hundreds of years ago. The village is the perfect place to host company events or to enjoy a day out with friends. This is an authentic ancient village, which is constantly improving. An ancient stronghold, protected from the enemy with a catapult and the sharp eye of an experienced warrior. Taverna where guests get a nice meal. Genuine saunas and accommodation. Here people can learn ancient dances, songs, games, needlework and traditions, how to use a weapon and sail. The Viking village is a mixture of the culture of the 8th to 12th century and modern day convenience.

Jurna Recreation Farm

Region: Saaremaa

E-mail: jurna@saaremaa.ee

WWW: www.saaremaa.ee/jurna

Contacts: Mati ja Airi Tarvis, tel. +372 4521 919, +372 52 70 700

Peaceful and safe farm is situated 5 kilometres from Kuressaare. The venue is suitable for an active holidaymaker. There are hunting expeditions for wild games and birds. Accommodation and breakfast for 20 visitors. BBQ available in the Farmhouse Garden, in the main building sauna and fireplace. Additionally a seminar and training room for 15 people.



Except Estonian Rural Tourism there are also other organisations and companies working with rural tourism and, particularly:

- Estonian Travel and Tourism Association <http://etfl.ee/eng/etfl/about-etfl/co-operation/>
- Estonian National Rural Network <http://www.maainfo.ee/index.php?page=3363>
- Medicine Estonia cluster
- Estonian Association of Travel Agents
- Estonian Spa Association
- SA Eesti Terviserajad
- Baltic Schuttle Ltd.

Medical spas:

- Estonia Spa Hotels
- Fra Mare Thalasso Spa
- Grand Rose Spa Hotel
- Kalev Spa Hotel & Water Park
- Kubija Hotel and Nature Spa
- Laulasmaa Spa
- Pühajärve Spa & Holiday Resort
- Spa Hotel Laine
- Tervis Medical Spa Hotel
- Tervise Paradiis
- Toila Spa Hotel
- Viiking Spa Hotel
- Tallinn Viimsi Spa Hotel
- Värska Spa Hotel & Water Park



The shifting meaning of the rural in the Estonian countryside

As the Rural Development Report demonstrated, Estonian rural areas, rural life, and culture have undergone significant structural changes. Rural tourism has been believed and promoted by the European Union and local authorities to revitalise rural economies and lives.

Ester Bardone is a researcher at the [*Department of Ethnology*](#) of Tartu University Institute for Cultural Research and Fine Arts. Recently she defended her thesis, "[*My Farm is My Stage: A Performance Perspective on Rural Tourism and Hospitality Services in Estonia*](#)", and now continues studying rural tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship in Estonia.

Ester Bardone writes that Estonian farm tourism enterprises have emerged since the mid-1990s and they are quite different from many European counterparts in the sense that the former lack the symbiosis of agricultural production and tourism that still persists in many European countries with a longer tradition in farm-based tourism or with different rural policies.

However, it is interesting that the word *talu* ('farm' in English) is kept in the name of the enterprise as the symbolic reference to rurality, even when there is no connection to farm work. The family farm, long considered a pillar of Estonian identity and a symbol of cultural continuity is now seen by the Ministry of Agriculture as a multifarious, multifunctional, and heterogeneous rural enterprise.

As agricultural production has been concentrated in large enterprises, small farms have looked for alternative niche production or have taken advantage of the growing number of urbanites who see the countryside as a place for leisurely consumption.

Novel rural commodities in Estonia include a great variety of events and services, from adventure sports to places for silent mediation, from guided heritage walks to gourmet dinners, staged and performed for urban tourists. Leisurely consumption of the countryside, in turn, creates changing representations of what is rural. Hosts use local cultural heritage as a source for the tourism experience or come up with completely novel experience opportunities.

The first type of enterprises are providing, for instance, the experience of having a smoke sauna (a traditional bathhouse and bathing practice in southeast Estonia), or showing how a horseshoe is forged, and accompanying it with storytelling by a working blacksmith. The second type is represented by a farm restaurant that uses hybrid and intriguingly contrasting combinations of urban and rural elements, offering gourmet meals with international culinary influences in a former storage house (the farm does not feature agricultural production). Hosts perform important role as **culture brokers**, combining local cultural knowledge with personal stories and interpretations.



The challenges of staging and performing rural experiences

A performance perspective on rural tourism and hospitality enterprises did not only reveal the potential of using natural and cultural resources and individual creativity in experience-producing business, but likewise indicated several challenges and dilemmas.

Firstly, entrepreneurs may attempt to stage rural tourism experiences, but in reality clients' experiences and impressions are also ephemeral, unpredictable, and personally as well as culturally constituted. One cannot undermine the role of improvisation and creativity of both the hosts and guests – experiences emerge not only in designed settings and events, but potentially in all everyday situations.

Secondly, there are likewise several personal costs often overlooked in tourism literature that relate to **self-commodification** of the micro-scale rural tourism entrepreneur, who often has to fight with the blurring boundaries of private and public life, as well as with the emotional burden of experience-providing service work.

Finally, each tourism enterprise operates in a particular socio-economic context, and the particular experience may be influenced by the overall experience the milieu provides – beautiful nature next to uncanny Soviet collective farm heritage, or the success stories of small entrepreneurs juxtaposed with aging or unemployed neighbors. The latter likewise perform rural life in Estonia.

More on <http://blog.ut.ee/my-farm-is-my-stage-insights-into-estonian-rural-tourism/>





Turbos needs

- personal selling
- advertising (online)
- public relations & sales promotion
 - create and maintain customers; the ability to find customers and get them to buy continually
 - getting international customers,
 - creat/developpe new protucts/services for foreign markets

Turbos are interested in product/service and different skills and abilities to create a product (or business idea) which differs from existing competitive products/services. They need:

Leadership skills

- how to inspire and motivate employees/people more
- negotiation
- team work

ICT skills

- blog and website design
- image and video processing
- social media
-

Languages skills in

- English
- German
- Russian

How the training/learning should be organised

- class room teaching like seminars, courses
- mentoring sessions.

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