



**PROJECT  
„DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF  
THE BALTIC SEA REGION AS A COASTAL FISHING TOURISM  
DESTINATION“**

**SEMINARS' EVALUATION**

**R E P O R T**

*by aggregated data, received from project partners countries*

**2021**

## **Introduction**

This Report provides analysis of the results of the quality of the seminars organised in the context of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region project RETROUT "Development, Promotion and Sustainable Management of the Baltic Sea Region as a Coastal Fishing Tourism Area".

The general aim of the RETROUT project is to develop and promote sustainable coastal fishing tourism based on the resources of the target species, the sea trout, in a coordinated manner at the regional level. To this end, a network of 5 fishing tourism areas, BALTIC SEA FISHING was established. It consists of: Estonia – Viinistu/Lahemaa; Latvia – Kurzeme; Poland – Gdansk Bay; Lithuania – Klaipėda; Sweden – Stockholm archipelago. Each area is managed by a local DMO, while a common marketing and publicity strategy has been developed. Management and publicity of the BSF network, ordering of its services in individual areas will be carried out via the online platform [www.balticseafishing.com](http://www.balticseafishing.com).

The seminars were organized with wide list of topics, that covers all possible issues of the development of the destination management organisation (DMO). The seminars were organised in the following project countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden.

The overarching objective of this report is to provide the analysis of the quality of seminars, organised in different countries. Based on the results of surveys, this report presents the main quality issues of seminars and recommendations for the quality improvement in the future.

The present report is divided into four sections. After the introduction, Section 1 presents socio-demographic data of participants and activity in participation in the seminars, Section 2 - overall evaluation of all seminars by countries, based on aggregated quantitative survey data from countries, Section 3 displays the results of the qualitative data, collected after the seminars. The analysis of these data represents the general overview of the seminars and can be very helpful to the seminars' organizers for making the decisions regarding the improvement of such activity in future.

The concluding section 4 summarizes the report.

The survey instrument consisted of several different parts intended to collect data for quantitative and qualitative data analysis. First part encompassed sociodemographic questions, attendance and type of institution represented by the participants. Second part of the questionnaire was comprised of six different categories related to the evaluation of the following aspects of the seminars: (1) contents; (2) organisation of trainings; (3) relevance of trainings; (4) competences of lecturers; (5) methods used; and (6) general evaluation of the seminar. Each of the first five categories were comprised of two statements where the level of agreement to the statement was evaluated by using five-level Likert scale where 5 = Strongly agree and 1 = Strongly disagree. Third part of the questionnaire included open-ended question where the participants were asked to comment on: (1) most positive aspects of the trainings; (2) most negative aspects of the trainings; and lastly (3) to suggest what could be improved in similar trainings in the future. Fourth part summarized the main evaluations of all countries in general.

Participants were surveyed straight after the seminar in each country or after the whole session of trainings were finished. Interview design was developed by Lithuanian partners (Klaipėda University) in English language and sent to partners for comments and approval (see questionnaire in Appendix A). After the final version of the questionnaire was confirmed partner countries translated it to national languages of the country where the trainings were organised. It was each partners responsibility to conduct the survey in their country and to send aggregated data to Klaipeda University for analysis. After the report was written it was reviewed and approved by each of the partner country.

## Section 1

### Socio-Demographical Data Attendance of the Seminars

		Sweden		Estonia		Latvia		Lithuania		Poland	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Total: Number of Participants*</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>40</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>35</b>	
Gender:	Male	6	86	6	75	22	55	9	64	27	77
	Female	1	14	2	25	18	45	5	36	8	23
Age:	Average	50		54		40		44		45	
Activity Sector:	Local Authority	0	0	0	0	4	10	2	14	4	11
	Fishing Guide	7	100	1	13	8	20	6	43	6	17
	Accommodation	0	0	2	25	13	33	2	14	6	17
	Visitors Centres	0	0	0	0	4	10	3	21	1	3
	Agency, Association, NGO	0	0	3	37	6	15	0	0	15	43
	Other Tourism Business (Fishing Equipment Rental, Car Rental, etc.)	0	0	2	25	5	12	1	8	3	9
How many times have you attended the RETROUT trainings?	One time attendance	0	0	0	0	20	50	1	2	8	23
	Two time attendance	0	0	0	0	7	18	1	2	3	9
	Three time attendance	1	14	0	0	4	10	2	13	5	14
	Four time attendance	3	43	2	25	3	7	4	26	5	14
	Five time attendance	3	43	1	13	4	10	4	26	0	0
	Six time attendance	0	0	5	62	2	5	3	21	14	40

\* Number of participants who responded to the questionnaire. Actual number of participants who attended the seminars was bigger.

## Section 2

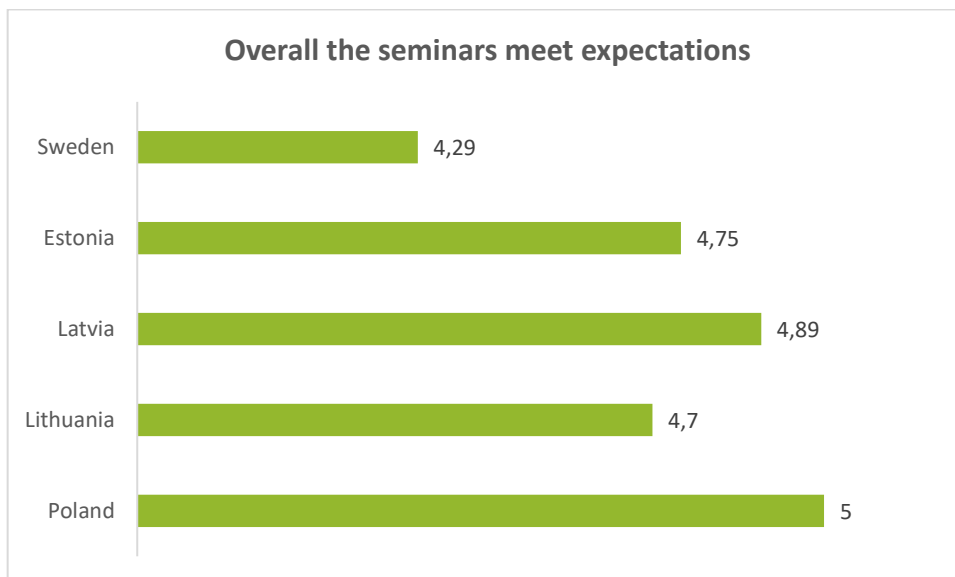
### EVALUATION OF THE TRAININGS BY COUNTRIES

(by the aggregated dates from countries)

#### QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Evaluation completed using five-level Likert scale, where there are 5 possible answers from "5 = Strongly agree" to "1 = Strongly disagree".1.

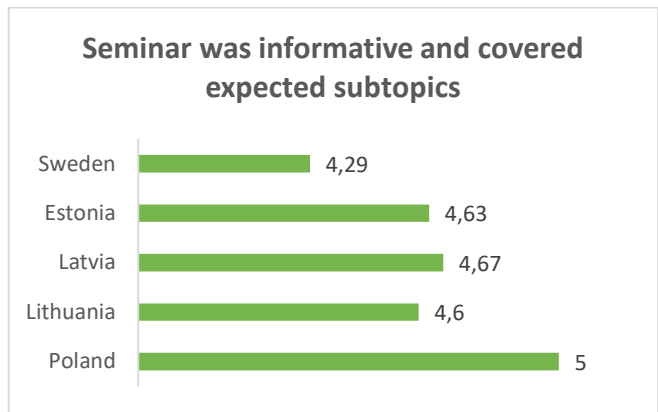
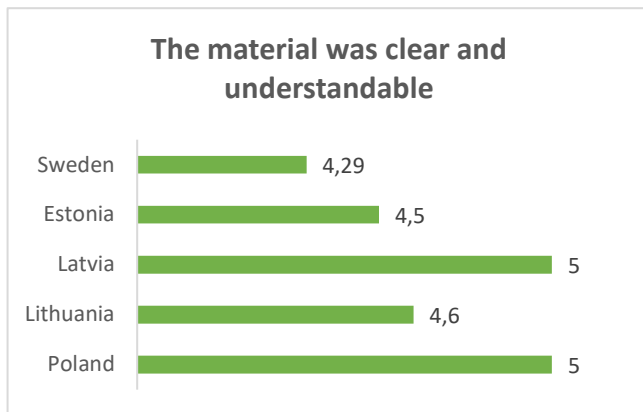
#### Evaluation part: GENERAL EVALUATION OF SEMINARS BY COUNTRY



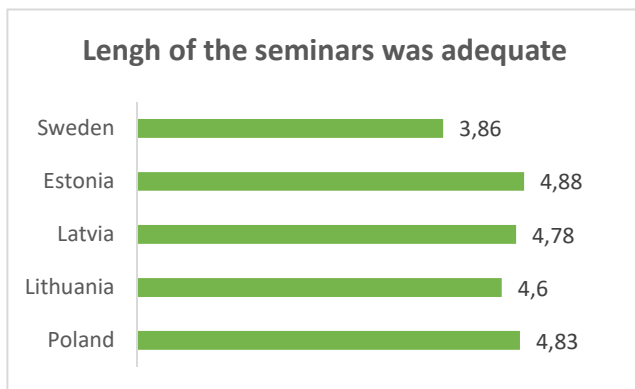
As it can be seen from the figure above that general evaluation of the seminars was highest in Poland (avg. 5) and lowest in Sweden (avg. 4,29). However, answers from the participants may be influenced by the response style affected by various factors in each of the country, thus the results may be partly biased by the differences in the way people fill surveys. Therefore, this notion could be taken into account when doing cross-country comparison based on the differences of the evaluation of each question. Instead, more focus could be put on the comparison of the results of different questions within the specific country.

Figures below present the evaluation of each of the statement provided in the survey.

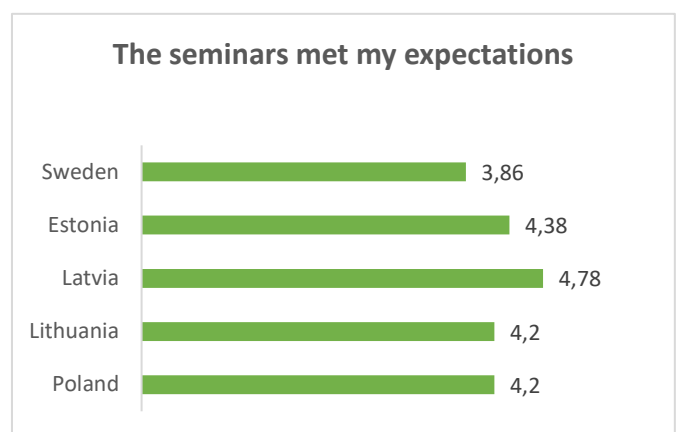
## Evaluation part: CONTENT



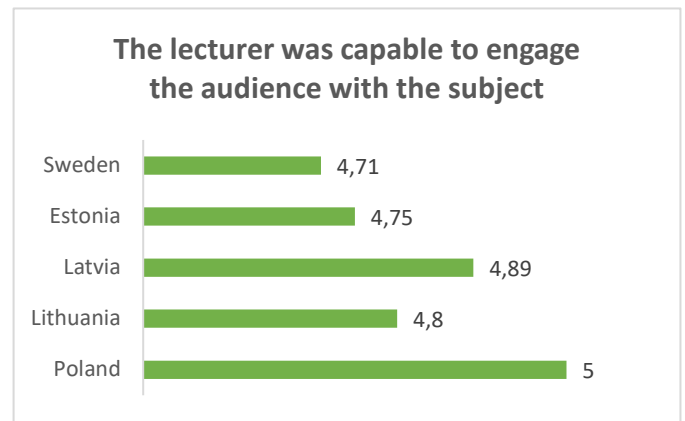
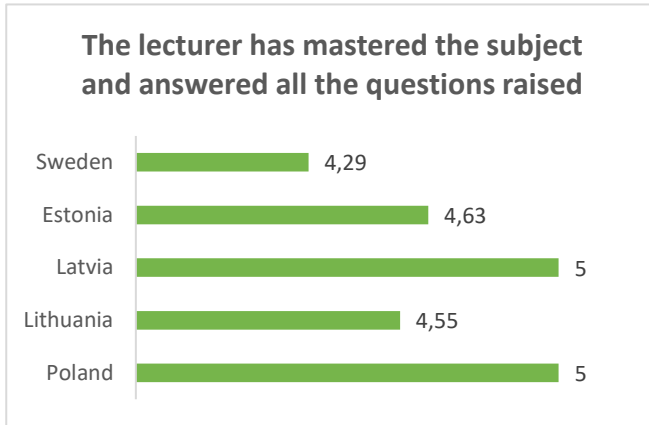
## Evaluated part: ORGANIZATION



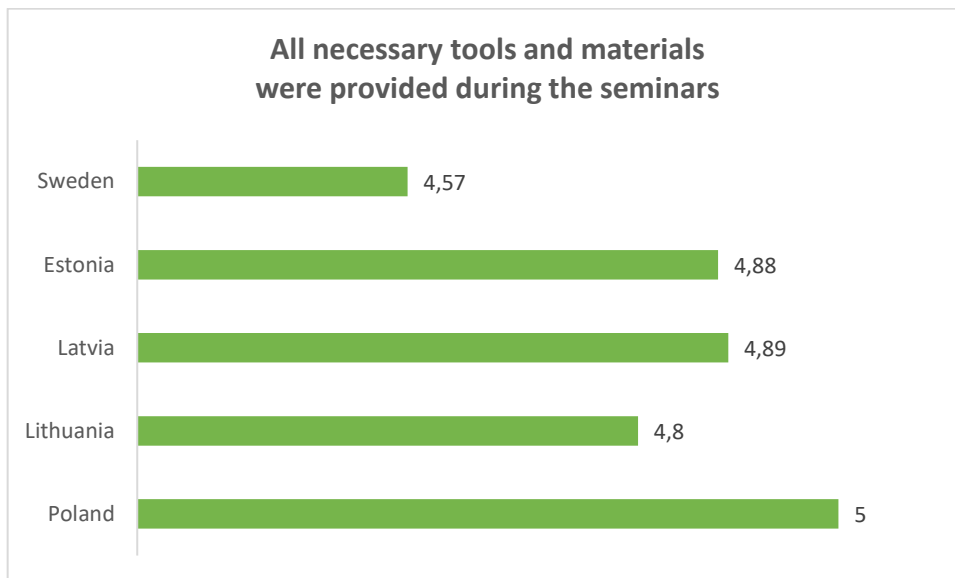
## Evaluated part: RELEVANCE



### Evaluated part: COMPETENCIES



### Evaluated part: METHODS



## Section 3 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Third part of the report includes analysis of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire where the participants were asked to provide their feedback on:

(1) most positive aspects of the trainings

(2) most negative aspects of the trainings

Lastly (3) participants were asked to suggest what could be improved in the similar trainings in the future.

Results indicate that trainings fostered the increase of cooperation of different stakeholders which might result in the creation of new services, partnerships, joint marketing possibilities and international DMO.

The content of the seminars was considered as informative, inspiring, well delivered, clear and simple.

Mostly the form of discussions was used during the seminars which also received positive feedback.

### **Category 1: THE MOST POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE TRAININGS**

<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Country</b>
<b>Increased Cooperation</b>	Support the initiative and are positive that it embraces the whole Baltic Sea as a sport fishing destination, that it favours cooperation among fishing guides in different countries as well as cooperation and dialogue between fishing guides and management bodies.	Sweden
	Strengthen understanding about possibilities of cooperation between different sectors of activity/ stakeholders.	Lithuania
	Many stakeholders were involved in our activities and it was looking for cooperation.	Lithuania
	New co-operation possibilities.	Poland
<b>High Quality Course Content/Organisation</b>	Informative and inspiring workshops with good meeting structures, many participants of fishing guides.	Sweden
	Good themes and practical exercises.	Estonia
	Independent work.	Estonia
	Relevant topics and opportunities for discussion.	Lithuania
	The training took the form of discussions, clearly and simply. Participation in the whole process gave an interesting experience by attending a meeting with other project participants	Lithuania
	Interesting trainings.	Poland
<b>Increased Communication</b>	Synergies between participants.	Estonia
	Meet people with similar interests and share experiences.	Latvia
<b>Visible Project Results</b>	Very welcomed result – to bring fishermen together in an association.	Lithuania
	Good to know that fishing tourism starts to develop.	Sweden
	Positive to joint marketing of all destinations.	Sweden
	Relevant initiative which acknowledge the increasing sport fishing tourism.	Sweden
	Enhancing touristic potential of the region (fresh fish straight from the sea).	Poland
<b>Competent Trainers</b>	Professional trainer and good presenters.	Estonia



### **Category 2: THE MOST NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE TRAININGS**

However, several concerns or negative feedback was also received from the participants of the seminars. Long duration or long time between the trainings indicated the issues related to the organization of the seminar. Swedish participants also mentioned loosely structured meetings and issues with parking near the venue of trainings. Increased competition among project countries, not giving enough attention to the restoration of fishing stocks and general approach of the training without giving more attention to the local peculiarities of the destination were also mentioned among other issues.

<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Country</b>
Organisation of the Trainings	The process would have been easier if there would not have been problems with traveling and packages insurances.	Sweden
	The meetings could have been more strictly structured, with a faster decision processes of what and whom to include.	Sweden
	The central location of meeting locality, problematic for drivers to find parking places.	Sweden
	Long time between trainings.	Estonia
	Long duration of the seminars	Lithuania
	It may be difficult to achieve the desired results in such a short time	Lithuania
Increased Competition	Possibly negative in competition terms for Sweden (considering that many fishing guide service businesses are already advanced in Sweden).	Sweden
	The USP of the project and sea trout as a focus species. Worries about the fish resource on one side and troublesome that change to a broader focus (sportfishing tourism targeting all coastal fish species) on the other side. Understandable but becomes rather similar to previous initiatives.	Sweden
Lack/Partly expressed local dimension	Trainings were too general and not connected with local conditions too much.	Estonia
	Seminars doesn't cover all Kurzeme, but only small part of it.	Latvia

### **Category 3. KEY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF TRAININGS**

Participants provided a wide list of suggestions which could be used for future trainings with the similar focus. Please see the table below for the full list of suggestions.

<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Country</b>
Improvement of Training Content/Organisation	Foundation – the resource: more focus on the resource, that is, to increase our work for a better management of seals and cormorants and habitat restorations/improvement activities.	Sweden
	Practical tips for social media promotion.	Estonia
	To have more fishing specific themes rather than general information.	Estonia

	More practical presentations.	Lithuania
	It would be useful to have more information about these activities provided by other countries and markets and to see how organize that	Lithuania
Better communication with guides/stakeholders	Communication: important to have frequent and continuous dialogue with the guides; to spread important results and information in mails etc.; longer and even more structured and moderated workshops, good setup is to work in smaller working groups (as what was done in the last Swedish workshops).	Sweden
	To involve more locals.	Estonia
Quality Assurance	Quality: ensure that there are enough number of guides involved; always have a professional approach; secure high and similar standard and quality within destinations although it can vary among destination; custom-made focus on the right target groups are key (!); smart Google keyword optimization; be prepared when participating in fairs; include fishing offers to disabled anglers.	Sweden
International Communication	Social: exchange knowledge and experiences among fishing guides from different destinations, meet and fish (!) – end the project by fishing together in Estonia; circulating hosting for workshops (on island in the archipelago for example).	Sweden
Seeking for Local Destination Sustainability	To ensure sustainability and local activities for development of fishing destination.	Latvia
	Organize similar activities in different places in Kurzeme.	Latvia
Continuity of Trainings	Organize additional meetings for fishing guides and entrepreneurs to share experience and ensure continuation of the started activities in local fishing tourism.	Latvia
	Organize additional seminars on topics: Preparation of stories for publicity; Designing of the tourism offer; How to reach the right customer, diversion of offers for each target groups.	Latvia
	There should be more similar trainings.	Poland

## Section 4 SUMMARY

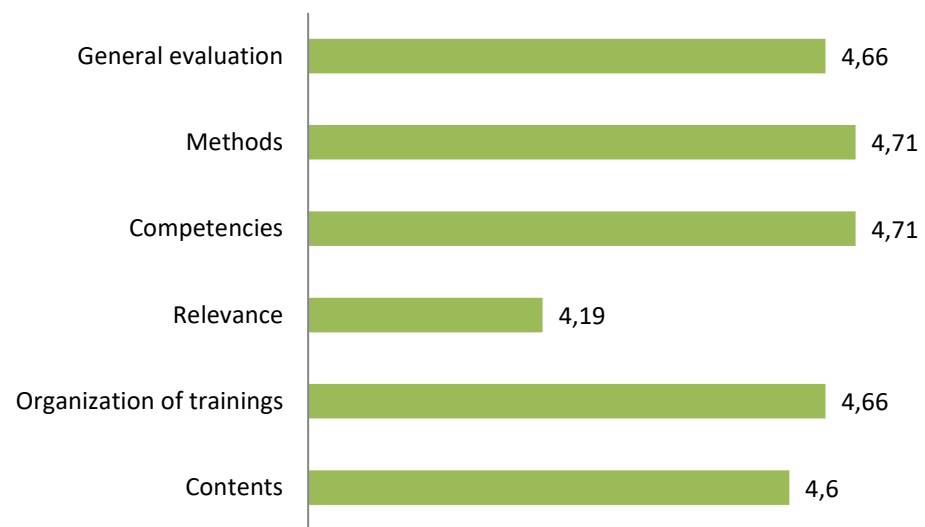
### GENERAL EVALUATION OF THE SEMINARS

General evaluation of the seminars in Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland indicates that the competences of the lecturers and methods used in the trainings (e.g. tools and provided materials) have the highest rank (avg. 4,71). Other evaluated elements are rather close to each other except *Relevance* which was valued by 4,19 on average.

In general, it can be argued that the seminars have been highly evaluated by the participants in all partner countries. All of the score averages are above 4 where the maximum score in scale was 5. This indicates that such trainings were well organized and useful for the participants. Analysis of the qualitative data also indicates a wide range of positive aspects of the trainings. However, participants also noticed the aspects which didn't fulfil their expectations and could be improved in the future trainings.

These trainings were of the utmost importance for the transnational destination development process which will allow to exploit the potential of coastal fishing tourism. It included guidance for the strategic planning, preparation of business plans and mentorship which will allow to enhance capacity for efficient operational procedures, improved local service packages, collaboration and change of experience within involved destinations. These trainings were also the basis for establishing local DMOs and connecting them with each other into a transnational network which aims to develop Baltic Sea Fishing concept and sustainable code of conduct. Finally, this type of trainings was new, timely and highly needed for most of the participants. Analysis of the participants' feedback revealed that future trainings could involve more practical workshops and international exchange of experience between fishing guides.

## EVALUATION OF SEMINARS



## Appendix A



### Questionnaire

**This questionnaire is intended to help to evaluate the effectiveness of RetROUT project organised trainings/seminars**

Please, answer several questions about yourself:

**Gender:**

Male

Female

**Age:** .....

**Activity section:** Local Authority  Fishing Guide  Accommodation  Visitor Centres  Agency, Association, NGO  Other Tourism Business (Fishing Equipment Rental, Car Rental, etc.)

**How many times have you attended RETROUT trainings?** .....

For this evaluation we will use five-level Likert scale where there are 5 possible answers from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree".

Please, mark your opinion with X

CATEGORY	QUESTION	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree, neither disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>1. Contents</b>	1. 1. The teaching material was clear and understandable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1.2. Teaching was informative and covered the expected subtopics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. Organization of trainings</b>	2.1. Length of the training was adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2.2. Communication before trainings was good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3. Relevance</b>	3.1. The knowledge gained through training is easy to apply in practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3.2. The training met my expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. Competencies</b>	4.1. The lecturer has mastered the subject and answered all the questions raised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. The lecturer was capable to engage the audience with the subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5. Methods</b>	5.1. All necessary tools and materials were provided during the training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6. General evaluation</b>	6.1. Overall, the training meet expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Qualitative assessment - please, write your opinion up to 100 words**

<b>7. Main suggestions</b>	<b>7.1. The most positive aspects of the trainings</b>	
	<b>7.2. The most negative aspects of the trainings</b>	
	<b>7.3. Key suggestions for the improvement of trainings</b>	