

ANDRES KEPLER

SAILOR · VOLUNTEER MARITIME RESCUER · SMALL CRAFT HARBOUR SPECIALIST STUDENT · FOUNDER OF MERVARE

Estonia · Portfolio: https://mervare.io/andres.kepler · andres@kepler.ee

Estonian sailor, yacht owner and volunteer maritime rescuer, studying to become a Small Craft Harbour Specialist. I founded **Mervare** (https://mervare.io), an early-stage maritime platform that connects small harbours with recreational sailors. Building it showed me that understanding harbour users was not enough — I needed to understand how harbours are run: daily operations, infrastructure, safety, maintenance, staffing, customer service and the business itself. **That is the direct reason I enrolled in the Small Craft Harbour Specialist programme in Hiiumaa, Estonia, in September 2026.**

Seeking: an Erasmus+ vocational placement in a working Portuguese marina · April 2027 · approximately three weeks, subject to school and host arrangements.

ERASMUS+ PLACEMENT — WHAT I WANT TO LEARN

1. Daily marina and small craft harbour operations
2. Vessel reception and berthing assistance
3. Customer service for visiting sailing crews
4. Harbour infrastructure and maintenance
5. Maritime safety and emergency preparedness
6. Environmental protection and pollution-response procedures
7. Working alongside experienced harbour staff

I want to learn by taking part in real operational work, under the supervision of the marina's staff — on the pontoons, in the office and on the water, wherever the work is.

Portugal's Atlantic harbours work in conditions the Baltic does not have: tides of a few metres, ocean swell and river-mouth entrances. Learning there would show me harbour work I cannot see at home. My longer-term goal is to bring what I learn back to small harbours in Estonia and the wider Baltic region.

What I bring aboard

- Estonian Small Craft Skipper Certificate and Marine VHF Short Range Certificate (SRC)
- SAR Level I and II training, as a regular member of Juminda SAR and a guest member of Pärispea SAR
- About 2,000 nautical miles under the keel so far, with hands-on berthing and mooring aboard Moi
- Safe teamwork and practical seamanship, built on rescue crews and aboard my own yacht

My focus during the placement is to learn directly from experienced marina staff. I come as a vocational trainee: to take part in the daily work, follow the marina's procedures and take home practical skills.

MARITIME CERTIFICATES

Estonian Small Craft Skipper Certificate
CERTIFICATE

Marine VHF Short Range Certificate (SRC)
CERTIFICATE

Search and Rescue (SAR) Level I
TRAINING COMPLETED

Search and Rescue (SAR) Level II
TRAINING COMPLETED

VOLUNTEER MARITIME RESCUE

Juminda SAR, Estonia
REGULAR MEMBER

Pärispea SAR, Estonia
GUEST MEMBER

Volunteer maritime search and rescue groups on the north coast of Estonia; membership is voluntary and unpaid. Preparedness, teamwork, safety awareness, emergency communication and responsibility.

SAILING

Owner and skipper of Moi, an Albin Accent 26 (26-foot sailing yacht), home port Hara Harbour, northern Estonia. About 2,000 nautical miles under the keel so far.

- Sailed the Muhu Väin Regatta aboard Moi.
- Volunteer organiser of the Hara Regatta.
- Navigation, passage planning, berthing and mooring, vessel care.

INTERNATIONAL HARBOUR VISITS

Personal visits on my own initiative, to see how other harbours work.

Portugal, Atlantic coast · October 2026

Travelled along much of Portugal's western coastline, visiting harbours and marinas independently, including Viana do Castelo, Figueira da Foz, Nazaré and Cascais.

Marina de Viana, Viana do Castelo: introduced myself as a maritime vocational student and contacted the marina operator about a possible practical placement. *Not confirmed — the operator has not accepted a placement.*

Conwy, Wales, United Kingdom

Visited a strongly tidal harbour to see how tidal range — metres here, centimetres in the Baltic — shapes vessel access, mooring arrangements and harbour operations.

Estonia · home waters

Hara Harbour, home port of my yacht, on Hara Bay between the Juminda and Pärispea peninsulas.

MARITIME INDUSTRY

METSTRADE 2026, Amsterdam · 17–19 November 2026

METSTRADE (https://www.metstrade.com) is an international trade exhibition for marine equipment and the recreational marine industry, held in Amsterdam. Attended to learn about harbour infrastructure and marina operations and to build international maritime contacts, including conversations with **Raymarine** (https://www.raymarine.com), a manufacturer of marine electronics and navigation technology, and **ICOMIA**, the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (https://www.icomia.org).

Themes: Navigation equipment and marine electronics; Marina management systems; Harbour infrastructure; Maritime data quality and interoperability; Marina operators' operational requirements. Exploratory conversations to learn and make contacts — not partnerships or commercial agreements.

EDUCATION

Small Craft Harbour Specialist

Level 4 vocational education · 2026 – present
Hiiumaa Gümnaasium ja Rakenduslik Kolledž (HIIG+), Hiiumaa, Estonia — https://www.hak.edu.ee

Focus: Harbour operations, maritime safety, harbour infrastructure, service organisation, environmental requirements, practical maritime activities.

Bachelor's Degree in Business Management

Estonian Business School, Tallinn, Estonia · graduated June 2026 — https://www.ebs.ee

LANGUAGES

Estonian
NATIVE

English
FLUENT

Russian
A2

BACKGROUND

My earlier career was in technology, most recently in site reliability engineering — the discipline of keeping critical systems running: preparation, written procedures, incident response and clear communication under pressure. They are the same habits harbour operations and sea rescue depend on.

Maritime portfolio with photographs: https://mervare.io/andres.kepler · Mervare: https://mervare.io