

COACHING PREFERENCES IN LITHUANIA, BALTIC STATES AND EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Abstract

The goal of this paper is to present received part of the data from the research about coaching situation in Lithuania in comparison with Baltic States and European countries. The whole survey was done by researchers from 45 European countries in 31 languages and approaching around 3000 participants of various roles – coaches, mentors, managers and leaders. It was done in 2018, in 31 languages, ranging from English, Spanish, French and German, to Greek, Catalan and Serbian. The aim of the research was to explore the nature of coaching and mentoring practices across Europe and Baltic States, and understand of the development of best practices.

This survey was publicized through established coaching federations and management bodies, as well as online through social media interest groups. In total, approximately 100 organizations committed to sharing the research link with their members or to publishing details of the research on their website.

Here is presented a part of the data about coaching situation in Lithuania as there is a big need of such researches. Cross-cultural comparison of coaching practice in Lithuania and other countries in Europe doesn't exist at all as well as situation analysis of coaching specialists, their qualification, their commitment to local chapters, continuous development or their adherence to ethical codes of practices.

Results show that coaching situation in Lithuania is quite similar to European countries. It is still developing area and more and more becomes taken for granted, the coaches in Lithuania are high-educated specialists who spare a lot of time for self-development, that they still need to have supervisions and that individual coaching is more popular than organizational at the moment, and that strong regulation of coaching profession and specialists is still required.

Keywords: *coaching, coach, coaching research, management, preferences.*

JEL Classification: M5

1. Introduction

Coaching became mostly famous in the middle of 20 centuries, around 1980-1990 as a separate tool effectively manage human resources. According to famous researchers and coaches, for example, V. Brock (2012), D. Clutterbuck & D. Megginson (2005), J. Whitmore (2002) and others, coaching came into organizations mostly with the soft skills and management idea and its importance for better leadership and co-operation.

Coaching we can understand as tool to help others to develop and solve their questions. In addition, it can be used to help managers and employees address issues of maximum efficiency and potential in their work. Coaching considered as one of the most effective ways to improve and enhance the skills and abilities of employees. At the same time, this method is considered one of the best ways to keep the best employees in the organization, to reveal their skills and to "recruit" them as efficiently as possible. Most high-level organizations are constantly applying the educational approach and intend further to expand its scope, as statistics show that small organizations are going to use coaching service in the near future (The Executive Coaching Forum, 2012).

As J. Whitmore (2002) says, the work world takes from us a lot and we pay a fairly high price for it. In his opinion, there are many workers and many managers in organizations live to work instead of working for life. Similarly, J. Schon and others (2015) says that high consumption is driving

more hours of work, which are bad. Therefore, the implementation of coaching culture in organization not only allows work-life balance, but also creates a positive atmosphere for the organization, which naturally can motivate and encourage employees as well as a managers and leaders, encourages following their values and dreams.

So organizations worldwide have widely invested into coaching with the hope of improving employees or client's goal attainment and well-being or bringing other benefits stated above to the clients. Leaders are being coached all across the globe and often on topics closely related to decision-making or management strategies (Passmore, Brown, et., 2018). In addition, organizations should pay attention to coaching and more understand the processes and national coaching trends that emerge to get a better understanding of the intervention their executives are engage in.

There are not a lot researches concerning coaching in organizations in Lithuania, mostly of them writes about narrow issues and questions. The importance and need of it still actually remains. Even more, cross-cultural comparison of coaching practice in Lithuania and other countries in Europe doesn't exists at all as well as situation analysis of coaching specialists, their qualification, their commitment to local chapters, continuous development or their adherence to ethical codes of practices.

Despite less number of researches, the coaching over the last decade in the Baltic States has matured considerably with more companies interested in the potential of coaching as a toll to help their employees as well as individual life coaching.

There has been a major expansion of coaching in the area of executive education and development. Coaching has become a standard feature in areas such as:

- Modular leadership development programees,
- Graduate development programmes, coupled with mentoring,
- Middle management development.

The use of internal coaches is also featuring more, with larger organizations developing their own internal coaching panels and supplementing these with external coaches where necessary.

This appears as a desire to embed a coaching culture and style of management into organizations. In spite of this growth, membership of the main professional body – the International Coach Federation (ICF) – remains relatively low. Membership of the ICF in each country is as follows:

- Latvia – 26 members,
- Lithuania – 22 members,
- Estonia – 33 members.

Current hot topics in Baltic coaching practice include:

- Coaching as a leadership style and coaching for executives,
- Coaching as a tool to create organizational culture,
- Life coaching and its de-mystification,
- Coaching as a profession and professional self-development.

So this paper is a possibility to explore deeper a coaching situation in Lithuania and other Baltic States, and to compare the received data with European Union countries.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Research background and questions

Researchers in conjunction with the EMCC (European Mentoring and Coaching Council) designed the questionnaire. The survey was publicised through coaching federations and management bodies, as well as online through social network for interest groups. Researchers analysed the survey

data from 45 European countries in 31 languages and approaching around 3000 participants of various roles – coaches, mentors, managers and leaders.

The goal of this research is to research a coaching situation in Lithuania comparing with other Baltic States and European countries. The aim of such research was to explore the nature of coaching and mentoring practices across Europe and Baltic States, and contribute to the understanding and development of best practice. The research aimed to extend beyond traditional professional networks and the main European languages (English, French, German and Spain), to provide a more inclusive research study, recognizing the equal value of all European countries, languages and cultures, and of different professional bodies and institutions.

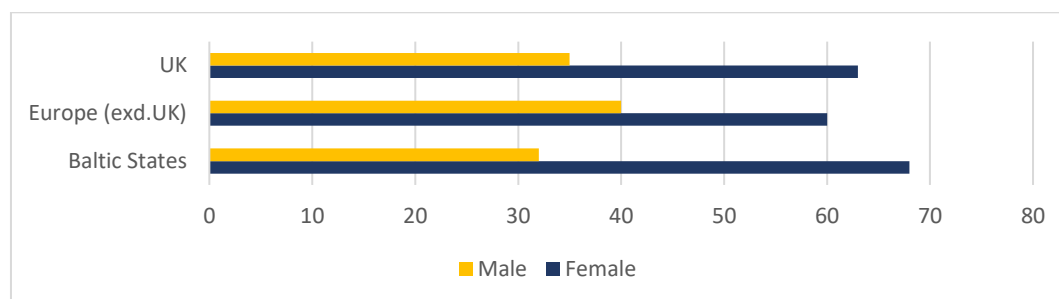
The exact research in Lithuania done an ICF Lithuania chapter. The questionnaire was shared through social networks to coaching specialists in Lithuania and via personal e-mail. According to ICF Lithuania web page (www.icf.lt), there were 22 certified ICF coaches in 2017-2018. Other coaching specialists who have finished other coaching programs in Lithuania also participated in this research and were invited to answer into questions. Consequently, 28 Lithuanian coaches participated in this research, i.e. 28 reports were received back. In total, 62 responses were received from three Baltic countries: 14 from Estonia, 20 from Latvia and 28 from Lithuania. This data was combined for the purpose of this article in case to have representative results and information.

In the questionnaire were prepared 24 questions to find out which coaching and mentoring bodies the coach is a member, what is his/hers highest non-coach/mentor and coaching/mentoring qualification training qualification, how many years have she/he practised as a coach/mentor, what types of coaching do he/she engages in and etc. Here we provide a comparison analysis of the received data towards those questions in case to see the coaching situation in Lithuania, Baltic states and whole Europe.

3. Research data analysis

3.1. Biographical information of coaches and education level

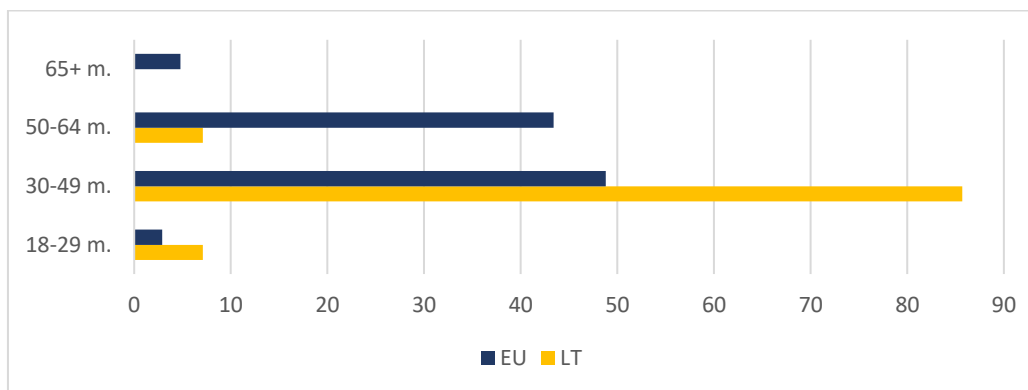
Comparing data by gender, it showed that there were 68% of women and 32% of man who participated in this research from Baltic States. The number of European countries were 60% of female and 40% of man, and UK it were 63% of women and 35% of man (see Picture No. 1).



Picture 1. Gender of participants, %

The exact percent of Lithuanian participants were 35.7% of man and 64.3% of women. From the data we can see that mostly of coaches are women and this situation is equal in all countries mostly. This shows that this area is quite feminine and it allows to rethink about such profession main characteristics and features, and to think about gender segregation.

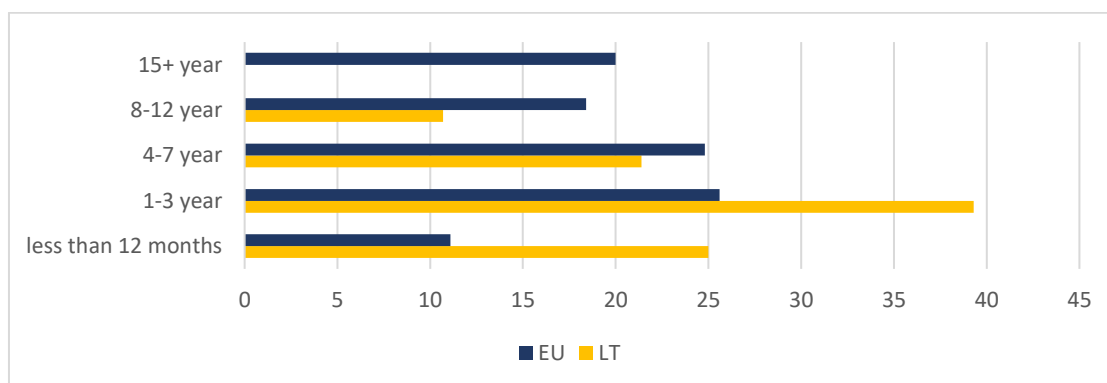
When coaches' age was analysed, the data shows that mostly of coaches during the research were 30 – 49 years old in both Lithuania and Europe countries, i. e. 85.7% in Lithuania and 48.8% in Europe. The next largest age group was 50-64 and it was 43,4% in Europe, but 7,1% in Lithuania (see Picture No. 2).



Picture 2. Age of coaches in Lithuania and EU, %

As we can see from this data, most popular age of coaches is 30-46 years old and it does not wonders. This profession needs to have some life experience and professional knowledge that mostly comes after studying at universities, having even a short life experience and being able to consult others of this collected experience. The same age group is also popular in European countries. The second popular group in Europe is 50-64 years old. As coaching in Lithuania is a developing profession, there are younger than 50 years old specialists.

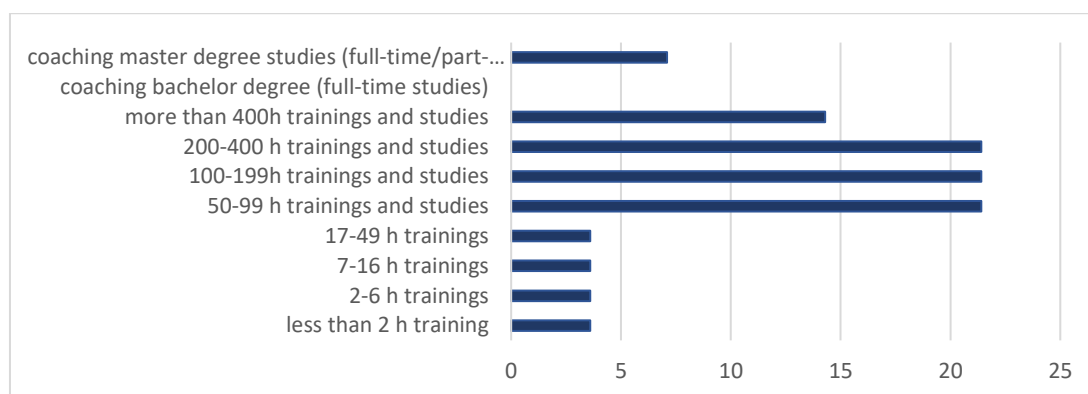
If we analyse coach by an experience years, the most amount is 39,3% from one to three year experienced coaches, other groups are 25% are less than 12 months, 21,4% - 4-7 years, and more than 15 years are only coaches from European countries, 20% (see Picture No. 3).



Picture 3. Coach experience by years in Lithuania and EU, %

If we analyse coaches' highest non-coaching education, the collected data showed that more than 60% of coaches have acquired master degree, 32% - bachelor, around 4% have a vocational education and 4% has a PhD. Therefore, coaches in Lithuania are quite educated and have higher than bachelor education. So Lithuanian coaches are well and high educated specialists.

Speaking about the coaching education of Lithuanian coaches, 64.2% of them have acquired from 50 to 400 hours' training, 14.3% of coaches – more than 400 hours and 10.8% have from 2 to 49 hours qualification. Also in research has participated 7.1% coaches who have finished coaching master degree at university (see Picture No.4).



Picture 4. Acquired qualification in coaching, %

3.2. The most popular contracting types for coaching assignments and fees

Most of participated in the research coaches came from local private organizations or have own coaching business. And there are 66,7% of such coaching specialists, 14,8% were from international private organizations, 11,1% - from governmental and public organizations, and 7,4% - from non-profit organizations and other NGO.

Data shows that such organizations were established in less than 5 years – 44.4%, before 5-10 years – 14.8%, 11 – 20 years – 14.8%, 21 – 30 years – 18.5%, and more than 31 years – 7.4%. Also data shows that coaching in Lithuania is more private initiative and there are more private and independent coaches at all that organizational ones and that this field could be developed and has a future.

This conclusion can be based by other data which shows that most of all coaches in this research are managers who uses coaching in their work or have own training business. It was 60,7% of such specialists in total. 14,3% were HR specialists and consultants who uses coaching method and attitude in they work (see Picture No. 5), “other” was market by 21.4% of respondents and only 3.6% was licensed therapist-consultant.



Picture 5. Coach position in Lithuania, %

If we look deeper about the organization where do the coach works, data shows that most of all Lithuanian coaches works in micro organizations where works less than 10 employees. And such respondents were 67.8%. Small company where coach works from 10 to 49 employees, are 10.7% of participants, middle-sized company (from 50 to 250 employees) – 7.1%, and big organizations (more than 250 employees) – 14.3% of coaches.

During the research, we have look deeper how much time coaches gives for the individual sessions comparing with the training courses.

The data showed that 36,8% of coaches in Lithuania gives 20% of their time, 26,3% of coaches gives 10% their time and only 15,8% gives 70% of their time. As training courses mostly – 38,5% of coaches gives 20% of their time, 23,1% gives 5% of their time and 15,4 % gives 10%. So mostly coaches their 20-30% of their time-shares for sessions and trainings.

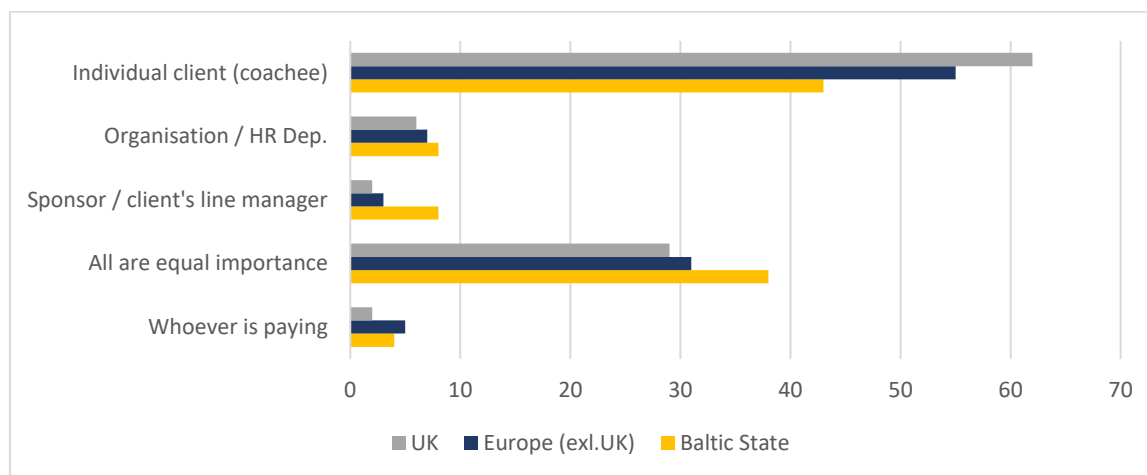
Only 6,3% of coaches shares 80% of their time for organizational sessions, 18,8% of coaches shares only 5% of their time for organisational sessions. 31,3% doesn't give any time for organizational sessions. In addition, some of coaches gives their time for writing and making researches. 30,8% of such coaches shares 10% of their time for such activities. 15,4% of coaches shares 20% of their time, and 7,7% - only 5% of their time. 7,7% shares tier time for researches and writing whole 100%. Other duties for which coaches spent a lot of time are managerial roles. This was marked more than 44,5% coaches who shares their time from 50 to 90%. Other biggest group was 50,1% coaches who shares their time from 10 to 40% in Lithuania.

As we were interested to know more about the most popular contracting types for coaching assignments, participants answered that most contracts done verbally with individual clients (coachee).

According to the data, the second place was a contract with the organization and verbally with other parties. This marked 21% of Baltic States' coaches, 22% by Europe and 18% by UK.

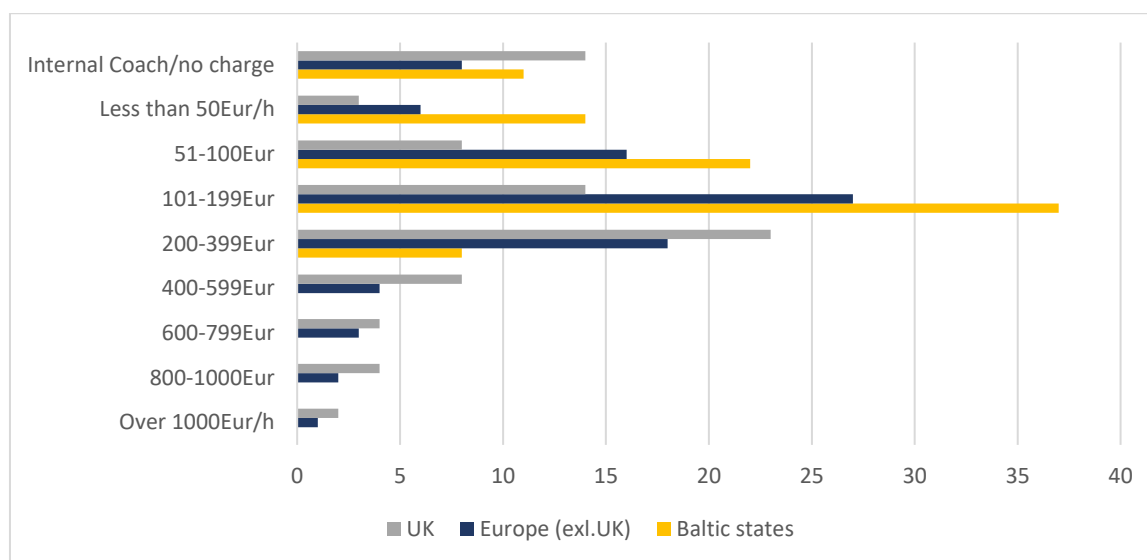
Such answers bases another question – “Who do you believe is the primary client when you “are delivering corporate/organizational coaching?”. An answer “Individual client” was marked mostly and this done 62% UK coaches, 55% Europe and 43% Baltic States' coaches.

Second most chosen answer was “all parts are equal importance” and this choose 29% by UK, 31% by Europe and 38% by Baltic States (see Picture No. 6).



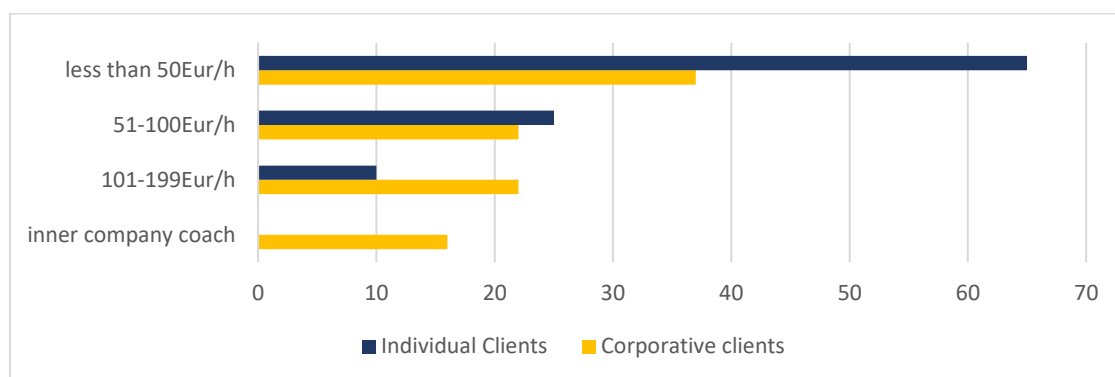
Picture 6. The primary partners, %

Analysing hourly fee rates for corporate clients, the results shows that 36 coaches who receives 101 – 199Eur fee in Baltic States for the corporate client. Meanwhile in EU such fee receives a little bit more that 24% coaches. The second place would be 51 – 100Eur per hour and this fee receives 23% coaches in Baltic States and 16% in EU. Moreover, the third place would be less than 50Eur per hour and such fee receives 17% coaches in Baltic States (see Picture No. 7).



Picture No. 7. Hourly fee rates: corporate funded coaching, %

If we look deeper in this data, we can see that dominates only three types of payment – less than 50, 51-100 and 101 – 199Eur per hour for both individual and corporative clients (see Picture No. 8).

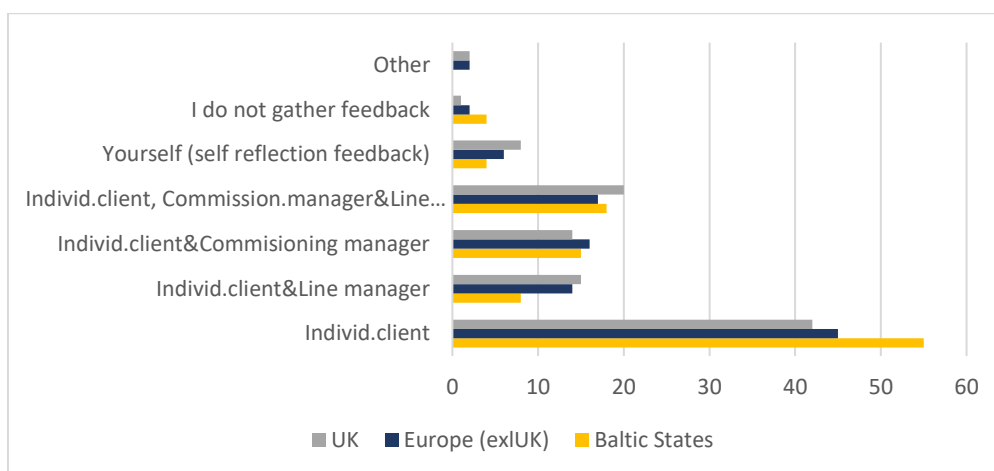


Picture 8. Hourly fees per corporative and individual clients, %

From the 14th Annual Industry review (2019) from Sherpa Coaching and their provided executive Coaching Survey Report for 2019, we can see that executive coaches receives 355Eur per hour. In 2018, it was 344Eur and 314USD in 2017, business coaches receives 224Eur per hour, down from last year’s average of 249Eur, and life coaches receives 185Eur, an increase over last year at 170Eur per hour. Comparing this information, we can see that the fee for Lithuania are quite similar to Coaching Survey has provided fee. Of course, there is not mentioned the level of coaches in this report and what accreditation does they have in case receiving such salary. However, the Lithuanian coaches receives a market dominating salary in Europe and Baltic states, and it can be a reason to have a guideline for a while to regulate a coaching market.

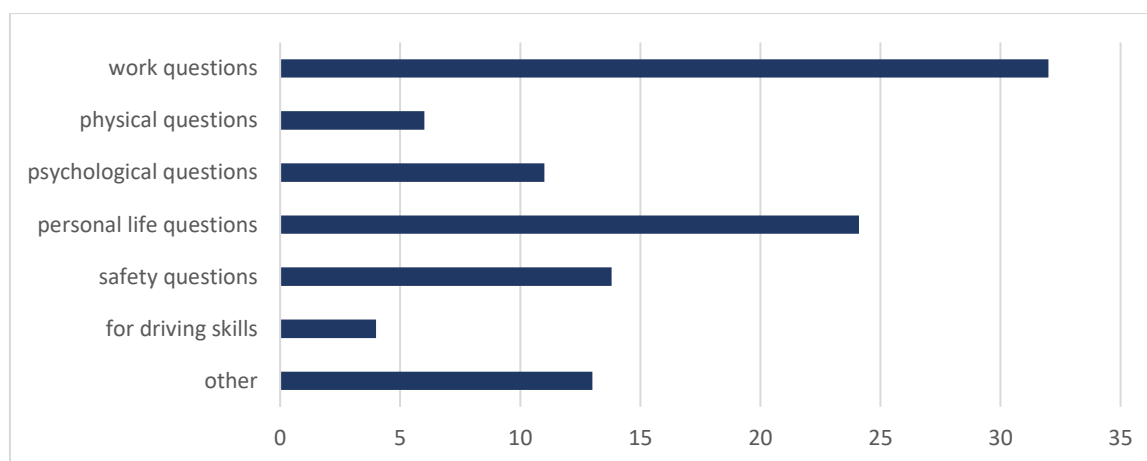
If check the information about evaluating the impact of the coaching, the data shows that most of Baltic States coaches do this informally and at the end of every meeting. This answer selected 55% and more coaches. Meanwhile formally evaluation and at the end of every coaching assignment or contract do more than 45% coaches of UK.

The data showed that the feedback was gathered more from individual clients in Baltic States – this was marked more than 55% of coaches. A little less than 45% in European countries and around 42% in UK (see Picture No. 9).



Picture 9. Gathering feedback, %

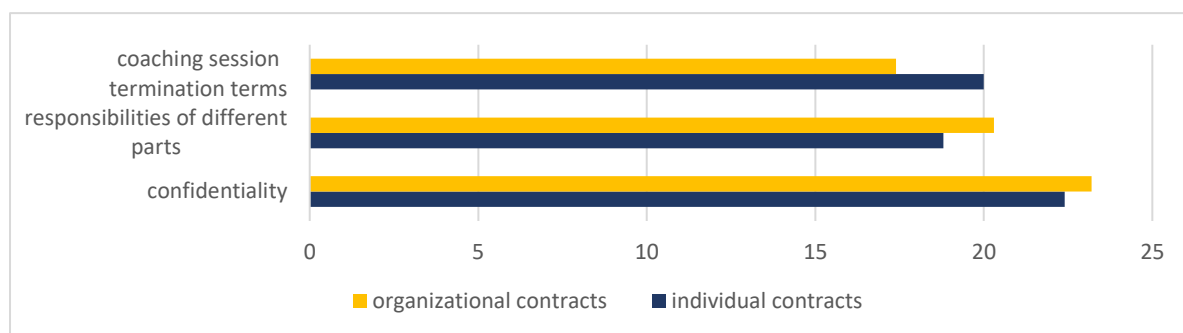
The most popular questions analyzed during sessions are work questions which was marked by 32,8% of coaches in Lithuania. Second question group were life questions and it was marked by 24,1% of coaches, and the third question group was safety questions – this was marked by 13,8% of coaches. So this shows that life coaching dominates in this research participants work (see Picture No. 10).



Picture 10. Main coaching fields, Lithuania, %

The most important aspects which should be included into the contract are confidentiality – this was marked by 22,4% Lithuanian coaches, coaching termination terms – this was marked by 20% of coaches and responsibilities of different parts – 18,8%.

If the contract is signed with organization, the most important aspects should be included in the contract are: confidentiality – it was marked by 23,2% of coaches, responsibilities of different parts – 20,3%, and session termination terms – 17,4% of Lithuanian coaches. The data is in 11 Picture.



Picture 11. Contract main aspects, Lithuania, %

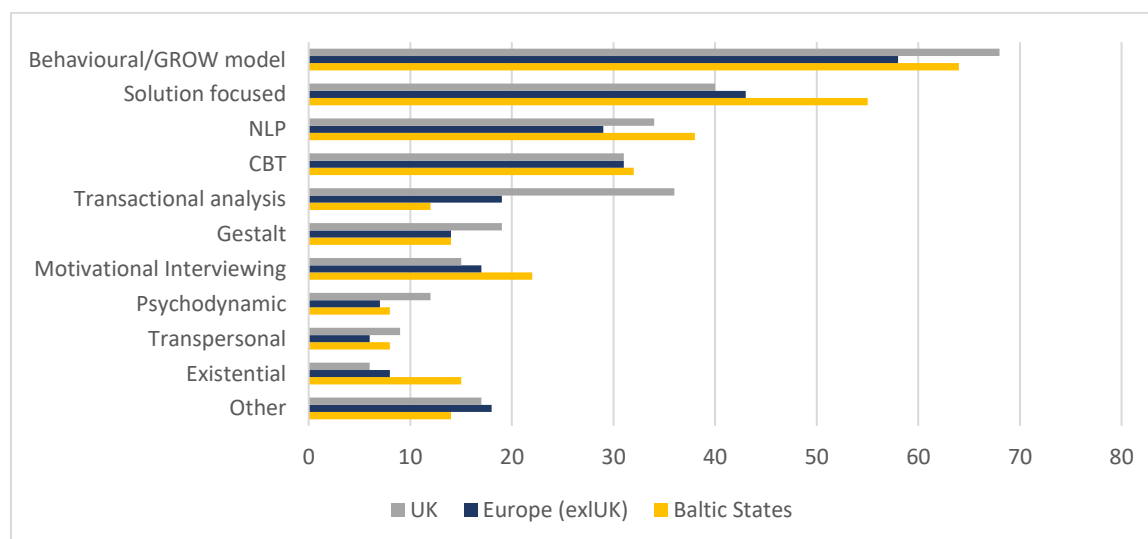
3.3. Coaches' background, continuous professional development (CPD) and session approach

If we analyse the received data coaches' working field, we can see that 24,6% of Lithuanian coaches are career specialists, 23,10% are performance and leadership coaches, and 13,80% works with job questions, 13,80% are life coaches and 12,30% are educational coaches.

71,4% of respondents in Lithuania works as a coaches, 17,9% are mentors-coaches and 10,7% are managers who delegates to use coaching method in organization. Data shows that mentors are mostly responsible for the talent search and there were 16,7% of such participants, most of them – even 66,7% were responsible for the leadership and growing managerial skills of employees programs, and 16,1% has marked “other”. For the mentorship, they deliver from 3 to 15 hours per month and this was marked by 80% of respondents. 20% marked less than 3 hours per month.

During the research it was interesting to know, what methods do coaches use to reflect in their practice mostly. The data shows that the most popular method of reflection was self-reflection, which choose more than 58% coaches in Baltic States and more than 75% coaches in UK. Second method was coaching books. 60% Baltic State coaches, a little bit more than 62% EU and 64% UK coaches choose this.

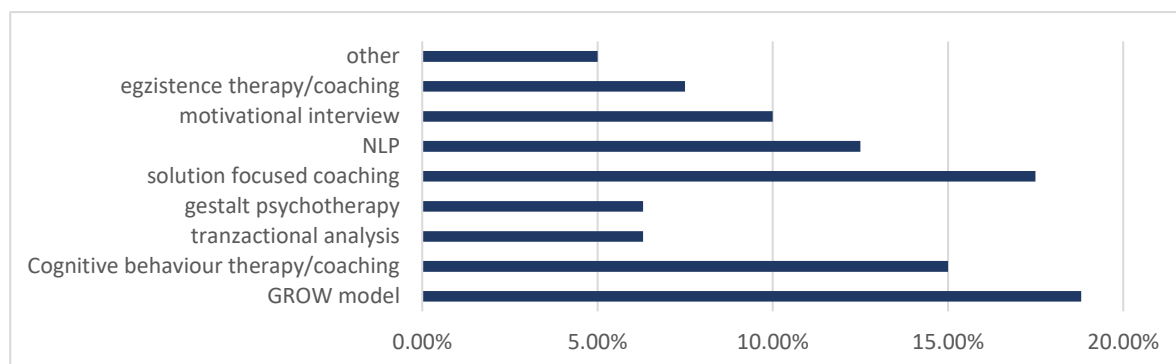
If we analyse session approaches used in the coaching practise, we will see that most of all popular method is behavioural and GROW model. This marks more than 64% Baltic State coaches, around 59% of Europe coaches and around 69% by UK coaches (see Picture No 12).



Picture 12. Coaching practise models, %

The second model and approach would be Solution-focused model and it marks by more than 55% of Baltic State coaches.

If we analyse this data looking for concrete Lithuania situation we would see that most dominated practise model would be the GROW model and this was marked by 18,8% of coaches. The second place would take Solution focused coaching and this was marked by 17,5% of coaches in Lithuania (see Picture No. 13).



Picture 13. Coaching practice models of Lithuanian coaches, %

This data shows that Lithuanian coaches' used models are similar to European countries or UK coaches.

If we look at the results by different approaches and model which are used analysing and working with different client issues, we can see three main and dominated results which are presented in the Table No 1.

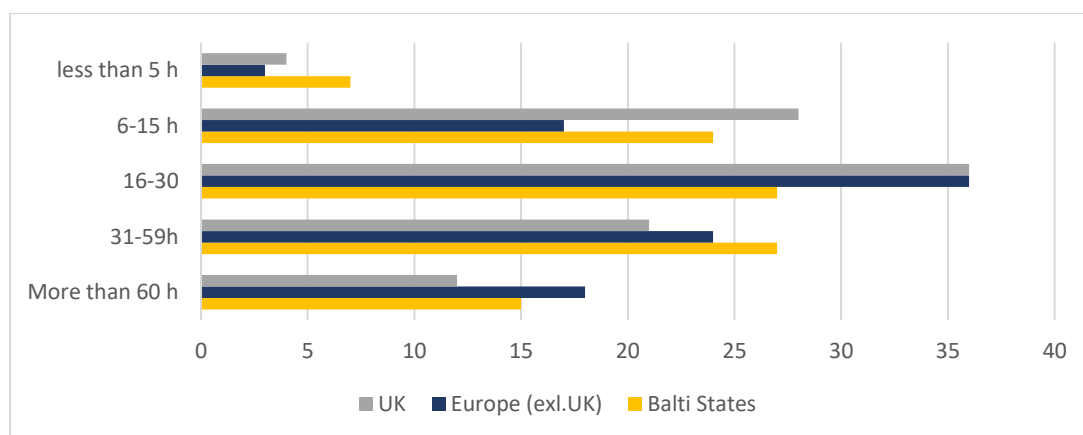
Table 1. What model is used with the following presenting issue, %

	BALTIC STATES	EUROPE COUNTRIES	LT
Career change			
<i>Behavioural/GROW</i>	48%	43%	29,8%
<i>Solution focused</i>	39%	28%	21,3%
<i>Motivational interviewing</i>	18%	15%	14,9%
Workplace stress			
<i>Cognitive behavioural coaching</i>	34%	24%	21,3%
<i>NLP</i>	27%	14%	14,9%
<i>Behavioural/GROW</i>	19%	17%	12,8%
<i>Gestalt therapy</i>	17%	9%	14,9%
Improving presentation skills			
<i>Behavioural/GROW</i>	39%	30%	22,9%
<i>NLP</i>	28%	16%	20%

<i>Solution focused</i>	26%	17%	11,4%
<i>Cognitive behaviour therapy/coaching</i>	16%	17%	14,3%
Persistent checking of non-work emails			
<i>Cognitive behavioural coaching</i>	24%	22%	24%
<i>Behavioural/GROW</i>	22%	21%	16%
<i>NLP</i>	17%	12%	20%

This data shows that cognitive behaviour therapy and gestalt therapy as a new approach comes for the Lithuanian coach workplace stress and improving presentation skills to be solved. Other answer are statistically quite similar.

If we would look about coaching specialists self-development and continuous professional development (CDP), we will see that more than 27% of Baltic states coaches invests from 16 to 60 hours for personal development and 15% of coaches invests more than 60 hours (see Picture 14).



Picture 14. Time invested in continuous professional development, %

Other data shows that respondents from Baltic States keeps up to date the knowledge, skills and competences in coaching practise. According the research information, more than 64% of respondents in Baltic States reads coaching books, 62% attends in professional networking events, 55% - attends in short courses in coaching skills and 58% - attends in coaching conferences (see Picture No. 15).

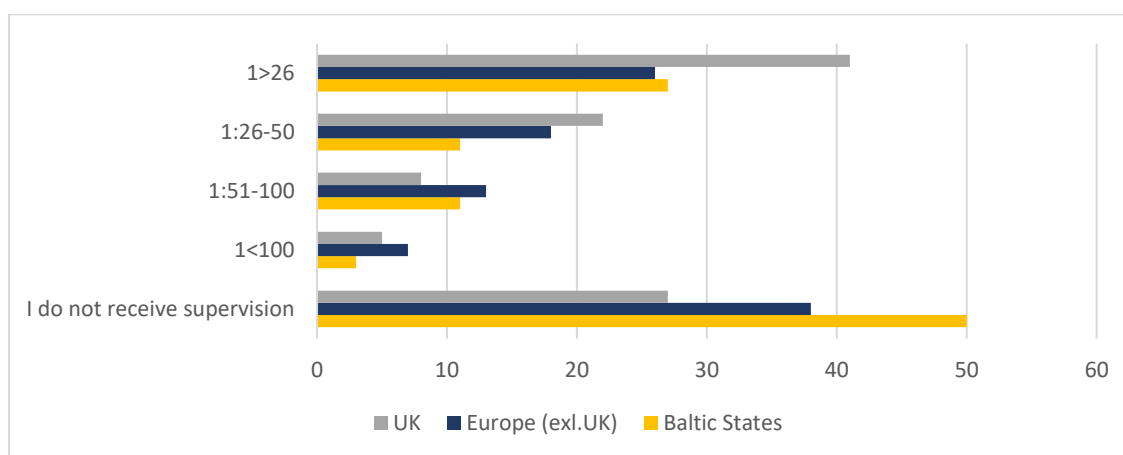


Picture 15. Keeping up to date, %

This data allows concluding that self-education and time delivered for self-development is in quite high range for the coaches of Baltic States and maybe because it is much more financial appropriate method.

However, ICF has published an Ethical code for coaches, which regulates professional work and relationship, coaching process and standards as well as the International Coach Competencies. It suggests that to be able to think ethically about their work, coaches should reflect on their work (Bachkirova, Smith, 2015). One method recommended by the EMCC is supervision. Supervision in helping professions traditionally means meetings of individuals or a group of professionals with a qualified supervisor, who helps their clients with challenging topics or develops their skills in the profession (Watkins, 2017). Supervision plays a number of roles, both developmental; helping coaches in their continuous professional development, and supervisory, helping coaches adhere to ethical and professional standards (Hawkins & Turner, 2017). Supervision thus plays the role of a guaranty for clients that they are receiving a high quality service (Hodge, 2016; Passmore et al., 2018). There are also other methods of reflection apart from formal supervision such as peer practice groups (Kovacs, Corrie, 2017). These approaches may vary in their focus with a stronger focus on the professional development or providing mutual support.

Received Lithuanian coaches' answers to question "How often the coach receives formal coaching supervision?" data shows that less than 50% of Baltic States coaches do not receive any formal supervisions. Meanwhile UK coaches receive supervision in between from 1 to 26 sessions and this number was marked by a little bit more than 41% of UK coaches (see Picture No. 16).

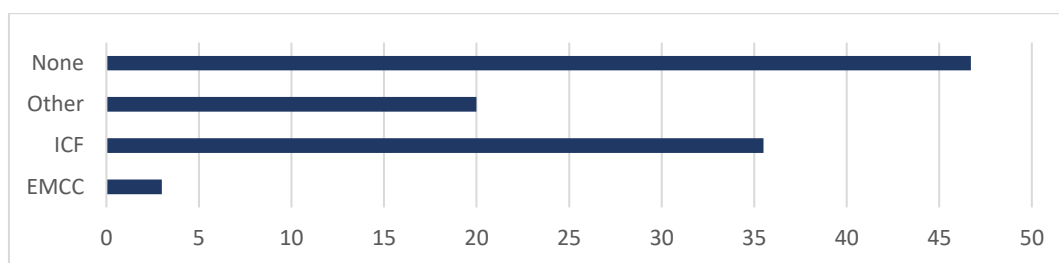


Picture 16. Frequently of supervisions (based on ration of 1 hour of supervision per X hours of coaching)

Despite such supervision statistics, data also shows that coaches in Baltic states gives a lot of attention for personal professional development and participates in various events and conferences.

3.4. Belonging to authoritative associations and organizations

Only 35.5% of coaches who had participated in this research belongs to the International Coach Federation ICF Lithuania chapter. 46,7% doesn't belong to any other coaching body, and 20% of participants belongs to other coaching organizations (see Picture No. 17).



Picture 17. Which coaching and mentoring bodies are you a member of, Lithuania respondents, %

We looked to “Other” answer deeper as wanted to know does it means not to belonging to any organization. The answers shows that coaches belongs not only to the ICF association but also to ICTA (ICU) or ICC association and have participated in this research. Therefore, we could conclude that despite the organization exact coach belongs, the coaching questions are important to every specialists and touches them. In addition, it shows that there is seen benefit to belong to any society or institutional organization, and on one hand shows the commerce of establishing such organizations, on other hand the possibility to regulate the profession.

Conclusions

This article has purposefully focused on areas of distinction for the coaching industry in Lithuania compared with the other European countries that took part in the wider study. The coach responses suggests that they are quite likely to use many of the listed coaching approaches or continuous professional development activities in their practice; they have a greater propensity to solicit feedback from the individual client more than from commissioning manager; they are high educated in both non-coaching and coaching education, mostly of them have own businesses, shares their time mostly for individual coaching sessions and trainings, managerial duties and writing, their contracts are discussed mostly verbally and gathers feedback after every session. During the sessions coaches mostly analyses work and personal life questions, and that termination of coaching session terms, responsibilities of different parts and confidentiality is both important for organizational and individual clients in the contract.

Finally, that woman in this profession in Baltic States are dominating as well as in other countries of Europe. What differs from Europe countries, that coaching specialists are quite young in Baltic States and less year experienced, they mostly works with life coaching than organizations and they do not have a lot of supervisions, but spares a lot of time for self-development.

Summarising all this we can say that coaching situation in Lithuania is quite similar to Europe country coaching situation. This can happen for few reasons. On one hand, European coaching culture and its approach bases training schools, which delivers coaching trainings and raises coaches. Such schools highlights quality, high standards and have well-educated specialists, international competencies, self-education and similar approaches for the sessions which is important for the quality. Also invited coaching specialists mostly comes from Europe and especially from UK what by itself forms relevant coaching culture. On other hand, most coaching specialist accepts two languages to read coaching material and self-educate – English and Russian and that by itself regulates relevant approach of coaching.

So coaching in Lithuania is still developing and has many possibilities for making it more acceptable, reachable for organizations and especially for rural business development. It needs better official contracts and regulation, not only verbal agreements and regulation and that coaching in Lithuania is quite similar to European coaching approach.

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