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Newsletter of the project “Black Sea Women Entrepreneurship Connection - Empowering Women through Tourism” (WETOURL – BSB1030)

Mapping of the competences and needs of female entrepreneurship in tourism sector in the Black Sea Region

Female entrepreneurship in the tourism sector is a crucial element in promoting economic growth and empowerment of women and has significantly risen over the years. However, despite this growth, there are still significant gender disparities in the entrepreneurial landscape. To support and enhance the capabilities of female entrepreneurs in this sector, it is essential to identify their competencies and needs.

WE TOUR project partners developed a survey in order to identify the competences, strengths, weaknesses and needs of entrepreneurs, SMEs and young professionals engaged in tourism sector in the Black Sea region. This survey was distributed by the partners among SMEs and young professionals in tourism sector. The results are shown in a comparative report that was developed relates to the competencies and needs of female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector in Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, Armenia, and Georgia.

Below you can find a preview of the main findings:

Greece

In Greece, the tourism industry is a significant contributor to the country's economy, accounting for approximately 20% of its GDP. According to a report by the National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce (ESEE), women account for only 31% of all entrepreneurs in the country. While there is no specific data on female entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, it is safe to assume that women are underrepresented in this industry as well.

Related to skills, in Greece, female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector need to develop their



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marketing and financial management skills. WE TOUR's research found that female entrepreneurs tend to operate small businesses, with limited access to financing and marketing resources. To address this issue, programmes and projects that provide training in marketing and financial management should be developed.

Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the tourism industry is also an essential contributor to the country's economy, with a growth rate of 4.4% in 2019. According to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the country has one of the highest rates of female entrepreneurship in the world. In fact, around 46% of all small and medium-sized enterprises in Bulgaria are owned by women. However, there is no specific data on female entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.

In Bulgaria, female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector require support to develop their digital skills and to improve their networking capabilities. Due to the country's location, it has a unique position as a gateway to both Europe and Asia, which offers ample opportunities for tourism. However, digital and financial barriers and lack of networking opportunities can limit the success of female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

Turkey

In Turkey, the tourism industry is a significant contributor to the economy, accounting for approximately 12% of its GDP. According to a report by the Turkish Statistical Institute, women account for only 22% of all entrepreneurs in the country. Moreover, a report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) found that women's participation in the tourism sector in Turkey is limited due to social norms and gender biases.

In Turkey, female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector require support in developing their marketing and leadership skills. According to WE TOUR's research, women entrepreneurs in the tourism sector tend to be concentrated in low-skilled and low-paid occupations. Therefore, programmes and projects that provide training in leadership and management can help female entrepreneurs in this sector to take on more prominent roles and increase their incomes.

Armenia

In Armenia, the tourism industry is a growing sector, with an average annual growth rate of 8% between 2016 and 2019. According to the National Statistical Service of Armenia, women account for only 26% of all entrepreneurs in the country. However, there is no specific data on female entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.



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In Armenia, female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector need support to develop their marketing skills and to improve their access to finance. Armenia's location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia offers ample opportunities for tourism. However, economical barriers and lack of access to finance can limit the success of female entrepreneurs in this sector.

Georgia

In Georgia, the tourism industry is one of the most important sectors of the economy, contributing to around 7% of the country's GDP. According to a report by the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, women account for only 29% of all entrepreneurs in the country. Furthermore, a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) found that women entrepreneurs in the tourism sector in Georgia face numerous challenges, including limited access to financing, lack of training and networking opportunities, and gender biases.

In Georgia, female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector require support to develop their digital and marketing skills. WE TOUR's research found that women entrepreneurs in the tourism sector in Georgia face challenges in accessing digital technologies and marketing resources. Programmes and projects that provide training in digital skills and marketing can help female entrepreneurs in this sector to overcome these barriers and compete effectively in the market.

Overall, identifying the competencies and needs of female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector in Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, Armenia, and Georgia is critical in developing activities and programmes that can support and enhance their capabilities. While the needs of female entrepreneurs vary across these countries, there are some common themes, such as the need for training in marketing, finance, leadership, management, and digital skills. By addressing these needs, WE TOUR project partners hope to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for female entrepreneurs in the sector, promoting economic growth and empowerment of women.



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