



TEMPLATE OF THE NATIONAL REPORT FOR

Analysis 1

”Are we ready for Circularity?”

Country

Contribution eZavod, Slovenia



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National tourism strategies in the countries already include targets and guidelines for circularity.

What national strategies exist at the country level in tourism?

Slovenia Development Strategy 2030¹: This strategy outlines a long-term framework for sustainable development in Slovenia, including a transition to a circular economy (future referred to as CE).

- **Goals:** Achieve a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and 95% by 2050 (compared to 1990), decrease resource consumption, and increase renewable energy sources.
- **Measures:** Enacting legislation and policies that promote CE principles, investing in research and innovation within this field, and raising public awareness through education.
- **Programs:** National Program for Transitioning to a CE, Program for Promoting Green Jobs.

2. City of Maribor's Transition to a Circular Economy Strategy²: This strategy focuses on practical ways for Maribor to shift towards a CE model. Adopting the Strategy is to fully follow the United Nations Agenda 2030.

- **Goals:** Reduce waste generation, increase the proportion of recycled materials, promote sustainable mobility, and achieve energy efficiency.
- **Measures:** Implement separate waste collection systems, encourage composting and material reuse, and invest in energy-efficient buildings and public transportation.
- **Programs:** Wcycle Maribor Project, Urban Soil 4 Food Project.

3. Slovenian Tourism Strategy 2022-2028³: This strategy emphasises sustainable tourism, which aligns with some elements of a CE.

- **Goals:** Develop a more resilient and green tourism sector that respects local communities and the environment.
- **Measures:** Support green tourism providers, encourage the use of local products and services, and educate tourists on sustainable practices.
- **Programs:** Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism, Green Practices of Slovenian Tourism.

¹https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MKRR/Strategija-razvoja-Slovenije-2030/Strategija_razvoja_Slovenije_2030.pdf

²https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/sites/default/files/strategy_wcycle_final.pdf

³<https://www.gov.si/en/news/2022-05-10-government-adopts-the-new-seven-year-slovenian-tourism-strategy-2022-2028/>

4. Recovery and Resilience Plan (NOO—RRP): This national plan includes measures for a green transition after the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on investments in green transition, circular economy, and green skills training. Slovenia has earmarked €1.7 billion under the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) to promote the green transition, circular economy, and skills training.

This program defines actions to achieve the circular economy goals outlined in the Slovenia Development Strategy 2030.

- **Goals:** Increase the share of circular materials within the economy, decrease waste generation, and create more green jobs.
- **Measures:** Supporting businesses' adoption of circular business models, funding research and innovation in this area, and providing workforce training.
- **Programs:** Calls for co-financing circular economy projects, Program for Promoting Green Technologies.

Are circular economies included in tourism strategies?

Some initiatives are directly or indirectly connected to the circular economy in all specified strategies.

Slovenian Development strategy includes legislation and policies that promote the circular economy. Under this strategy, there are two national programs: the National Program for Transitioning to a Circular Economy and the Program for Promoting Green Jobs.

The City of Maribor's Transition to a Circular Economy Strategy focuses on practical ways for the City to shift towards a circular economy model, with the goals of reducing waste, increasing recycled materials, promoting sustainable mobility, and increasing energy efficiency. This strategy includes several programs and initiatives, such as cycling and the Urban Soil 4 Food Project.

Slovenian Tourism strategy also includes some elements of CE, such as green tourism, the use of local products and services, and educating tourists on sustainable practices. Some programs are ongoing, such as the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism and the Green Practices of Slovenian Tourism.

The Recovery and Resilience Plan (NOO-RRP) also includes measures and focus on investment in green transition, CE, and green skills training. Some calls are going on: calls for co-financing circular economy projects and a Program for Promoting Green Technologies.

Do national strategies include guidance on circularity? If yes, which ones?

National strategies in Slovenia include some key points about circularity:

- **The 2022-2028 National Tourism Strategy** emphasises sustainable development, aligning with some CE principles. It lays the groundwork for future integration through goals like reducing waste and promoting local products.
- **Focus on Sustainability:** Many national strategies in Slovenia, particularly those related to environmental protection and resource management, indirectly promote circularity principles by focusing on waste reduction and resource efficiency.
- **Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning:** This ministry's website contains information on national environmental protection and resource management strategies, which could touch upon CE principles (Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning Slovenia).
- **Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform:** This European platform offers resources and information on circular economy initiatives in various countries, including Slovenia.

Some activities are underway in government departments regarding the CE and towards a more sustainable and protected environment, and they are in the process of validation.

Countries have a policy on waste management and recycling in tourist destinations.

What waste collection policies do countries have?

Slovenia has a comprehensive waste management and recycling policy, including tourist destinations. The main features of this policy are:

Legal framework:

Slovenia follows the *European Union guidelines on waste management*, which include legislation such as the **Environmental Protection Act and the Waste Management Regulation**. These regulations set out responsibilities for waste collection, treatment and disposal and promote recycling.

Separate waste collection:

Separate waste collection is well established in Slovenia. Separate containers are set up at tourist destinations for different types of waste: **packaging, paper, glass, biological waste and mixed waste**. This helps to recycle more efficiently and reduce the amount of waste ending up in landfills.

Promoting recycling:

Slovenia actively promotes recycling through various programs and initiatives. For example, awareness campaigns are often organised in tourist destinations to inform tourists about the importance of separation and proper waste management.

Producer responsibility:

Legislation stipulates that producers and importers of products are responsible for the waste generated by their products. This includes financing systems for collecting and recycling packaging and other waste.

Utilities:

Each municipality has municipal companies responsible for waste collection and treatment. These companies often partner with tourist destinations for adequate waste management infrastructure and services.

Waste reduction strategy:

Slovenia also implements waste reduction strategies such as promoting reuse, repair and donation instead of throwing away products. In tourist destinations, this includes initiatives to reduce the use of single-use plastics and promote sustainable products.

Educational activities:

Tourist destinations often organise educational activities for visitors and local people to promote environmentally friendly practices and proper waste management.

Through these measures, Slovenia aims to ensure sustainable waste management that protects the environment and improves residents' and tourists' quality of life.

Countries have financial incentives and subsidies that individual countries offer for sustainable tourism projects.

Please outline some of the financial incentives in the tourism sector and VET in tourism and whether the incentives also include circular economy principles.

Slovenia offers various financial incentives and subsidies for sustainable tourism projects and for vocational education and training in tourism, including circular economy principles. Here are some key initiatives and programs:

Financial incentives in the tourism sector

1. Public calls for tender by the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology:

The Ministry of Regional Development and Economic Cooperation regularly launches calls for proposals to co-finance tourism projects that promote sustainable and innovative practices. This includes projects based on the CE, such as reducing resource consumption, recycling and reusing materials.

2. Slovenian Enterprise Fund:

The Fund offers subsidies and soft loans to small and medium-sized enterprises in tourism that implement sustainable projects. Special attention is given to projects that contribute to sustainable development and introduce CE principles.

3. Financial incentives for energy efficiency:

The Slovenian Environmental Public Fund (EcoFund) offers subsidies for projects that increase energy efficiency and use renewable energy sources in tourism facilities. These projects also include circular practices such as using recycled materials and reducing energy consumption.

4. European Union programs:

Slovenia participates in various EU programs, such as **COSME and ERASMUS+**, which support sustainable tourism. These programs fund projects that include developing sustainable tourism products and services and education on the CE.

Vocational education and training in tourism

1. *Centre for Vocational Training (CPI):*

The CPI runs training and education programs for tourism workers integrating sustainable practices and CE principles. This includes courses and workshops to improve knowledge and skills in sustainable tourism.

2. ERASMUS+ program:

This program funds training projects and exchanges that enable tourism workers to acquire knowledge on sustainable practices and the CE. This includes partnerships between Slovenian and foreign educational institutions.

3. Professional training programs:

The Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism and other government bodies fund various professional training programs focused on sustainable tourism. These programs often include modules on the circular economy, sustainable resource management, and reducing the environmental footprint of tourism activities.

CE principles

All of the above financial incentives and training programs also incorporate CE principles such as:

Waste minimisation: Promoting projects that reduce waste and encourage reuse and recycling.

Resource efficiency: Support for projects that optimise the use of natural resources and energy.

Innovation and Sustainable Technologies: Funding the development and deployment of new technologies that support the circular economy.

Through these initiatives, Slovenia supports sustainable tourism development and strengthens the knowledge and skills of tourism professionals in sustainable practices and the CE.

Description of how the national analysis was carried out (from the questioners)

Provide a short description of steps, way of implementation, methods and tools used, and challenges faced... no. of questionnaires for tourism organisation and VET, carried out interviews, focus groups (include numbers)

The Analysis nr. 1 in Slovenia was implemented on the basis of the Methodology for implementation, which was developed in the consortium for Activity A2.2.

For the main topic of the analysis, nr. 1, the partnership created 3 tools: survey-based questionnaires, an Interview-based survey, and a Focus group. For Analysis nr. 1 in Slovenia, we used the survey based on the questionnaires.

The survey based on the questionnaire was done online (based on a Google form). We have used two questionnaires:

- Questionnaire 1 – for the representatives in tourism and related fields.
- Questionnaire 2 - for representatives of VET institutions, which prepare the

workforce for tourism and related fields.

During the entire period of the analysis process in Slovenia, we have done the following activities:

- Translating both questionnaires into Slovenian language.
- Prepare the Google forms for both questionnaires for online responses.
- Preparing a list of stakeholders:
 - target group of organisations acting in tourism and related sectors and
 - VET institutions, teachers, and trainers who educate future employees working in tourism and related sectors.
- Disseminating information about the analysis process on web pages, social media, e-mails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings.
- Raising awareness: Communicating with target groups about the project's topics, presenting (sending) them Vocabulary, and inviting them to complete the online questionnaires.
- Motivating them to provide relevant answers and opinions about Analysis No. 1.
- Facilitating a balanced representation of the two groups of respondents.

Analysis of general questions for both questioners (gender, age, company type or education, field of organisation or level of education)

Summary of the section's general question in questionnaires.

For Analysis nr. 1, two types of respondents were targeted:

- representatives from tourism and related fields.
- representatives of VET institutions, which prepare the workforce for tourism and related fields.

Number of participants:

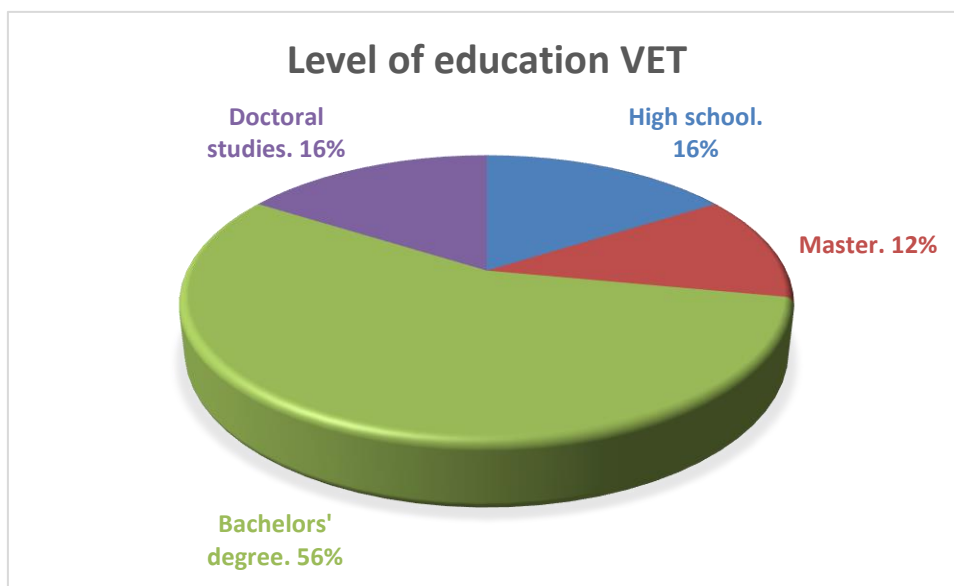
The survey, based on the questionnaire, had a total of 54 respondents, 29 of whom were from tourism and related fields and 25 of whom were from VET institutions.

Participants by Gender of both responders' groups: 88,9 % of responders were women, and 11,1 % were men responders.

The background of participants:

- *Age of participants:*
 - 1,8 % were less than 25 years old
 - 87,1 % were 25-60 years old
 - 11,1 % were more than 60 years old

- *Level of education*



56% of respondents have a bachelor's degree, 16% have doctoral studies or High school, and 12% have a master's degree.

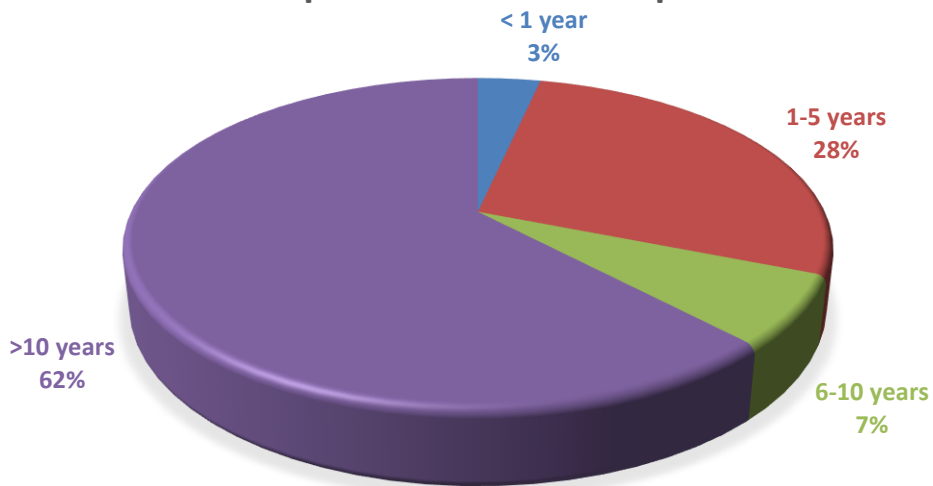
- *Size of the organisation*



55 % of respondents are micro-organisations with less than 10 employees, and 41% are medium organisations with 50 – 250 employees.

- *Years of experience*

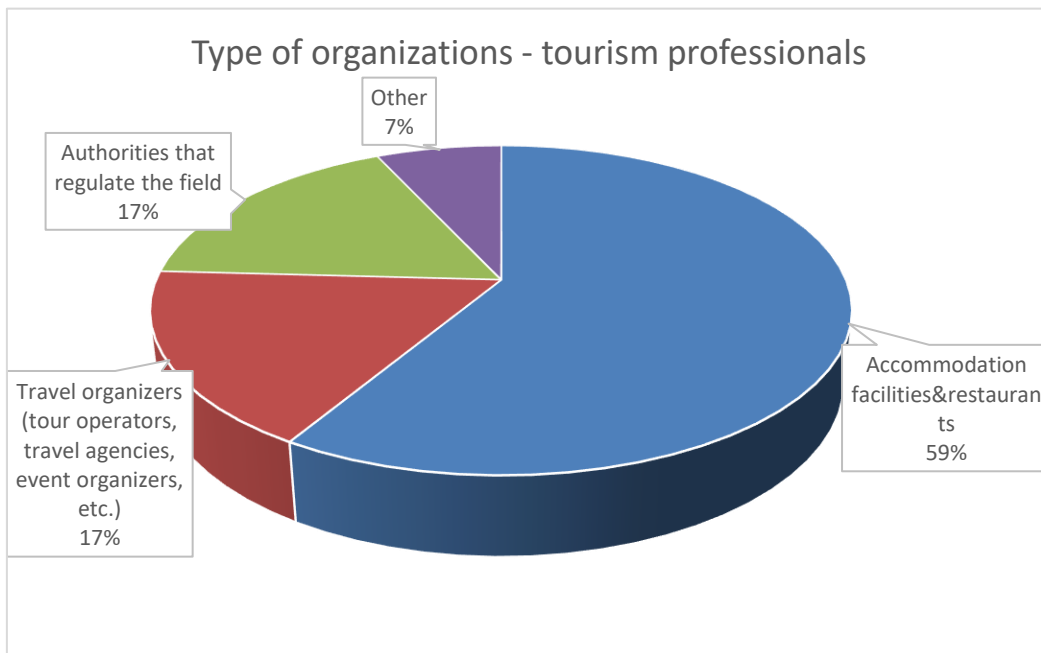
Years of experiences - tourism professionals



62% of responders have more than 10 years of experience in the tourism sector.

- *Type of organisation in the field*

Type of organizations - tourism professionals



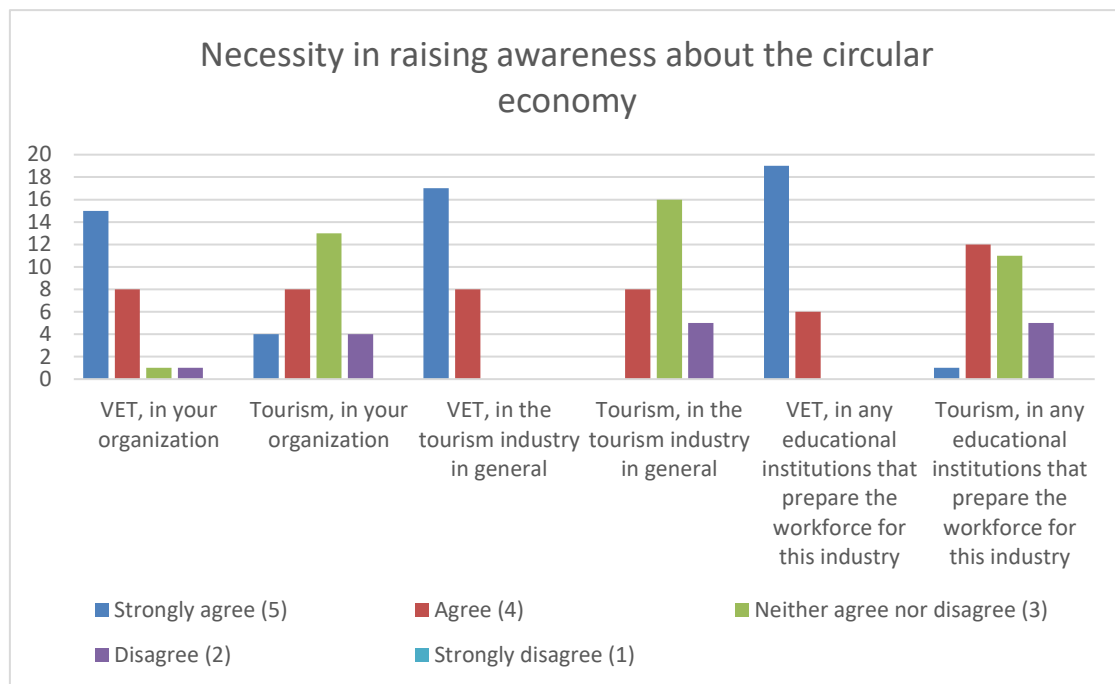
59% of respondents are accommodation facilities and restaurants, 17% are travel organizers, and 17% are authorities that regulate the field.

General Conclusions and Recommendations - as they resulted from the interpretation and synthesis of the answers received

Analyse the information collected (questionnaires, focus groups, interviews), present the data in graphical form, and interpret it.

1. Raising awareness about the CE

Responders agree and strongly agree that raising awareness about CE VET is important in their organisation (92%), in the tourism industry in general (100%), and in any educational institutions that prepare the workforce for this industry (100%).

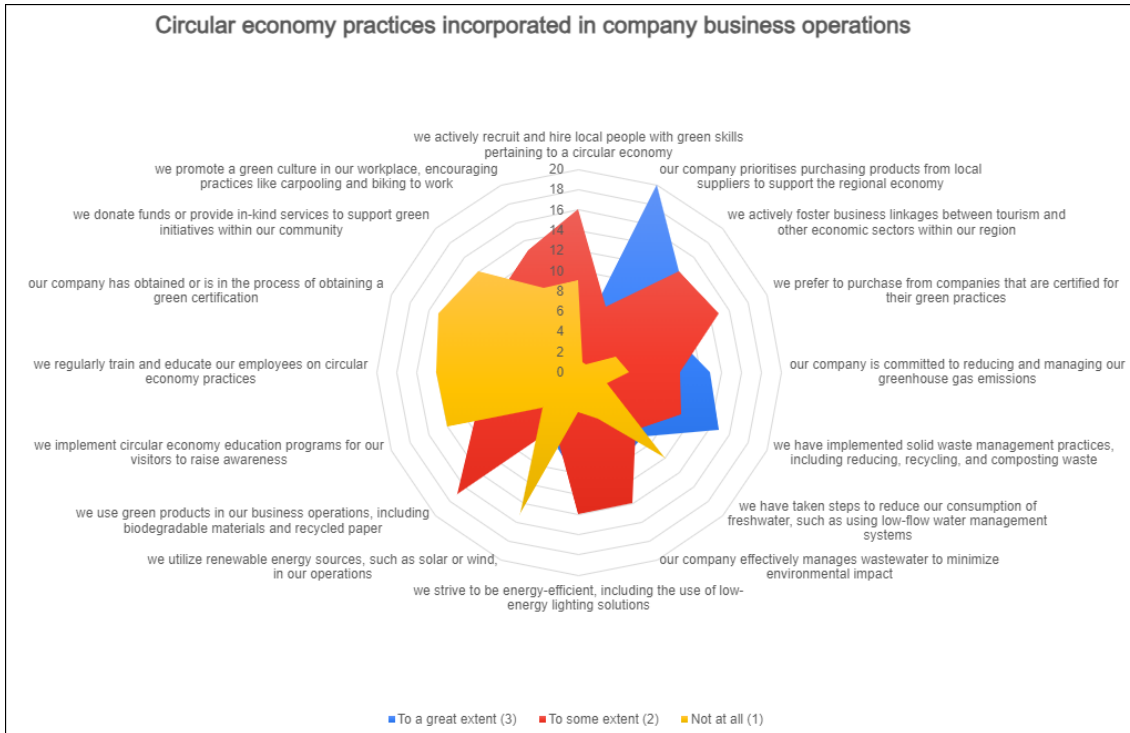


Tourism organisations give different results:

- The importance of raising awareness about the CE in their organisations: 44,8% neither agree nor disagree, 41,4% agree and strongly agree.
- The importance of raising awareness about the CE in the tourism industry in general: 55,2% neither agree nor disagree, 27,6% agree, and 27,6% strongly agree.
- The importance of raising awareness about CE in any educational institutions that prepare the workforce for this industry: 37,9% neither agree nor disagree, and 44,8% agree and strongly agree.

This shows that tourism organisations do not have enough knowledge and information about the CE in general and its importance for their organisations. So, they need more information, motivation, training, and activities that will raise their awareness in the future.

2. To what extent have tourist organisations incorporated the CE practices into their business operations



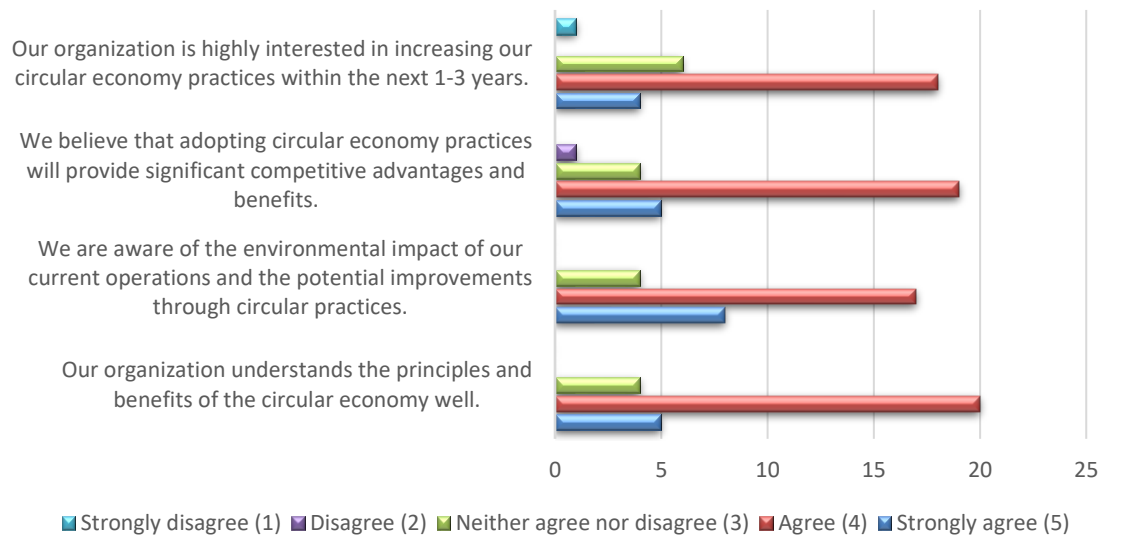
Tourist organisations, to a great extent, prioritise purchasing products from local suppliers to support the regional economy, and they have implemented solid waste management practices, including reusing, recycling and composting waste.

To some extent, they use green products (recycled paper, biodegradable materials), actively recruit and hire local people with green skills, prefer to purchase from companies certified for green practices, strive to be energy efficient (use low lighting), and effectively manage wastewater to minimise environmental impact.

They do not utilise renewable energy sources (solar, wind), are not in the process of obtaining a green certification, do not donate funds or provide in-kind services to support green initiatives, do not train and educate their employees on CE practices, and have not taken some steps to reduce their consumption of fresh water.

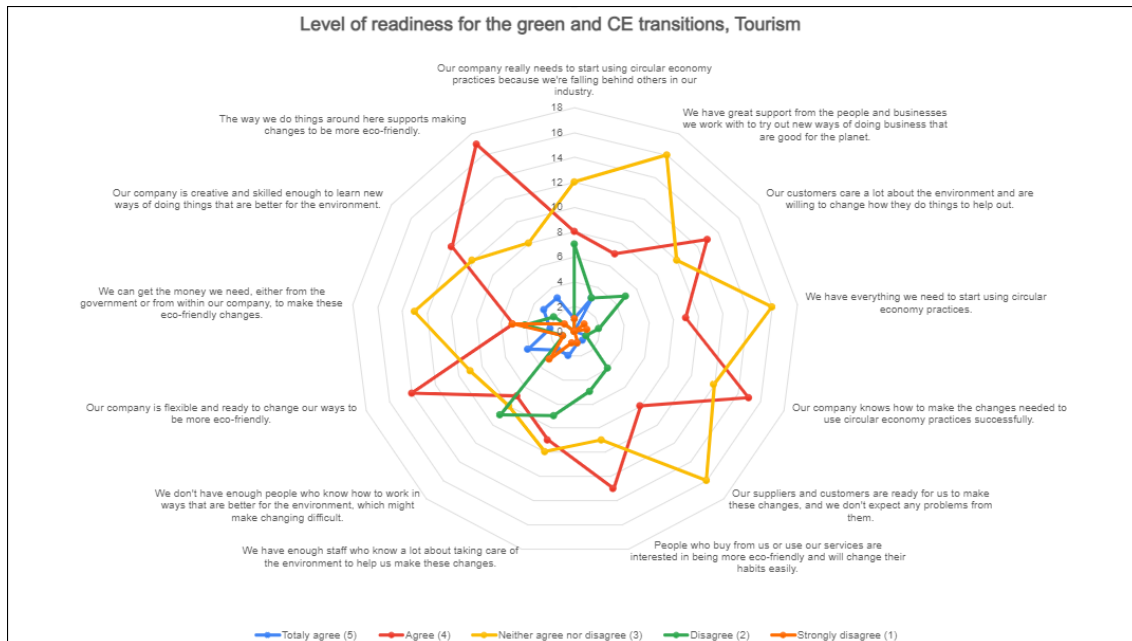
3. Assessment of the current level of awareness and comprehension within tourist organisations regarding efforts to advance towards a more sustainable, green, and CE

Awareness towards sustainable, green and circular economy



Most tourism responders show high awareness of sustainability, greenery, and CE in their organisations. They understand the principles and benefits of the CE well, they believe that adopting CE practices will provide significant competitive advantages and benefits, they are highly interested in increasing CE practices in the next 1-3 years, and they are also aware of the environmental impact of their operations and potential improvements through the CE practices.

4. The level of readiness for the green and circular transition in tourism organisations, institutions



Tourism responders think that how they do things supports making changes to be more eco-friendly. They know how to make the changes needed to use CE practices successfully, they are flexible and ready to change to be more eco-friendly, their buyers are also interested in being more eco-friendly and their customers care a lot about CE.

Tourist organisations gave a score of 3 (not agree or disagree) about the readiness of customers and suppliers to make changes and not expect any problems from them, about the support of people and businesses they work with trying new ways that are good for the planet, about have everything they need to start using CE practices successfully, about getting money from government to make eco-friendly changes.

They have enough people who know how to work in ways that are better for the environment; they answered they are not failing behind others in the industry in using CE practices.

5. The points that VET focus on primarily to raise awareness and create a workforce capable of acting in the CE



VET primarily focus on the following:

- Teach students how to use digital marketing channels in tourism effectively.
- Prepare students to address and adapt to climate change in the tourism sector.
- Equip students to contribute to CE in social areas, focusing on cultural authenticity and building an inclusive society.
- Prepare students to implement CE principles in future workplaces (reducing energy and water use).
- Prepare students to navigate the challenges of new competing destinations that emphasise new, green and safe tourism practices, supporting circularity.
- Encourage students to engage and benefit from the collaborative economy in tourism.

6. The barriers that impacted their ability to adopt circular economy tourism practices in their organisation

The barriers to adopt CE practices in tourism organizations

Financial constraints hinder our ability to invest in circular economy initiatives (e.g. government...	Lack of human resources 7	Complex legal or administrative procedures have discouraged us from adopting circular econo...	There are not enough proven examples or models of circular economy practices in ou...
		The high cost of complying with environmental regulations and standards 3	Lack of information on how to...
We face technical challenges, like not having the right equipment or needing to upgrade our facilities 8	No incentives or rewards for businesses that adopt circular economy practices. 4	Limited access to suppliers who sell sustainable products (e.g. organic food, alternative fuel...	Lack of commitment within our...
			Low awar... of th...

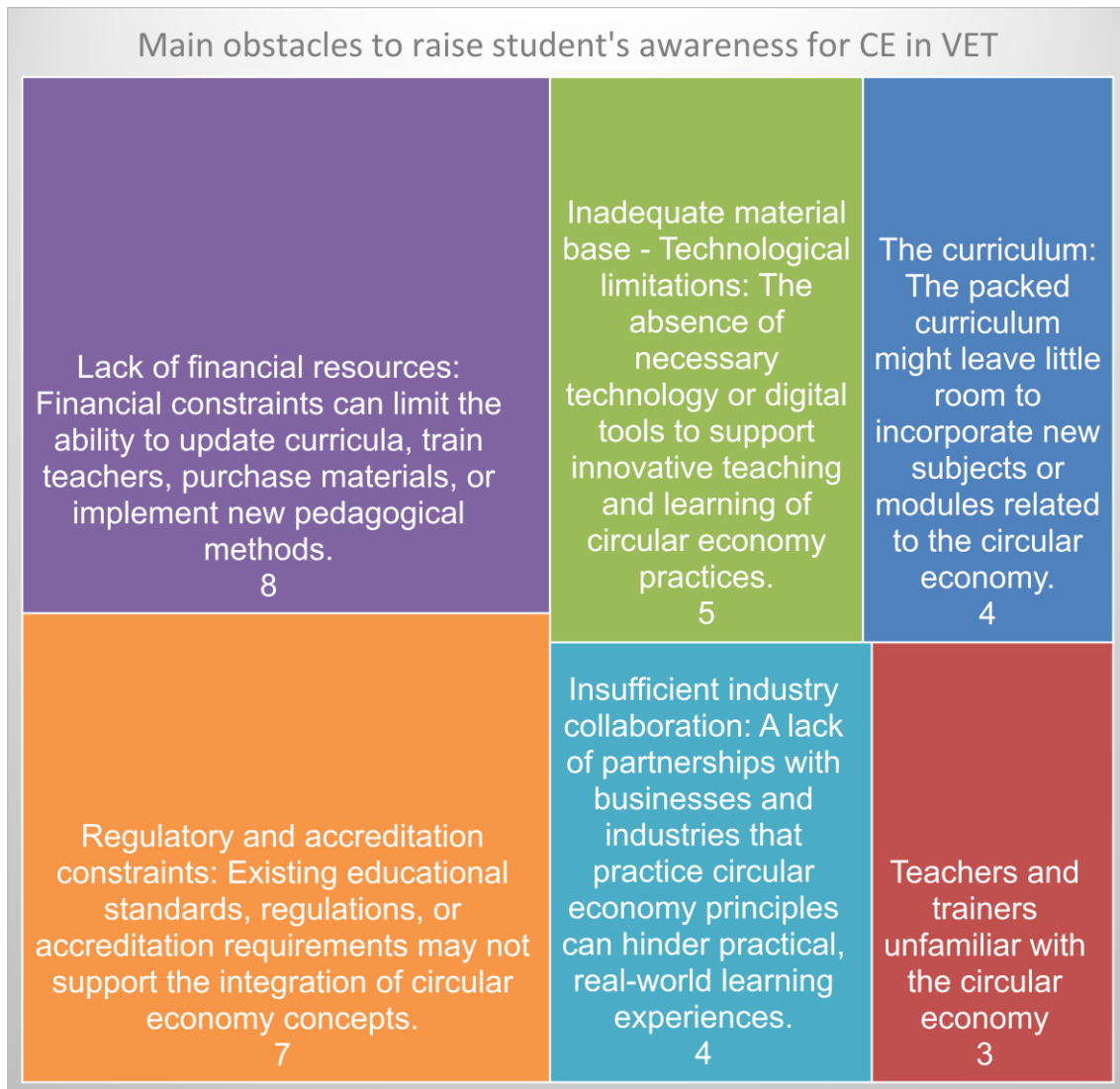
The most significant barriers to adopting CE tourism practices in organisations are:

- Financial barriers, ability to invest in CE initiatives
- Technical challenges (right equipment, facilities)
- Lack of human resources

Following by:

- Complexity and administrative procedures
- High costs of environmental regulations and standards
- Limited access to suppliers of sustainable products (organic food, alternative fuels, biodegradable items)
- Lack of proven examples or models of CE

7. Main obstacles in training and developing to raise awareness for a CE for graduates



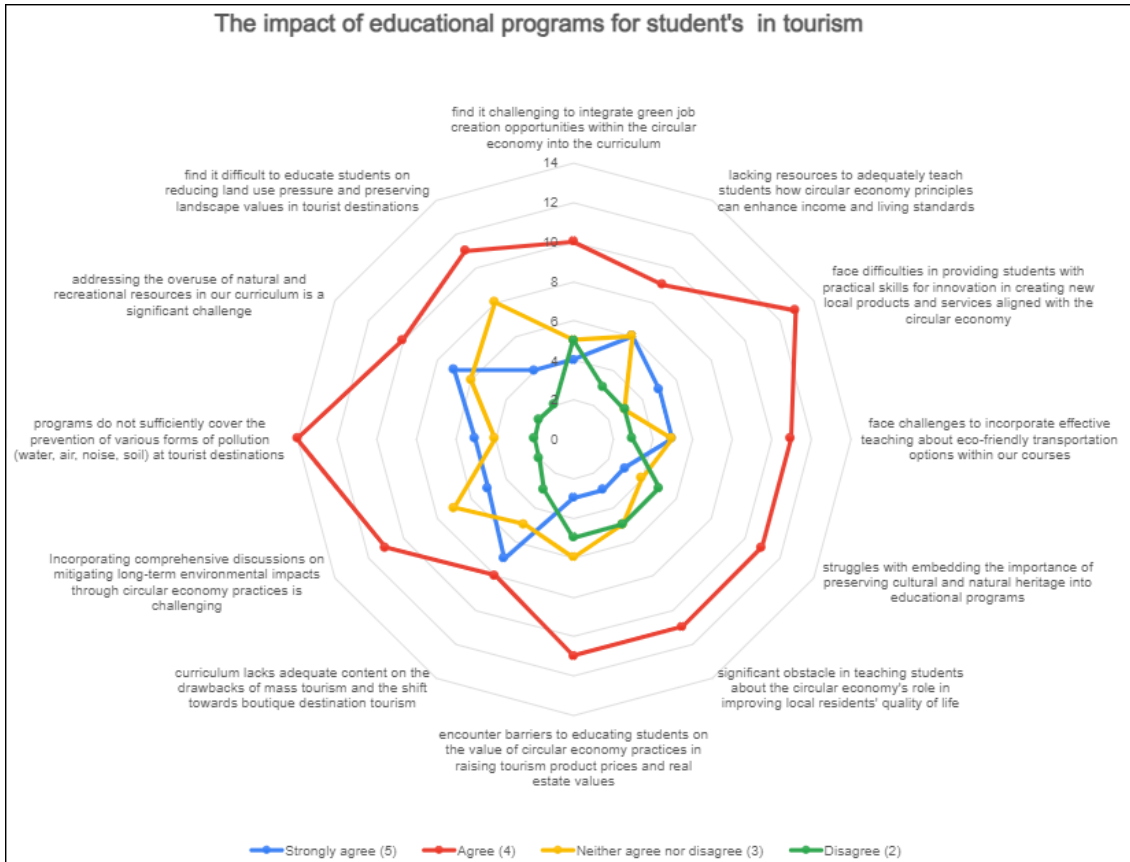
The main obstacles in VET – training and development to raise student’s awareness of CE are:

- Lack of financial resources (limited ability to update curricula, train teachers, purchase materials, or implement new pedagogical methods).
- Regulatory and accreditation constraints (Existing educational standards, regulations, or accreditation requirements may not support the integration of circular economy concepts).

Following by:

- Insufficient industry collaboration (a lack of partnerships with businesses and industries that practice CE principles).
- The curriculum (little room to incorporate new subjects or modules related to the CE).
- Teachers and trainers might be unfamiliar with the CE.

8. The impact of educational programs for the tourism sector on students' ability to work and act in the CE



VET responders identified several impacts of educational programs for the tourism sector on students' ability to work and act in the CE:

- Educational programs do not sufficiently cover the prevention of various forms of pollution (water, air, noise, soil) at tourist destinations.
- Difficulties in providing students with practical skills for innovation in creating new local products and services aligned with the CE.
- The challenge to integrate green job creation opportunities within the CE into the curriculum.
- How to incorporate comprehensive discussions on mitigating long-term environmental impacts through CE practices.
- Difficulties educating students on reducing land use pressure and preserving landscape values in tourist destinations.
- Challenges to incorporate effective teaching about eco-friendly transportation options within our courses.
- Struggles with embedding the importance of preserving cultural and natural heritage into educational programs.
- Obstacles in teaching students about the circular economy's role in improving residents' quality of life.

- Educating students on the value of CE practices in raising tourism product prices and real estate values.
- How to integrate green job creation opportunities within the CE into the curriculum.
- Lack of resources to teach students how circular economy principles can enhance income and living standards.

9. The type of support for VET to raise graduates' awareness of the CE

- Policy and regulatory advocacy (Working to influence educational policies and regulations to support CE education).
- Online platforms for collaboration and learning (Developing or providing access to platforms for resource sharing, educator collaboration, and virtual learning on the CE).
- Training programs (Providing specialised training programs for educators and staff on the CE and sustainable practices).
- Student engagement initiatives (Supporting student involvement in CE projects, competitions, and community activities).
- Counselling in CE (Offering expert guidance and advice to integrate CE principles into VET programs).

Following by:

- Exchange of good practices (Facilitating platforms where VET organisations can share successful strategies and lessons learned in teaching the CE).
- Networking with other VET organisations on tourism (Creating opportunities for VET institutions to network, share experiences, and collaborate on CE projects within the tourism sector).
- Access to updated educational resources (Supplying the latest learning materials, case studies, and research to keep curricula current with CE practices).
- Financial assistance for curriculum development (Offering grants or funding to help develop or enhance CE content in courses and programs).
- Technology and infrastructure support (Providing technological tools and infrastructure necessary for innovative teaching and learning methods).
- Professional development for educators (Organizing workshops, seminars, and courses focused on the CE for teachers and trainers).
- Partnerships with industry (Establishing connections with businesses practising CE principles for practical learning experiences like internships and projects).

10. The type of support to raise awareness toward greater readiness for the CE in tourism

Tourist organisations mostly prefer the following type of support to raise awareness towards greater readiness for the CE in tourism:

- Networking with other organisations engaged in circular practices.
- Opportunities to exchange good practices with other tourism organisations.
- Participation in training programs focused on circular practices.
- Financial support from national or international funds.

What would you do differently?

VET suggestions:

A good strategic plan for implementing CE knowledge into the training programs is needed.

Adopting the existing curriculum with CE topics.

More information and motivation about CE principles in VET for future tourism workers.

Cooperation with tourism organisations in common projects addressing CE.

Develop new educational programs to give students appropriate knowledge and a basis for CE principles so they will be prepared and equipped with knowledge when starting to work in the tourism industry.

Organise teacher training about the CE topics.

Get some qualifications in this area.

Tourism suggestions:

Get more information and knowledge about CE principles and how to incorporate them into their businesses.

Exchange of good practices in CE principles.

Cooperate with VET in tourism to gain more knowledge and train their students to become future employees in this sector.

Cooperation with VET and NGOs is needed for common European and national projects and initiatives.

Establish a CE centre where tourism organisations can get more information and specific directions on how to implement CE principles in their businesses.

Fill in the SWOT analysis for your country based on the questionnaire 1 and 2 responses (including the most obvious strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats).

Instruction on how to fill in the SWOT:

Strengths: Questions that VET institutions or tourist organisations are marked as strongly agreeing on (things that they excel at).

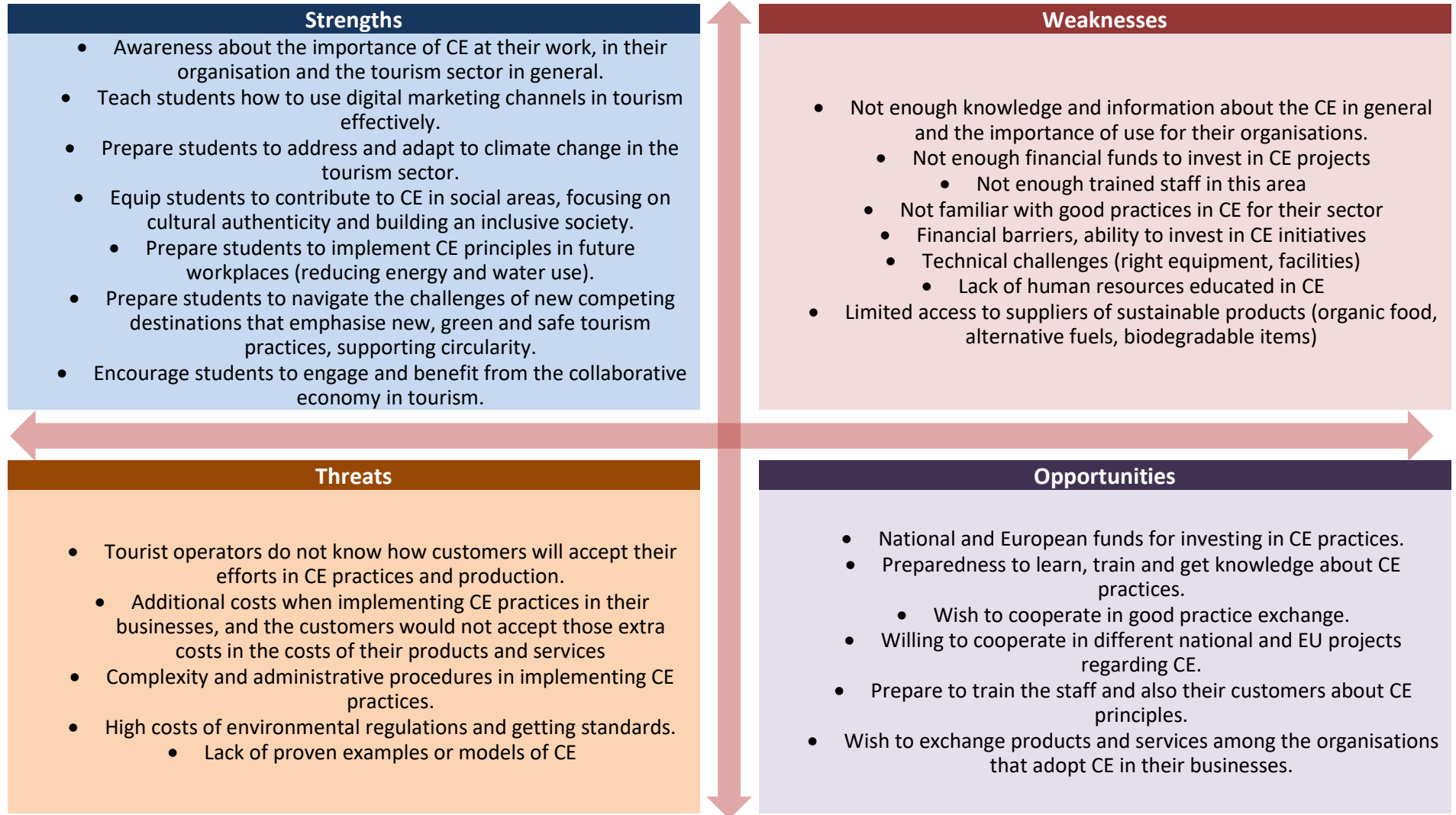
Weaknesses: Question the VET institutions or tourist organisations marked as strongly disagreeing, present weaknesses, and identify areas for improvement.

Opportunities: Opportunities are an external factor that refers to opportunities to improve and give it a competitive edge/grow and expand of business (answers to questions 12, 13 and 14⁴)

Threats: Potential risks or challenges to the business's success (*examples for VET: declining student enrolment, budgetary limitation...*) and come from competitors, changing regulations, economic downturns, disruptive technologies, or shifting consumer preferences

⁴ Only in the questionnaire for VET institution – experts.

SWOT analysis of responses from tourism professionals



SWOT analysis of responses from VET institutions

