

## ON TOP OF SEASONALITY

Seasonality is one of the most significant challenges for the hotel and tourism industry in all of the Nordic countries.

The hostel Toppen in Ebeltoft is very successful in the summer, but faces major challenges in the off-season, when it is basically empty. Toppen's challenges, which are outlined below, are key issues facing the tourism industry in all of the Nordic countries, and they need to be addressed in order to promote sustainable and competitive tourism development in the area.

### ***Toppen's three central challenges:***

**Low occupancy in the off-season:** During autumn, winter and spring, the occupancy rate at the hostel is very low, resulting in a deficit or minimal profits. This means that it is difficult to maintain the facilities and carry out the necessary upgrades due to limited revenues in the off-season.

**Fluctuating need for labour:** The major seasonal fluctuations result in a need to adjust the number of employees. This leads to a high staff turnover and increased costs due to training of new employees.

**Reaching new target groups:** Today, one of major challenges facing Toppen is that the primary target group is summer guests. In order to create a sustainable business model, the hostel needs to reach new target groups and offer activities all year round.

### ***Guiding questions***

Your task is to develop ideas for how a place such as Toppen can meet the challenges caused by seasonal fluctuations and increase revenues during the off-season. Based on one or more of the following questions, you should try to create new solutions, initiatives and creative approaches to meet the challenges of the off-season.

Questions to consider:

- How do we deal with the challenges of seasonality in places such as Toppen?
- How do you (re)invent ways to attract guests in the off-season?
- How can places such as Toppen streamline operations in the off-season without reducing staff numbers?
- Which partnerships can be established with local companies and organisations to create complete tourism experiences and attract guests in the off-season? And how can this be handled in a smart and efficient way?
- How can technology help solve the above challenges?