

Sustainable tourism – mission (im)possible



Image caption: Fisherman's Ethnographic Homestead in [Neringa](#) (Lithuania)

<http://visitneringa.com/en/what-to-see/museums/fisherman-s-ethnographic-homestead-in-nida>



Image caption: New rest houses in [Neringa](#)

(Lithuania) <https://www.booking.com/hotel/lt/nidos-namai-nida.en-gb.html>

The objects are located in Curonian Spit (Lithuania), which Outstanding Universal Value is recognized by Unesco in the world's heritage list:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/122019>

The Curonian Spit is a unique and vulnerable, sandy and wooded cultural landscape on a coastal spit which features small Curonian lagoon settlements. The Spit was formed by the sea, wind and human activity and continues to be shaped by them. Rich with an abundance of unique natural and cultural features, it has retained its social and cultural importance. Local communities adapted to the changes in the natural environment in order to survive. This interaction between humans and nature shaped the Curonian Spit cultural landscape (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/>)

CONTENT

General overview	3
Wind, waves and the human. Activity overview	4
1st activity “Social responsibility vs or & legal requirements”	5
2st activity “Preservation vs evolution”	9
Resources	12

General overview

Over the last decades, tourism has become one of the leading socio-economic sectors in the world today. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) states that in 2018 there were a record 1.4bn international tourist arrivals, a rise of 6% over 2017. There are opportunities for new business establishments, working places, improvement of livelihoods, renewal of places and communities, and the promotion of natural and cultural heritage if tourism is properly managed.

Among the different motivations for travelling, visiting cultural sites and discovering local customs and traditions rank high on traveler's list (e.g. initiative GiUnesco: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNjQ4jAOkVU>) tourism thus forms an important component of international tourism and can contribute to ensure the conservation of heritage, foster mutual understanding and a sense of pride in host communities.

Tourism also has a special, two-way relationship with the environment. On the one hand, it is an industry bound to territory, dependent on the national, regional and local resources of a country. The quality of the environment is essential, as this is very often what attracts people to visit a place, and persuades them to return. Evidence of this can be found in the 2016 edition of the EU Eurobarometer [survey](#) on Europeans' preferences on tourism, confirming that nature and landscape remain predominant factors in choosing holiday destinations, while the quality of natural features continues to be the main reason for wanting to return to the same place. On the other hand, tourism has major impacts on the environment, not least due to the sheer size of the industry. It is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing economic sectors.

To ensure that tourism is used effectively as a tool for cultural preservation, the World Tourism Organization is working closely with the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme to create an international framework for sustainable tourism management at world heritage sites. Considering that more than 40% of the world heritage sites listed by UNESCO are in Europe and that seven out of the ten most visited countries in the world are European, the safeguarding of these sites needs the contribution of each of us. European policy, social responsibility, interest of different social groups will be explored within this exercise.

References:

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284416608>

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/599327/EPRS_BRI\(2017\)599_327_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/599327/EPRS_BRI(2017)599_327_EN.pdf)

Wind, waves and the human. Activity overview

All the exercises in this workbook are designed to improve the competencies of those working or future workers of the tourism and related sectors, which can help to attract more clients, properly meet their expectations and needs, and contribute to business development. However, what impact tourism has on the uniqueness of the sites to be visited, the areas to be protected, what are the interests of social groups in society today - business or nature lovers, is it possible to find a compromise – the activities described within this exercise invites to learn about and discuss this topic.

The exercise consists of 2 activities. In the first part, students will be introduced to the rules valid for visitors to protected areas. By examining them, students will have the opportunity to learn more about their designation - why the rules are applied, what is sought effect of them, why they can be (non-)convenient to tourists, and how different wording can increase their effectiveness. During the activities of this exercise, students will be able to discover that in order to explain a topic - a rule to other people, we learn a lot of new and useful things ourselves.

The second activity will provide the opportunity for students to develop the knowledge acquired in the first part of the exercise. By participating in debates between representatives of different interest groups, students will get acquainted with the relevant national and European Union legislation, look for practical examples to substantiate the benefits of their interests, learn the principles of constructive dialogue and compromise relevant to the individual, group, personal or social interests.

General objective:

- to encourage students to become aware of the policy of world heritage protection;
- to raise awareness for the cultural heritage preservation necessity;
- to help to understand the impact of the human activities for the sustainability of cultural heritage sites.

The activity can be applied for the VET students of various programmes during the subject related to [#literacy](#), [#foreign languages](#), [#law](#), [#environmental protection](#), [#social sciences related subjects](#).

Descriptive activity sheet

1st activity “Social responsibility vs or & legal requirements”

Resources for the activity implementation. Internet, computer, white board.

Activity starts by introducing the situation, the students have to empathize with:

Imagine the situation: you are representative of the Curonian Spit national park Nida visitors centre. Today you received a visitor who wonders not only about do's and don'ts, announced in the infostands of the park, but also wants to understand the background of it. He is not sure about the necessity of them, because they make barriers for his planned experiences (he is a nature photographer).

Use the list provided here <http://visitneringa.com/en/information/park-information> and provide a short and clear explanation for him – why are they here and what circumstances can cause prohibited actions? What could be other means able to encourage the awareness of the students? The explanation about the legal requirements should also reflect a common social responsibility attitude to help the visitor to understand the need to keep the rules not only because of fine but also understand the need for the preservation of the object.

To encourage the student's interest on the topic of the exercise and help the student to understand the importance of sustainable tourism policy teacher should offer to watch these video, and discuss with the students about it:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/venice-italy-threatened-mass-tourism-unesco-world-heritage-site-in-danger/>

<https://www.thebrooke.org/news/responsible-tourism-campaign-tackles-issues-world-heritage-site>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-earth-day-britain-nature/as-wildlife-revels-virus-lockdowns-put-british-nature-reserves-at-risk-idUSKCN2240M9>

To provide the explanation students have to fill the table:

The rule	Results of tourists activities according to the rules	Results of tourists activities non-compliance with the rules	Other possible means (side to or instead of fines) to encourage tourist to follow the rules
Prohibited driving away from the hard road coverings (paving asphalt, concrete or macadam), to park	E.g. Maintenance of the natural landscape, no harm for vegetation.	E.g. Damaged natural landscape and its vegetation. Step by step, 5 years after, tourist could not be	E.g. Visualisation of possible consequences of prohibited acts: “Before” – “After”

motor vehicles at the places not intended for that		able to see unique plants typical to this area.	

To increase the focus on developing students' communication skills the following activity can be added:

Discuss with the class:

What is a polite way to tell people about policies or rules? What can make it more effective:

- focusing on the thing;
- not accusing the person directly;
- giving another option;
- politely tone.

E.g. What sounds better: You can't park your car here *or* parking isn't permitted here?

Why? One sounds aggressive or like a personal attack; the other sounds neutral.

Why is it more polite to focus on the thing or action than on the person?

Because the person might not be aware of the rule, and it separates the person from the activity.

Discuss and identify the nouns or actions in the rules they just came up with, the policy and an option, if needed. Write on the board like the following:

Noun	Activity	Policy	Option
	parking away from the hard road coverings	is prohibited	but You can park in the signed parking areas.
Dogs	walking without dog-leads and muzzles	are not allowed	The dogs can be walked with the dog-leads and muzzle.

Result of the activity.

A table has been completed explaining the reasons for and consequences of the existing rules and making concrete proposals to encourage tourists to comply with them.

Recommendations for the teacher:

- The task could be organized individually also as a group work by the need (according to the entry level of the students).
- This task is based on the rules valid in a cultural heritage site in the country of its authors. Depending on the needs of the class / learning, it can be adapted using the rules for visiting any other relevant cultural heritage site.
- Encourage students to surf the internet and look for the textual or visual information that can illustrate the statements provided in the table.
- Think on other rules that can be actual to preserve this site.
- Offer the class to debate and choose the most convincing ideas / means that can work most efficiently to encourage tourists to follow the rules. The visualization of them can add additional value to this activity and lead to the deeper involvement of the students into the task/ awareness in cultural heritage sustainability policy.

This activity should help students to get acquainted with the local / EU policy to ensure the sustainability in the protected areas and possible negative effect of the uncontrolled mass tourism also develop these [key competences](#):

Literacy competence, by developing their skills:

- to communicate and connect effectively with others, in an appropriate, creative and convincing way;
- to use different types of sources, to search for, collect and process information.

Personal, social and learning to learn competence, by developing their skills:

- to act under the code of conduct and rules of communication generally accepted in the class group activities;
- collaborate in teams and negotiate showing tolerance, expressing and understanding different viewpoints.

Citizenship competence, by developing their skills:

- awareness of the aims, values and policies of sustainable at the global level and their underlying causes;
- to engage effectively with others in common or public interest;
- to express support for sustainable lifestyle and to take responsibility for the environment.

The evaluation of the activities of this stage:

Based on the tasks of this activity, we suggest a number of assessment criteria that may be applicable during this stage.

1. Assessment in relation to the requirements of the particular subject (Law: ability to explain the rule. Literacy: ability to describe the measure)

2. The whole task can be evaluated in the frame of group workflow – are the students involved in the activity, do they understand the task and can present their findings during it. The main criteria of such task evaluation should be presented to the class:

- Completeness of the statements / measure;
- Illustration of the statement / measure;
- Integrated approach on the social responsibility and legal requirements.

3. Use / refinement of skills attributed to specific key competences areas during this exercise also ability to apply the pre- and gained knowledge of different subjects:

Recommended evaluation of the skills related to the literacy competence:

- statements and suggestions formulated in correct, logical and convincing way;
- the statements are based on facts.

Recommended evaluation of the skills related to the personal, social and learning to learn competence:

- active participation in the class debates following the code of conduct and rules of communication generally accepted in the class group activities;
- demonstration of the ability to collaborate in teams and negotiate showing tolerance, expressing and understanding different viewpoints.

Recommended evaluation of the skills related to citizenship competence:

- ability to express and describe the awareness of the aims, values and policies of sustainable at the global level and their underlying causes;
- ability to plan and describe the effective means in common or public interest.

2st activity “Preservation vs evolution”

Resources of the activity. Network, computer, projector, white board.

Activity starts by introducing the situation, the students have to empathize with. You are representative of one of the following groups (class has to be divided into 4 groups):

Group 1: group of the modern architects “We need modernism here – the world moves forward” or businessmen eager to build a modern restaurant/hotel “it is 21st century outside the window!”

Group 2: group of the conservative architects “We need to protect this pearl from the past – nothing can’t be changed” or representatives of protected area “People come to see the uniqueness of this place, not the sites of the modern world”.

Group 3: local inhabitants – “We are tired to live in a museum”.

Group 4: group of tourists – “It’s a really nice place to visit!”

Use the information explored in the 1st activity and prepare for debates.

After the debates are finished, write the main statements of each group on board and try to identify:

Is it possible to find a common, win-win solution for all or part of them?

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Possible general solution(-s)

Result of the activity.

Prepared and implemented debates, formulated conclusion and decision for the future steps.

Recommendations for the teacher:

- The debates can be organized in a national or foreign language according to the goal/ topic of the lesson.
- Choose one of the topics for group 1 or 2 according to the program/ subject of a particular class.
- Examples of the debates organization You can find here:
 - ✓ <https://www.esldebates.com/a-teachers-guide-the-basics-of-a-classroom-debate/>
 - ✓ <https://www.euroclio.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Learning-to-Disagree-Teachers-Guide-2020.pdf>
 also, there are lots of information in national EU languages about it. Examples of on-line debates You can find here: <https://www.debatingeurope.eu/>.
- According to the main topic of the exercise we recommend to direct the students to explore the subject by investigating 2 main directions: legal database of country and EU, which can help or put a barrier for their arguments and also positive or negative examples of nationally or internationally preserved sites, which was affected by one of these groups.

- According to the needs and goals of the lesson the debates activity can be substituted in essay writing or preparation of the poster for the strike, organized by one of these groups – in this case we recommend to explore the topic also in this additional direction: What are the main national requirements for the strike organization? What are legal requirements, the group, initiating the strike, should follow?

This activity should help students to broaden their knowledge about legal requirements valid in the preserved sites, explore topic from the different points of view, develop skills to substantiate their statements with legal arguments and practical examples also develop these [key competences](#):

Literacy competence/ Multilingual competence, by developing their skills:

- to identify, understand, interpret facts and opinions in written and oral form;
- to use the different types of sources - legal databases, articles, researches;
- to find and use visual and digital materials across disciplines and contexts, in a national and foreign language;
- to distinguish and use different types of sources supporting their arguments;
- to formulate and express findings and arguments in a convincing way appropriate to the context, demonstrate critical thinking and ability to assess information;
- to understand and use language in a positive and socially responsible manner.

Personal, social and learning to learn competence, by developing their skills:

- to work with others in a constructive way;
- to focus, deal with complexity, critically reflect and make decisions;
- to communicate constructively, collaborate in team and negotiate also show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints.

Citizenship competence, by developing their skills:

- to think critically and apply problem solving skills;
- to obtain and apply the knowledge of basic concepts and phenomena relating individuals, groups, work organisations, society, economy and culture;
- to seek solutions and respond to the needs of different social groups and sustainable social development policies;
- the ability to engage effectively with others in common or public interest, including the sustainable development of society;
- to develop arguments for constructive participation in community activities, as well as provide proposals for local, national and European level decisions.

The evaluation of the activities of this stage:

Based on the tasks of this activity, we suggest a number of assessment criteria that may be applicable during this stage.

1. Assessment in relation to the requirements of the particular subject (Foreign language: ability to formulate statements and express them. Law: ability to find and apply the proper legislation, find the possible decisions based on it. Subject related to environmental protection: ability to apply the knowledge/ reflect the topic related arguments within the debates).

2. The whole task can be evaluated in the frame of the debate process. The main criteria of such task evaluation should be agreed to be presented to the class. Examples of it can be found here:

https://www.niu.edu/facdev/_pdf/guide/strategies/classroom_debate_rubric.pdf

https://www.academia.edu/2712164/The_How_and_Why_of_Debates_in_Teaching_and_Assessment

3. Use / refinement of skills attributed to specific key competences areas during this exercise also ability to apply the pre- and gained knowledge of different subjects:

**Recommended evaluation of the skills related to the literacy competence/
multilingual competence:**

- the presented findings are in line with the provided task/topic;
- different reliable sources are used to collect information;
- students are able to motivate reasonably their arguments;
- the provided info is essential, clear, valid and systemized;
- the provided arguments are related to the discussion flow.

Recommended evaluation of the skills related to the personal, social and learning to learn competence:

- constructive participation in a group work is showed;
- tolerance, understanding different viewpoints are showed;
- a problem solving attitude is demonstrated during the debates session.

Recommended evaluation of the skills related to the citizenship competence:

- critical thinking and problem solving skills were demonstrated;
- arguments reflecting constructive participation in community activities of a particular social group, as well as proposals for local, national and European level decisions are formulated and expressed clearly;
- awareness of national / Europe sustainable development policy is demonstrated;
- knowledge of basic concepts and phenomena relating individuals, groups, work organisations, society, economy and culture are demonstrated;
- eagerness to participate constructively and to seek solutions respond to the needs of different social groups also in line with sustainable societal development policies can be identified;
- the ability to engage effectively with others in common or public interest, including the sustainable development of society.

Resources

<https://www.historytoday.com/history-matters/whats-point-unesco>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jan/31/more-than-100-natural-world-heritage-sites-degraded-by-human-activity-says-report>

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable_en

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/science-update/natural-world-heritage-sites-under-severe-pressure-human-activities>

<https://owhc2019krakow.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/sustainable-tourism.pdf>

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/factors/>

https://www.unesco.lt/uploads/file/failai_VEIKLA/kultura/Pasaulio_paveldas%20Lietuvoje/n_erijs_dok/curonian_spit_nomination_EN.pdf

Why many World Heritage sites are at risk ([The Economist](#))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-K079txZe8>

<https://www.thebrooke.org/news/responsible-tourism-campaign-tackles-issues-world-heritage-site>