

# SWOT-Analyses Compendium

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AGORA 2.0 - WP5 Project Partners



**Baltic Sea Region**  
Programme 2007-2013

Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument)

[eu.baltic.net](http://eu.baltic.net)



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## 1.0 Introduction to the SWOT-Analyses Compendium

The purpose of having every WP5 project partner to make a SWOT-analysis is to elucidate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the individual WP5 organization. The exercise should help contribute to a more holistic understanding of the organization such that areas of excellence or mediocrity would become evident. When the organization has a deep understanding of every area of operation, it empowers it to exploit strengths and improve weak points. Achieving this makes the organization more ready to face the opportunities or threats that the environment imposes.

A serious contribution from each WP5 project partner is the foundation for such an immense publication as the compendium has turned out to be. Most of the project partners have worked on their SWOT-analyses since the first presentation of these at a workshop at Copenhagen Business School in September 2010. During the past year project partners have had the opportunity to present their work at various meetings or get feedback from Copenhagen Business School via phone/e-mail.

Gathering all the WP5 project partners' SWOT-analyses into one publication should help facilitating knowledge sharing. WP5 consists of very different organizations, but they may still be able to learn from each other, as many of them are facing the same opportunities or threats. Furthermore, the publication can help facilitate communication and troubleshooting among the WP5 project partners, as everybody knows which issues the different organizations are dealing with.

# Castles



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## 2.0 Häme Castle

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### 2.1 Introduction

Häme Castle is one of Finland's medieval royal castles. It is believed to have been built at the end of the 13th century, following the crusade by Swedish Earl Birger to Häme region. During the Middle Ages the original fortified camp was built into a residential castle for its commandant. In the 18th century a third storey was built and curtain wall buildings partly replaced the original outer walls. The castle and its surroundings were in prison use from 1837 to 1972. The main castle is now presented as a historical monument.



Häme Castle and its redbrick barracks are on the shore of Lake Vanajavesi. The promontory has been a meeting place for centuries.

(Source: [http://www.nba.fi/en/hame\\_castle](http://www.nba.fi/en/hame_castle))

## 2.2 SWOT-Analysis

### ECONOMY AND RESOURCES

(=structure of staff, facilities and use of them, activities and process of action)

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The only Medieval brick Castle in Northern Europe</li> <li>• Good professional skills to lead the Castle</li> <li>• Summer guides are well-educated students of history</li> <li>• Developed organizing of Castle's events</li> <li>• Events are regular (Europe Day, Three Castles Epiphany, Easter Market, Christmas Market and theme guidings)</li> <li>• Versatile, international and high quality exhibition management</li> <li>• State run castle, good sponsors reasonable price of entrance fee</li> <li>• Four museums in the same castle hill area, regular staff meetings, combined entrance ticket to the castle and three museums, marketing co-operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent non-professional staff is occasionally not committed to work</li> <li>• Lack of long term exhibition plans</li> <li>• Summer guides work only short periods of time (New ones have to be educated every year)</li> <li>• Structure of staff is incorrect (number of non-professional staff is higher than professional staff)</li> <li>• State program of productivity (reduce of number of personal)</li> <li>• Money from the state budget is depending on economic situation</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique facilities to arrange events etc.</li> <li>• Co-operation between the Castle and Hämeenlinna Historical Museum, Prison Museum and The Artillery Museum of Finland</li> <li>• Different EU-projects</li> <li>• Development plan and vision of Castle Hill gives the castle and three museums the tools to co-operate and make a brand of Castle hill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diminishing funds in National Board of Antiquities budget</li> <li>• Diminishing funds of sponsor's budgets</li> <li>• Facilities and areas are in a poor shape because of that the castle doesn't have enough money for conservation work</li> <li>• The force to increase the entrance fee</li> <li>• Sponsors are hard to get</li> </ul>

<b>Conclusions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the non-professional staff to participate to the planning of events and happenings, arrange and take part to the different kind of event organizing seminars. More economical and other responsibility to the staff to arrange events.</li> <li>• Long-term sponsorship agreements both for events and exhibitions.</li> <li>• Organizing events that are economically profitable, sustainable and give good image to the castle and partners.</li> <li>• To make it possible for the permanent staff to increase their skills by education and field trips.</li> <li>• To found an exhibition work group to make an exhibition strategy to the castle and make an exhibition plan for 3-4 years.</li> <li>• To increase and develop the co-operation of the castles' staff.</li> <li>• Since the castle and three museums all have a little of money for marketing, co-operation is needed and everyone benefit from it.</li> <li>• We need a product to market and that product is Castle Hill (=castle and three museums), marketing plan has to be made with co-operation with professional marketing people with good knowledge of history.</li> <li>• If the entrance fee has to cover all the expenses of castle, the amount of visitors will sink.</li> <li>• The politicians must recognize the value of the castle and we have to network with the local and national politicians.</li> </ul>

### PROCESSES AND ORGANIZATION

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer guides' education is well-organized, regular, versatile and has high quality.</li> <li>• Self-organized events have high quality with many visitors, whose feedback is positive.</li> <li>• Co-operation with the restaurant and other event organizers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent non-professional staff won't participate actively in the summer guides' education.</li> <li>• Permanent non-professional staff won't participate actively in organizing events.</li> <li>• Lack of research of the castle's history</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of National Board of Antiquities supports the change, which is happening in the castle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of events decreases.</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are premises and Management's support to development.</li> <li>• Education plan for the professional staff has to be done and motivating the permanent non-professional staff to participate more in events.</li> <li>• Education plan for non-professional staff has to be done.</li> <li>• Lifelong learning.</li> <li>• The castle doesn't have resources to use volunteers in castle's daily work since we do not have the capacity to educate volunteers (only 3 professional=historians staff members).</li> </ul>	

### CLIENTS, NETWORKS AND INFLUENCY

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-organized networks exist already (Hämeen Linnan Ravintolat Oy, City of Hämeenlinna, Hämeen Sanomat, Hämeen Matkailu, The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea-members, Agora 2.0)</li> <li>Good relationships and network in National Board of Antiquities.</li> <li>More than 100,000 visitors yearly.</li> <li>Häme castle is well-known regionally, nationally and internationally.</li> <li>Exhibition activities increase historical knowledge of visitors.</li> <li>Cooperation with others (culture, sport, school) is good and long lasting.</li> <li>Coordinator Anne Parikka has excellent network with politicians and Finnish society.</li> <li>The castle has own websites, <a href="http://www.nba.fi">www.nba.fi</a> and is participating many other websites (<a href="http://www.fort.fi">www.fort.fi</a>, <a href="http://www.baltic-castles.org">www.baltic-castles.org</a>) and some of the exhibitions are on internet (Facebook)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Networking is too dependent on the coordinator.</li> <li>Lack of marketing allowance in budget.</li> <li>Castle's websites are old fashioned.</li> <li>Every potential client has not access to the internet.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development plan of networking (exhibitions).</li> <li>Increasing marketing and communication.</li> <li>Marketing and communication strategy.</li> <li>Increasing the number of visitors by using social media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diminishing amount of sponsorships in exhibitions.</li> <li>Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.) can be misused.</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole staff participates in networking.</li> <li>The castle's recognizability is good.</li> <li>Marketing allowance has to be added to budget and marketing and communication strategy has to be done.</li> <li>Professional person with knowledge of history to take care of marketing and communication.</li> <li>Most of the visitors are well educated ladies in their 50's, by the social media we could get teenagers and young adults to get interested in history and the castle.</li> </ul>	

### PROFESSION, WORKING ABILITY

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secretaries are educated to their profession.</li> <li>Coordinator is able to cooperate and to run, develop and organize castle's operation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent non-professional staff has not got historical understanding and they have a lack concerning the will to further education.</li> </ul>



Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibilities to self-development and the will to learn are good (life long learning) and the will to do so among the younger members of the staff is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some of the members of the staff are getting old, which decreases ability to work.</li> <li>• Muutosvastarinta = opposition to changes in the castle and National Board of Antiquities.</li> </ul>
Conclusions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to motivate the staff to keep their physical condition good. By organizing possibilities to exercise (swimming, gym etc.) and paying partly the costs, the castle is preventing musculoskeletal diseases of the staff. To organize lectures in ergonomics is way of teaching the staff good practices in their daily work.</li> <li>• To increase evaluation of work and to be proud of the work that has been well done, increase the good spirit among staff members (we did it), flow phenomenon.</li> <li>• Staff learns to appreciate each other's work and support each other.</li> <li>• To be open minded and honest.</li> </ul>	

### SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland is the best country in the world (Newsweek August 2010).</li> <li>• Well-organized Education.</li> <li>• History is highly valued by the Finns and the knowledge of History is good.</li> <li>• Social and Economical gaps between Finns are not relevant.</li> <li>• The Castle is an important attraction and the entrance fee is very suitable.</li> <li>• The Castle is owned by the State of Finland.</li> <li>• Finns speak several languages.</li> <li>• Häme Castle is partner in many EU projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Budget is given by the Ministry of Education and Culture.</li> <li>• The Castle location geographically is not very significant (100 km northwest from Helsinki).</li> <li>• Schools are not able to use the Castle in teaching because the lack of money.</li> <li>• The cost of living is high.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castle is a wanted partner in many kinds of co operations, networks and projects.</li> <li>• Multi-culture has always been Häme Castle's policy.</li> <li>• The Castle is not only a tourist attraction but a history learning center.</li> <li>• Finland is a safe country to visit and travel (clean climate, beautiful nature, peaceful country, exotics).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economical depression.</li> <li>• Climate change.</li> <li>• Terrorism and vandalism.</li> <li>• Closeness to the railways (transportation of chemicals etc.)</li> <li>• Change of economic, social and political values.</li> <li>• Decreasing budget.</li> </ul>
Conclusions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Heritage must be taken care of in spite of the threats.</li> <li>• International co-operation has important role and should be increased.</li> <li>• State-owned Castle has a certain security and continuity, but at the same time the changes in political, economic and social climate can affect the castle more than other non-state-owned tourist attractions.</li> </ul>	

#### Final conclusions:

Häme castle and Olavinlinna castle are both state-owned and run castles and belong to National Board of Antiquities in Finland. Häme castle together with Olavinlinna castle form Castles Unit. Häme castle and Olavinlinna castle attracted 36.3% of total visitors of all castles and museums of National Board of Antiquities in the year 2009. National Board of Antiquities runs 18 museums and two castles.

Häme castle is lucky to be in Finland, thanks to Swedes that they built the castle. Häme castle is an important local and national symbol and tourist attraction.

Visitors are not only able to see and visit a historical site; they have a chance to learn from local, national and world history and about the everyday life in the castle during different time periods, thus giving them a wider sense of history.

#### Häme castle and challenges of today:



- to achieve nationwide recognition of importance and value not only on emotional but also on economical level
- the restoration work done years ago
- informative and physical accessibility
- Häme castle needs workers who have wide variety of skills and knowledge, not only cleaning or guiding etc. (multitasks)
- economics of the state of Finland affects Häme castle in every way
- EU funds and participation of EU projects
- **Identifying the challenges of tomorrow already today**

### **Häme castle and challenges of tomorrow:**

\* Visitors want more than just a guided tour

- experiences of history through interpretation
- need of workers who have wide variety of skills and knowledge
- changes in political, economical and social climate affects the castle

### **Physical condition of Häme castle:**

- earlier restoration work and maintenance work
- funding
- accessibility (physical & informative)

### **Häme castle needs wider networking and co-operation in spite of the networks we have already**

- local, regional, national and international
- benefits for both castle and tourists
- use of social media (Facebook etc.) and internet

### **PASSAGE FROM INFORMATION SOCIETY TO *INTERPRETATION* SOCIETY**

- theme tours based on historical facts
- special ready-made tour packages for different groups and occasions
- happenings and events based on historical facts

### **Know you history to understand your future!**

**Culture history is part of everyday life and Häme castle turns it into a party!**

## 3.0 Skokloster Castle

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### 3.1 Introduction

Skokloster Castle is located on Lake Mälaren between Stockholm and Uppsala. It was built in the Baroque style between 1654 and 1676 by the wealthy military commander and count Carl Gustaf Wrangel.

Carl Gustaf Wrangel – potentate, fashion freak and big spender – created a stately home of European style at Skokloster. Just like continental princes, he endeavored to understand the world by collecting art and antiques as well as natural specimens. The Armory he stocked with a medley of arms and armor, exotic animals and Indian objects from the New World, America. From Holland he commissioned glittering gilt leather hangings for the state apartments and tools for his lathe workshop. For the Library he purchased maps and travelers’ accounts of faraway countries. He had the Castle’s octagonal towers decorated with models of the universe – armillary spheres.

Skokloster Castle is a listed building and has been a national museum of cultural history since 1967. Professor Ove Hidemark’s groundbreaking restoration has set the tone of present-day heritage conservation – respect for old building techniques and preservation of the atmospheric patina of age.

(Source: <http://sko.lsh.se/default.asp?id=4620&refid=2543>)



### 3.2 SWOT-Analysis

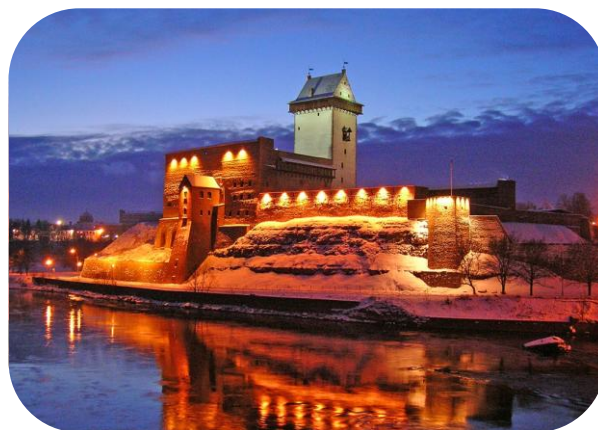
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skokloster Castle has unique artifacts from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.</li> <li>• Skokloster Castle is one of the world's most famous and unique baroque castles.</li> <li>• The interiors of the castle are intact and carefully conceived with the aim of preserving the castle and the environment for future generations.</li> <li>• Skokloster Castle attracts visitors from the whole world.</li> <li>• Vertumnus is one of the most famous paintings in the world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of visitors.</li> <li>• Lack of strategically cooperation – county, business association, networking etc.</li> <li>• The castle has the image of being uninteresting and living its own life, lack of context and difficult to access.</li> <li>• Lack of strategic marketing activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make all the employees interested in the work of making the brand of Skokloster Castle stronger, more attractive and to achieve the goal of getting more visitors.</li> <li>• Increase the number of reasons why you (tourists) should visit Skokloster Castle.</li> <li>• Increase the degree of priority – identify values that have a meaning for the local population, the county and local commercial business.</li> <li>• Developing partnerships that will gain Skokloster Castle coming success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard competition – Skokloster Castle compete against other museums, entertainments, sports activities, people's spare time.</li> <li>• The time is gone, when Skokloster Castle was a part of the history education in school.</li> <li>• Difficulties to prioritize, what is the most important issue – critical needs for Skokloster Castle: Develop the infrastructure, conservation and maintenance together with the national board of property.</li> <li>• Reduced economical support from the state.</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusions</b>	
<p>As Skokloster Castle no longer can rely on a steady amount of students visiting the sight in relation to their history classes at school, a greater amount of tourists have to be attracted. This can be done through increased marketing activities. However, as the economic support from the state is declining it has become vital to establish partnerships. A greater effort of Skokloster Castle has to be put into this activity such that a sound economic base can be established once again. The main purpose of the marketing activities is to get rid of the rather dusty and static image that it seems like the castle is representing at the moment.</p> <p>Furthermore, the internal strategic activities have to be prioritized. Instead of aiming too broad management has to decide on the most vital activities and then carry them out first. Asking the question “<i>What will bring most value to the castle?</i>”, would be very relevant as a beginning.</p>	

## 4.0 Narva Castle

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### 4.1 Introduction

The Narva Museum is one of the oldest museums of Estonia. The historical museum was opened in the palace of Peter I shortly after its acquisition by Narva society members of the Big Guild in 1865. July 22, 1950 was the opening day of the museum in the garrison tower of the Narva castle. In 1986 the first stage of the Narva castle's renovation finished. The Long Hermann tower and the western and southern wings of the castle were opened for visitors. In 1989 the permanent exposition that reflects on the period from 13th



(Source: <http://tourism.narva.ee>)

until 18th century was opened. In 2007 the Northern Yard of the castle was restored and the center of experimental history was opened for public. The center focuses on the reconstruction of 17<sup>th</sup> century (Early Modern Period or the Swedish period) urban life. The Narva Museum consists of two parts – the Narva Castle and the Art Gallery. The latter is situated on the bastion Gloria in the 18<sup>th</sup> century building, which was used for military purposes.

## 4.2 SWOT-Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique geographical position and one half of the unique architectural and historical ensemble. The Narva castle is situated right on the border between Estonia and Russia (EU and Russia, West and East) overlooking the Narva River. It is rather unusual for two fortresses/castles of different architectural styles to be situated so close to each other.</li> <li>• The Narva Castle was rather recently renovated. Since the castle was badly damaged during the WWII, the reconstruction works took place in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – rather recently. The most recent restoration works were done in the Northern Yard. However the eastern wing of the castle is not open for public awaiting its turn.</li> <li>• Recently introduced successful tourist projects – Northern Yard (2007) and Carl Linné Garden (2009). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="http://www.narvamuuseum.ee/pohjao/?menu=eng&amp;next=teadus2010">http://www.narvamuuseum.ee/pohjao/?menu=eng&amp;next=teadus2010</a></li> <li>○ <a href="http://www.narvamuuseum.ee/?lang=eng&amp;next=linnaed&amp;menu=menu_kula">http://www.narvamuuseum.ee/?lang=eng&amp;next=linnaed&amp;menu=menu_kula</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• High quality permanent and temporary exhibitions.</li> <li>• Museum has developed several functions, i.e. place for exhibitions, organization of events (concerts, seminars, weddings etc), educational programs for school children.</li> <li>• Narva Museum has established good cooperation with other Estonian museums (exchange of temporary exhibitions, participation in festival of Estonian museums since 1998) and with international partners through the Association of Castles and Museums Around the Baltic Sea. Development of mutual project with the Narva City government.</li> <li>• Museum employees are good specialists, who are flexible and able to adjust quickly to changing environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor logistics and infrastructure inside the museum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The castle and gallery are not very accessible for people with physical disabilities.</li> <li>○ There is no adequate parking space, bicycle stands, museum shop.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tourist activities are dependent on seasons, i.e. the Northern Yard is open only in summer.</li> <li>• Lack/outdated technical support. Security system, climate control system and electrical equipment are outdated, need upgrade/change.</li> <li>• Permanent exhibition is of good quality but needs to be updated/improved.</li> <li>• Difficulties of finding the right marketing strategy. The museum uses mostly printed leaflets/brochures, but they seem to be inefficient. Just recently the museum began using social media, but the results need time.</li> <li>• The majority of museum employees lack language (including Estonian language) skills to service foreign and Estonian-speaking tourists. Service level in general is rather low.</li> <li>• Narva and Ida-Virumaa (county where Narva is situated) have a rather bad reputation in Estonia. It's one of the most “problematic” regions of the country (high criminal and unemployment rates, the majority of population are Russian – ethnic minority). While the reality may not be that bad, stereotypes are difficult to change.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museum has much of development potential – restoration of the eastern wing, Kristervall bastion, renovation of the Castle park, updating and improving permanent exposition etc. If the town bastions get restored, it also can give boost to the museum.</li> <li>• Development of new tourist products and services (building new conference center in the eastern wing, developing new education programs etc.) and applying for different funds for financing.</li> <li>• Increased cooperation with local (Narva College of Tartu University) and international partners, incl. Ivangorod Fortress.</li> <li>• Finding the right marketing strategy for local inhabitants and incoming tourists (right balance between traditional marketing and usage of social media).</li> <li>• Improving the employees' Estonian and English language skills through language courses. Free of charge Estonian language courses have taken place since spring.</li> <li>• Using the unique geographical situation of the museum. The museum is situated right next to the border/transit point, where tourist buses stop and wait until getting permission to cross the border. The castle is unique position to provide people with something to see while they wait.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty in economic and financial situation. During the economic crisis the museum's budget was cut by 1/3, which is the biggest cut out of all Estonian museums. Due to that 22 employees were laid off.</li> <li>• Relations between the museum and Narva city government are complicated and depend too much on people's personalities, which makes them very unpredictable and unstable.</li> <li>• Lack of highly professional employees in the region; low salaries that do not encourage much motivation. High competition from private sector for the qualified workforce.</li> <li>• Strict border control between Russia and Estonia discourage many Russian tourists from visiting Narva. Unstable political relations between the two countries may damage the potential tourist ties.</li> <li>• Narva and Ida-Virumaa may not in the near future discard the negative image, which damages the touristic potential.</li> <li>• Increasing competition from other tourist centers in Estonia (castles in Kuressaare, Haapsalu, Rakvere, and Tallinn).</li> <li>• Decrease of tourists' interest due to draw towards light entertainment.</li> <li>• Museum is a budget organization and completely depends on the Narva city government – lack of decision power when it comes to issues of finances, prices, salaries etc.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



### Conclusions

- Although Narva Museum has a lot of potential to develop, it will take a lot of time and financial resources to make the museum a truly modern attraction.
- Using money from EU and other projects could be a way to accomplish the tasks that cannot be financed by the budget resources.
- The museum should focus on improving marketing tools, finding the balance that would attract both local people and tourists to the castle and gallery, and at the same time not jeopardizing the quality of the services (exhibitions, research materials etc.).
- The quality of service and employees' language and people skills should be improved.
- Being a budget organization puts a lot of constraints on decision-making. One of the possible solutions is to become a foundation.

### Some facts:

Ticket prices - [http://www.narvamuseum.ee/?lang=eng&next=piletid&menu=menu\\_kula](http://www.narvamuseum.ee/?lang=eng&next=piletid&menu=menu_kula)

Statistics – In 2009 overall 29,029 people visited Narva castle (11,577 in winter period, and 17,452 – in summer period). 1,656 people visited the Art Gallery during whole year. Unfortunately we don't have any statistics as to the visitors' background.

# Red Brick Gothic



## 5.0 German Association for Housing, Urban and Spatial Development

### 5.1 Introduction

#### St. Nikolai's Church (dome), Greifswald

The church is mentioned for the first time in a document in 1262/63; hall church in 1360/70, extended to basilica in the 15th century. The church has a nearly 100 meter high tower, which has come down twice. It contains old frescoes from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, which are still partly covered. In the church there are grave stones and epitaphs; "Rubenow-Tafel" from 1460 (the most well-known). The church has often been pictured by romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich in his works. Today the church offers concerts, tours (e.g. guided by children) and exhibitions.



#### Cultural Centre St. Spiritus, Greifswald

The hospital is mentioned for the first time in 1262. The hospital church was constructed during the period of 1280-1290. It is a Brick Gothic building and is part of the European Route of Brick Gothic. It contains Brick Gothic elements such as walls, pillars and a crypt-like room with frescoes. However, the appearance has been changed several times during the centuries. The building was restored in 2003/2004, where Brick Gothic elements were made visible again. Today it functions as a socio-cultural centre in the middle of the old town with gallery space and a concert hall hosting a variety of cultural events.



#### St. Nicolas' Church, Lüneburg

The church was built around 1400 and consecrated in 1409. The first tower was built in 1587 and the current one in 1895. In 2009 the parish celebrated 600 years of St. Nicolai together with the city. The interior of the church is a mixture of elements from other churches: Altars, fonts, bells etc. Highlights include: Paintings of Hans Bornemann from the 15th century, which picture Lüneburg of that time extraordinary precisely; stellar vaulted ceiling combined with the narrow shape of the church and a city model of old Lüneburg, which most of the city guides include in their tours.



#### Town Hall, Lüneburg

The oldest parts originate from around 1300 - the baroque facade was finalized in 1720. Behind the facade "hides" one of the biggest medieval town halls of Europe. The interior features a unique mix of medieval and renaissance elements. The Town Hall has rooms and architectural elements



from 14<sup>th</sup> until 18<sup>th</sup> century. Highlights include: Fürstensaal (1450), Gewandhaus (around 1300), Gerichtslaube (14th century), Bürgermeisterkörkammer (1491), Alte Kanzlei (1450), Große Ratsstube (1566-1584). Nowadays the Town Hall is used as a city hall with facilities for the city administration, Lüneburg Marketing GmbH, tourist information and a restaurant.

## 5.2 SWOT-Analysis

### Goals of the SWOT analysis

- With the help of this SWOT analysis, German Association as the manager of the European Route of Brick Gothic wishes to create more visibility for the international network/route and more prosperity for the regions and cities.
- This is why it is important to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of some representative objects in some representative cities to be able to see their opportunities and threats for successful marketing / awareness raising activities, which can be then applied / introduced by the management for / in all cities.

### In general, the goals are the following:

- More visitors in objects and cities – even though not possible in ALL objects due to restoration reasons
- Monetary advantages for objects, cities and regions – also regions experiencing structural problems while not that favorable situated directly on the sea etc.
- More good publicity, awareness and understanding for the joint cultural heritage
- More funding / sponsorships for objects – for good staff, good material, events
- More „booster clubs“ and supporting associations – for voluntary workers, longer opening times, funding etc.
- More concrete touristic products / packages with suitable cooperation partners

### St. Nikolai's Church (dome), Greifswald

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Famous through paintings of Caspar David Friedrich.</li> <li>• Beautiful architectural mix: brick gothic, baroque tower, partly romantic interior.</li> <li>• Very visible, in the city center, easy to access.</li> <li>• Well-trained voluntary workers responsible for tours, system of children guides.</li> <li>• Engaged priest – also in tourism issues.</li> <li>• Receives governmental funding for restoration</li> <li>• No entrance fee.</li> <li>• Hosts plenty of exhibitions, concerts, festivals.</li> <li>• Cooperation with the University of Greifswald (tours, concerts, training of guides).</li> <li>• Positive visitor feedback („unique, modest“).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly restored, but changes from the 80's highly controversial, do not please everybody.</li> <li>• Not enough coordination resources for touristic offers.</li> <li>• Non-expert workers at the entrance, not enough know how about history.</li> <li>• Not linked enough with other Brick Gothic objects.</li> <li>• Opening times relatively short.</li> <li>• Not that much foreign language material.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness raising on the role of famous painter Caspar David Friedric.</li> <li>• More visibility for tours guided by children, e. g. in schools and for day visitors with kids.</li> <li>• Cooperation and networking with other objects and touristic players in the city.</li> <li>• Offers for day visitors and visitors of the university seminars.</li> <li>• More foreign language materials.</li> <li>• Active development of exciting stories around the church (e.g. picture of a whale found on the wall).</li> <li>• Developing sponsorships / partnerships for e.g. the planned communication center.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other attractive offers around the corner (other buildings, old city center, other cities, beaches).</li> <li>• Pressure for entrance fee grows out of financial reasons.</li> <li>• In Eastern Germany churches and religion are for many people still „unfamiliar“.</li> <li>• Non-expert workers at the entrance not motivated / informed enough to serve the public =&gt; could have a negative image effect.</li> </ul>
Conclusion - St. Nikolai's Church (dome) in Greifswald	
<p>Some possible measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer training sessions by voluntary guides for non-expert workers at the entrance to increase their engagement and interest in the church and their work there.</li> <li>• To develop attractive materials on the role of the painter Caspar David Friedrich in the church – for example together with the Caspar David Friedrich Gesellschaft.</li> <li>• Promotion of the tours guided by children for schools; also to bring whole families to church – by distributing the existing flyers actively or per electronic media, emails, newsletters etc., which is not that cost intensive than producing flyers.</li> <li>• Promoting the church also for the (foreign) visitors of the university e.g. by electronic media, newsletters etc.: using mailing lists of the university.</li> <li>• Regular meetings, workshops, brainstorming sessions with other touristic players in the city for new products, stories etc., (tourist information, university, city).</li> </ul>	

### Cultural centre St. Spiritus in Greifswald

Strengths	Weaknesses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Tip-top" condition, restored fully 2003-2004, no big investment needed for that.</li> <li>• Has the oldest crypt in Greifswald.</li> <li>• High level cultural events very popular.</li> <li>• Attracts also individual tourists in the summer.</li> <li>• Management interested on serving touristic visitors and developing offers for them.</li> <li>• Offer also own tours for visitors on request.</li> <li>• Engaged and skilled co-workers responsible for tours on the top of their main activities.</li> <li>• Cooperation for the tours with the Nordic institute of the university.</li> <li>• Positive visitor feedback.</li> <li>• No entrance fee for the building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not well known among the visitors as a Brick Gothic object.</li> <li>• Not enough time to manage (both manager and co-workers) object touristically.</li> <li>• No budget for tourism and touristic offers.</li> <li>• Program flyers exist, but no further own material on building and its history available (material from the city exist).</li> <li>• Relatively little information on the website on Brick Gothic.</li> <li>• No financial resources for touristic staff available.</li> <li>• No financial recourses for the restoration of the crypt available.</li> <li>• For laymen not always easily recognizable as a Brick Gothic object.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness raising on Brick Gothic elements of the building; storytelling about interesting history and eras.</li> <li>• More marketing and marketing materials on Brick Gothic.</li> <li>• Renovation of the crypt and opening it to visitors.</li> <li>• Attracting of individual visitors also outside the summer season (e.g. workshops, events related to history).</li> <li>• Tourists bring contacts to international artists and, in turn, artists spread the word about the centre to potential tourists.</li> <li>• Developing partnerships for funding, for e.g. hiring more co-workers for touristic work.</li> <li>• Cooperation with the Nordic institute of the university.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not interesting enough; visitors will go to see other Brick Gothic highlights.</li> <li>• Existing staff will have no time for tours etc. in the future.</li> <li>• No funding for extra staff / materials can be found.</li> <li>• No funding for the crypt can be found.</li> <li>• Tourism will stay only a minor issue.</li> </ul>

### Conclusion - Cultural centre St. Spiritus in Greifswald

Some possible measures:

- Promoting the Brick Gothic history more effectively for the visitors of the events and courses e.g. by using the already existing materials of the European Route of Brick Gothic such as flyers, travel guides, rollups.
- More contact with the European Route and the city of Greifswald in Brick Gothic marketing issues.
- More promotion of the Brick Gothic background on the website.
- Searching for stories from the interesting history to be used in marketing.
- Searching for sponsors / cooperation partners (e.g. university) to realize historic workshops and events.
- Searching for funding for renovating the crypt.

### St. Nicolas' Church in Lüneburg

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique features: old city model; paintings of Hans Bornemann; stellar vaulted ceiling; crypt.</li> <li>• City model picturing old Lüneburg (around 1660) in tower hall → standard part of all guided city tours → many visitors.</li> <li>• Situated centrally in the core of Lüneburg old town, next to market place</li> <li>• Positive publicity due to 600 years of St. Nicolai celebrations.</li> <li>• Long opening times: ten weeks in the summer until sunset.</li> <li>• 30 voluntary workers, 8-9 of them very motivated voluntary guides for the offered own tours.</li> <li>• Own materials in several languages (but no take-away flyers for foreigners)</li> <li>• Restored, receives funding for reparations.</li> <li>• No entrance fee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not the biggest and oldest church in town.</li> <li>• Quite small staff: tourism causes lot of work for the priest, sacristan and secretary.</li> <li>• Tourism causes costs (e.g. energy, toilet, cleaning), but no financial resources for these costs, since churches receive funding according to the number of their community members and not according to the touristic needs.</li> <li>• Not enough resources for coordination of voluntary workers and developing offers for tourists.</li> <li>• Coordination of events and tourist groups sometimes difficult (literally full of groups in the summertime).</li> <li>• No donations received, since a tourists travelling in a group have no time for that.</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of offers for day trippers and shopping tourists, e.g. „30 minutes organ for lunch“.</li> <li>• Awareness raising among the locals to keep the interest (600 years St. Nicolai celebrations created plenty of public interest and participation among the citizens).</li> <li>• Recruiting more voluntary staff.</li> <li>• More materials concentrating on Brick Gothic heritage together with other objects, wide distribution, joining forces.</li> <li>• More events (with a small entrance fee?) together with other Brick Gothic objects.</li> <li>• Evening opening times and special offers around them (tours with mediation etc.).</li> <li>• Cooperation with local companies (sponsoring), initializing booster clubs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taxes going down for churches.</li> <li>• Pressure for entrance fee grows.</li> <li>• Tourism will cause more costs than it creates revenue.</li> <li>• Evening opening times are not cost-effective.</li> <li>• Staff won't have enough time to manage the tourists.</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusion - St. Nicolas' Church in Lüneburg</b>	
<p>Some possible measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The communication activities should be maintained / strengthened (e.g. active public relations) to keep up the local public interest attained during the 600 years celebrations.</li> <li>• The communication should also be directed to stakeholders (company magazines, newsletters) in order to reach their interest and eventually funding (for materials, cooperation's, visitors etc.).</li> <li>• More promotion for evening opening times and more offers for evening visitors (e.g. candle light / mediation tours); since evenings are times for individual visitors who are more interested on the church as a religious object and also maybe more willing to donate etc.</li> <li>• More contact with the other Brick Gothic objects in the city to develop joint activities.</li> </ul>	

### Town Hall in Lüneburg

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beautiful, unique features: combination of Gothic, Baroque and Renaissance.</li> <li>• Situated centrally, next to the market place and tourist information.</li> <li>• Positive publicity: e.g. one of the rooms „the most beautiful Gothic parlor in Germany“ (Dumont).</li> <li>• Attractive flyers and materials.</li> <li>• Attractive guided tours several times a day; special tours, tours in other languages for groups.</li> <li>• Very well preserved, funding for restoration from the German Foundation for Monument Protection.</li> <li>• Reasonable entrance fee.</li> <li>• Opened six days a week.</li> <li>• Professional touristic management made by Lüneburg Marketing GmbH.</li> <li>• Enough personal resources, one staff member responsible for tours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sightseeing only possible during guided tours, e.g. bound to certain times.</li> <li>• Visitor amount limited due to security and preservation reasons.</li> <li>• Events, e.g. exhibitions not possible in the building.</li> <li>• Not easily recognizable as a Brick Gothic object.</li> <li>• No museum shop (yet, but is being built).</li> <li>• Only limited foreign language information available.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique elements outside and inside could attract visitors from around the world.</li> <li>• More marketing in foreign markets.</li> <li>• More foreign materials for foreign tourists already in town.</li> <li>• More marketing for exciting special tours.</li> <li>• Raising awareness among the locals.</li> <li>• Developing more offers for younger visitors.</li> <li>• Museum shop and “cozier” new entrance which are being built.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure for higher entrance fee.</li> <li>• No acceptance for entrance fee.</li> <li>• No acceptance for limited visiting. times and limited visitor amount.</li> </ul>
Conclusion - Town Hall in Lüneburg	
<p>Some possible measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication activities should be strengthened to generate / keep up knowledge and acceptance for the object and its sensibility (e.g. no events, no uncontrolled visitor streams possible due to restoration reasons).</li> <li>• Marketing and communication activities also to underline the exclusiveness of the experience.</li> <li>• Creating experiences around the object but not always necessarily in the object; e.g. museum shop.</li> <li>• Expert seminars in the object – for networking and showing others how to manage a popular object touristically and without injuring the historic structure.</li> </ul>	

### Conclusions / recommendations: Some possible measures<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eventually applicable for the entire route.





- Knowledge exchange events and workshops, internal and external
  - E.g. on how to manage visitors efficiently, groups and generate revenue
  - To network, exchange ideas, concepts and best practices and create new ones
  - To collect stories/topics around the Brick Gothic heritage for product development
- Creating/improving local networks with stakeholders.
  - To generate supporters' associations and „Offene Kirchen“ associations.
  - To generate cooperation (and/or sponsoring).
- Stronger cross-linking of objects and offers for special target groups:  
Architecture/culture/music lovers, cycling/hiking/boat trip tourists etc.
- More marketing and communication generally, also for local public.
  - To create attachment and engagement of the locals, to bring more volunteers etc.
- More materials, also in foreign languages, more focused for different target groups.





# Shifting Sand Dunes



## 6.0 Administration of Neringa Municipality

### 6.1 Introduction

The Curonian Spit is a unique monument, light multisided strip of a land, uniqueness of which is comprised of relief created by the sea and wind, the highest spit in Northern Europe, Lagoon marl prints, remains of former Lagoon's forest and soil brought by the wind and constant interesting eolic processes.

The Curonian Spit is a peninsula, which divides the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea. The Northern part (the biggest part) of the Curonian Spit belongs to the Republic of Lithuania. The other part, where Pilkopos, Rasyte, Sarkuva and some other smaller settlements are, belongs to Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation. In 1923 the Northern part of the Curonian Spit (territory of 52 km in length) went to the Republic of Lithuania. During the period of 1939-1945 the whole spit belonged to Germany. After World War II, the Northern part of the peninsular went to Lithuania again. Currently, the part of the Spit that belongs to the Republic of Lithuania (0.8 thousand ha) is being administrated by the Municipality of Klaipeda City, and the remaining part (approximately 25.6 thousand ha) is administered by the Municipality of Neringa.

In 1961 the main settlements of the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit - Alksnyne, Juodkrante, Pervalka, Preila, and Nida - were united into Neringa town. Currently, around 2,600 people permanently reside in Neringa.

(Source: <http://www.visitneringa.com>)



## 6.2 SWOT-Analysis

### Protective dune crest (by the settlements)

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical value.</li> <li>• Engineering solutions that helped to save the Curonian Spit.</li> <li>• Rare plants.</li> <li>• Centenarian traditions.</li> <li>• Location in 2 States (LT &amp; RF).</li> <li>• The traditional model of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.</li> <li>• Excellent lee for sun baths.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive for natural phenomena.</li> <li>• Constant investment.</li> <li>• Absence of stable funding policy.</li> <li>• D6.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financing from Structural Funds.</li> <li>• Demonstration of the dune strengthening process.</li> <li>• Applying volunteer labor.</li> <li>• Education, camps.</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage Tourism.</li> <li>• Thematic tours.</li> <li>• Adaptation for paragliding.</li> <li>• The emergence of recreational infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global warming (threat of the water-level rise).</li> <li>• Termination of financing - political nuances.</li> <li>• New methods of strengthening the dune may displace the heritage.</li> </ul>

### Drifting dunes (Sklandytojū dune)

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of brands of Neringa.</li> <li>• An esthetical value.</li> <li>• Strong impression.</li> <li>• Exclusive landscapes.</li> <li>• Diverse bordering landscape elements.</li> <li>• Historical aspects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragliding School.</li> <li>• Sand covered villages.</li> <li>• Border with Russia since XVa.</li> <li>• Subject of Natura 2000.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural succession.</li> <li>• Visitor-sensitive environment.</li> <li>• Visiting prohibited.</li> <li>• Unsteady.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent visibility from the water.</li> <li>• Artificially prevent overgrow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No sand replenishment.</li> <li>• Danger of extinction.</li> </ul>

### Vecekrūgas (also known as The Old Inn) dune

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The highest one.</li> <li>• Represents the history of planting the mountain pine.</li> <li>• Has a legend.</li> <li>• Excellent observation place.</li> <li>• Close to bike paths.</li> <li>• Conveniently accessible by supported means of transportation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility by motor vehicles.</li> <li>• Lack of information.</li> <li>• No signs.</li> <li>• No recreational infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploiting the legend, as a marketing tool.</li> <li>• Exploiting the planting method for tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car Travel.</li> <li>• Frequent fires.</li> <li>• Landscape change.</li> </ul>

### The grey dunes

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aesthetics</li> <li>• Habitat of Natura 2000, as an ecosystem</li> <li>• 4 buried Nagliai villages</li> <li>• Convenient trail, well representing the Reservation</li> <li>• Next to the bike trail</li> <li>• Good accessibility</li> <li>• A vivid landscape</li> <li>• Unique wildlife world</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Unique in Europe sands passage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no safe place to leave bicycles</li> <li>• Parking not yet optimized</li> <li>• Negative impact of recreational visiting</li> <li>• Complex traffic control</li> <li>• Expensive maintenance</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natura 2000</li> <li>• Vivid landscape of the "dead" dunes</li> <li>• Infrastructure development</li> <li>• Flow research – calculation of optimal carrying capacity</li> <li>• Education on sustainable visiting</li> <li>• Including volunteers into traffic control</li> <li>• Entrance fees</li> <li>• Observing dunes from water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass visiting</li> <li>• Unregulated anthropogenic carrying capacity</li> <li>• Natural succession</li> <li>• Closing for visitors due to the over carrying capacity</li> </ul>

### Horns (Bulvikio horn)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The widest point of the Curonian Spit.</li> <li>• A rich history.</li> <li>• Strong impression.</li> <li>• Excellent observation point.</li> <li>• Proper location for bird migration and more.</li> <li>• Places to relax.</li> <li>• Good accessibility by a variety of means of transport.</li> <li>• The possibility of picking mushrooms</li> <li>• Attractive for tourism walking trail along the lagoon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion.</li> <li>• Infrastructure.</li> <li>• Lack of information about the attractiveness of the place.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs.</li> <li>• Publicity.</li> <li>• Raising an observation tower.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion and possible extinction.</li> <li>• Possible runway expansion.</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

One of the most important activities for Neringa Municipality is to obtain a stable flow of funding. If this cannot be achieved with the state, Neringa Municipality should turn to the private sector to find sponsors. If funding becomes more stable the municipality will have the possibility to improve some essential features in connection to the dune, e.g. car and bike parking facilities. Without necessities like these, it is clear that tourists have less incentive to visit the dunes.

Employing volunteer labor is one way of strengthening operations without increasing costs significantly. More focus on the recreational aspect of the dunes can be considered important, as it can generate ancillary revenues and attract different segments than the present ones.

Storytelling can be an efficient marketing tool for the dunes. As some tourists might find the dunes themselves static and less appealing compared to other attractions, a focus on the surrounding aspects of the dunes can be helpful. By telling the legend the dunes become more dynamic and broader appealing.

## 7.0 County of Leborg

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### 7.1 Introduction

Słowiński National Park is a national park in Pomeranian Voivodeship, Northern Poland. It is situated on the Baltic coast, between Łeba and Rowy. The northern boundary of the Park consists of 32.5 kilometers of coastline. The original idea of creating a preserve here came out in 1946, at a conference in Łeba with scientists from Poznań and Gdańsk. The park, however, was created 21 years later, in 1967, on an area of 180.69 km<sup>2</sup>. Today it is slightly larger, covering 186.18 km<sup>2</sup>, of



(Source: <http://www.slowinski.pn.pl>)

which 102.13 km<sup>2</sup> consists of waters and 45.99 km<sup>2</sup> of forests. The strictly preserved zone covers 56.19 km<sup>2</sup>. In 1977 UNESCO designated the Park a biosphere reserve under its Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MaB). The Słowiński wetlands were designated a Ramsar site in 1995.

The Park is named after the Slavic (later Germanized) people known as the Slovincians, who used to live in this swampy, inaccessible area at the edge of Lake Leba.

In the past, the park's area was a Baltic Sea bay. The sea's activity, however, created sand dunes which in the course of time separated the bay from the Baltic Sea. As waves and wind carry sand inland the dunes slowly move, at a speed of 3 to 10 meters per year. Some dunes are up to 30 meters high.

## 7.2 SWOT-Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of extraordinary wealth of sand dunes in Slowinski National Park.</li> <li>• The wealth of natural and geographical advantages of the Baltic counties (Slowinski National Park, „Blue Land”).</li> <li>• Cyclical cultural and sport events (Codfish Festival, Offshore angling championship).</li> <li>• Promotion of Łeba ("Principality of Łeba”).</li> <li>• Existing tourist facilities (e.g. agrotourism, horse riding, biking, windsurfing, yachting).</li> <li>• A very good natural conditions and ecological tourism development (Slowinski National Park as a world biosphere reserve).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under-use of assets and natural resources.</li> <li>• No spa in Łeba.</li> <li>• Insufficient use of trails.</li> <li>• Insufficient cooperation with Scandinavia and the Baltic countries - the closest neighbors.</li> <li>• Lack of markings and descriptions of some hiking trails.</li> <li>• No water routes.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poland in the European Union, access to the EU funds for development.</li> <li>• Extensive experience in obtaining EU funds.</li> <li>• Fashion (in Poland and in Europe) to new forms of tourism.</li> <li>• St. Jacob Route.</li> <li>• Ability to confer the status of the spa town of Łeba.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seasonality in tourism.</li> <li>• Vagaries of weather.</li> <li>• Complicated procedures and the high demands of institutions providing financial support.</li> </ul>
Conclusions	
<p>As it is difficult and time consuming for the County of Leborg to obtain financial support from public institutions, corporate sponsorships are important to maintain a steady cashflow. This funding could benefit the county in several ways. First, improve marking and descriptions of hiking trails. Without these visitors have less incentive to visit the place. This results in an insufficient use of trails. Thus, it can also be questioned whether the right amount of trails exist at the moment taking the current demand into consideration. Second, increased funding could help the County of Leborg establishing closer relationships with the neighbor countries. Such relationships can be efficient for knowledge sharing and eventual mutual marketing activities.</p>	

### Participants in the SWOT-analysis

- County of Leborg
- Łeba Commune and Wicko Commune
- Słowiński National Park
- Local Tourism Organization „Łeba”
- Association of tourist guides „PTTK”

## 8.0 Immanuel Kant State University of Russia, Kaliningrad



eu.baltic.net

Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument)



## 8.1 Introduction

The Curonian Spit stretches from the Sambian Peninsula on the south to its northern tip next to a narrow strait, across which is the port city of Klaipėda on the mainland of Lithuania. The northern 52 km long stretch of the Curonian Spit peninsula belongs to Lithuania, while the rest is part of the Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia. The width of the spit varies from a minimum of 400 meters in Russia (near the village of Lesnoj) to a maximum of 3,800 meters in Lithuania (just north of Nida). More information on the Curonian Spit can be found in the section of Neringa Municipality.

## 8.2 SWOT-Analysis

### Unique moving sand dune “EF” / Curonian Spit

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valid tourist object the whole year round.</li> <li>• The highest moving dune in the Russian part of the Curonian Spit.</li> <li>• The second highest dune in Northern Europe (64 meters).</li> <li>• Unique composition of wet forests and hot sands.</li> <li>• Registered nature monument (since 2000 – UNESCO heritage).</li> <li>• Wonderful point for sightseeing</li> <li>• Included in all tourist programs within KO.</li> <li>• Equipped with platforms for sightseeing, information desks and paths.</li> <li>• All nature objects of the spit are visible from the dune.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most remote tourist object at the Curonian Spit from KD-center.</li> <li>• Direct connection of sand dune with bay-waterline makes the complex more vulnerable.</li> <li>• The opposite tourist streams within the route are not segregated.</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and equipment the new ecological routes to other dune complexes with the aim to reduce the pressure</li> <li>• Equipment of the dune complex for tourists (Bio-WCs, etc.)</li> <li>• Organizing the joint ecological tourist routes for both countries (LT and RU)</li> <li>• More possibilities for visitors (with widening the net of paths within the route)</li> <li>• Elaboration of schedule for visitors, and controlling by the NP employees (as a part of ecological and recreational monitoring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of the other dune complexes in the BSR</li> <li>• Dune degradation</li> <li>• High ecological pressure</li> <li>• Extinction of the rare plant species (some of them are endemics)</li> <li>• High attractiveness of sand to be used as physical object for sliding</li> <li>• Very intensive development of the settlement Morskoye placed very close to the object (2 km) could affect the danger for the dune</li> </ul>

## Detailed explanation to the SWOT-analysis

### Strengths

- *Valid tourist object the whole year round*  
The dune is accessible for tourists the whole year round, even in winter time, when it is covered with snow. It is a fantastic view in winter time and in any season.
- *The highest moving dune in the Russian part of the Curonian Spit*  
There are no similar open (not covered by plants) and moving dunes in the Russian part of the Curonian Spit.
- *The second highest dune in Northern Europe (64 meters)*  
It is a unique nature object, which is very high and wide, and almost has no analogues in Northern Europe.
- *Unique composition of wet forests and hot sands*  
As soon as the dune “EF” is the open dune (without plants), it is an amazing composition of the sand and the wet forests which are surrounding the dune from the side of the Curonian lagoon.
- *Registered nature monument (since 2000 – UNESCO heritage)*  
The dune “EF” belongs to the Curonian Spit which is included into the UNESCO heritage list as a unique artificial nature object in year 2000.
- *Wonderful point of sightseeing*  
The dune is equipped with the platforms for sightseeing, and when the tourists are on these platforms, they can feel the atmosphere like in the desert (somewhere in Africa).
- *Included into all tourist programmes within KO*  
The dune is the tourist object which is the most commonly visited one by tourists arriving to the Kaliningrad region in general and to the Curonian Spit in particular with any purposes.
- *Equipped with platforms for sightseeing, information desks, paths*

The tourist object dune “EF” is equipped with platforms for sightseeing, information desks, paths, which is very important for the comfort of tourists, and for the ecological safety and nature security of the area, as the dune belongs to the natural National park.

- *All nature objects of the spit are visible from the dune*

As soon as the dune has the height of 64 meters, and it is the highest point of the Curonian Spit, tourists could see from one point all the most interesting natural objects, such as the Curonian lagoon, the Baltic Sea, wet forest, sand forest (pines, birches, etc.), lake “Swan”, etc.

### Weaknesses

- *High accessibility (low level of protection from non-organized tourists)*

There are a lot of visitors coming to the Curonian Spit by their own cars, without guides. Some of them ignore the rules of the National Park while visiting the tourist object dune “EF”, and walking out of the paths.

- *Existence of the other dune complexes in the BSR*

The dune complex “EF” on the Curonian Spit is not the only complex in the Baltic Sea Region. There are moving dunes in Poland as well as on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit. As far as visa regime for EU-country members visiting the dune complexes is concerned Lithuania and Poland are easier to access in comparison to the Kaliningrad region of RF.

- *The most remote from KD – center tourist object at the Curonian Spit*

For the tourists and other guests of Kaliningrad who stay in Kaliningrad and, for example, have little time for sightseeing, it is not possible to visit the dune “EF”, as it takes more than 4 hours to drive out to this tourist object.

- *Direct connection of sand dune with bay-waterline makes the complex more vulnerable*

Every year the dune loses sand in the waters of the Curonian bay, especially during the stormy and windy weather. The unique flora of the dune is suffering.

- *The opposite tourist streams within the route are not segregated*

Especially in summer time (high-season) there are a lot of tourists coming to the dune “EF” (organized groups and individuals). Due to the overloading of the paths within the routes by tourists, there is no free space on the paths. Most of the tourists have to step aside from the paths and to walk on the grass and sand. It creates the danger for the nature, and makes the tourists feel uncomfortable.

### Opportunities

- *Development and equipment the new ecological routes to other dunes with the aim to reduce the pressure*

As soon as the dune “EF” is overloaded with tourists, it (the dune) is under strong pressure on its nature complex from the tourists. It is important to develop and organize the new tourist ecological routes to other dunes within the Curonian Spit.

- *Equipment of the dune complex for tourists (Bio-WCs, etc.)*  
One of the problems for tourists on the Curonian spit (Russian part) is the lack of WCs. Thus, one of the opportunities for the dune “EF” is the equipment of it with additional WCs. It is also important to install some places where tourists could have a rest and to have a meal (or to eat the meal they brought with them). The territory nearby the dune allows the organization of this.
- *Organization of the joint ecological tourist routes for both countries (LT and RU)*  
There are no joint ecological routes within the two sides of the Curonian Spit (Russian and Lithuanian part together). Thus, there is a good opportunity for developing such routes for tourists from Russia and Lithuania. Such routes will be of special interest to tourists from other BSR and EU countries as well.
- *More possibilities for visitors (with widening the net of paths within the route)*  
There is limited number of paths and sightseeing platforms within the dune, no paths directed to the bay waters. Therefore, a good opportunity exists to equip the dune with new paths in order to give more unforgettable impressions to visitors.
- *Elaboration of schedule for visitors, and controlling by the NP employees (as part of ecological and recreational monitoring)*  
This activity is needed first of all in order to make the tourist flows more organized, and to count the number of tourists/visitors of the dune complex with the aim to evaluate, monitor and regulate the tourist flows.

### Threats

- *Dune degradation*  
Due to anthropogenic factors: A lot of tourists are walking on the sand within the dune which affects its degradation. Natural factors: Wind slowly destroys the dune too.
- *High ecological pressure*  
A high number of tourists have a negative impact on the natural complex of the dune. Visitors walking out of paths disrupt plants within the route (some of the plants are very rare and even endemic).
- *Extinction of the rare plant species (some of them are endemics)*  
Some of rare plants are disappearing because of tourists, who disrupt them, but some of the plants disappear due to lack of people who monitor and take care on these rare plant species.
- *High attractiveness of sand to be used as physical object for sliding*

The dune is very beautiful, looks like a desert on its top, and attracts tourists (especially the young ones) to walking and sliding on the sand. Such activities are destroying the dune.

- *Very intensive development of the settlement Morskoye placed very close to the object (2 km) could create the danger for the dune in the future*

As soon as the dune “EF” is a moving dune and could be easily destroyed, the close placing of the settlement makes danger for the dune. On the other hand, the dune itself could be dangerous for the buildings of the settlement which will be placed in the dangerous proximity to the dune as there are some evidences from the past when the whole villages were covered with the sand of the moving dune.

## Conclusion

SWOT analysis was made by Associative partners of the project AGORA 2.0 from Kaliningrad region. The object of the research in Kaliningrad region was Dune complex “EF”, within WP5 “Shifting sand dunes”. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the dune complex “Ef” were defined and analyzed. Among the strengths of the dune “Ef” we can pay the attention to the most important of them:

- The dune is accessible for tourists the whole year round, even in winter time, when it is covered with snow. It is a fantastic view in winter time and in any season. The tourist object dune “EF” is equipped with platforms for sightseeing, information desks, paths, which is very important for the comfort of tourists, and for the ecological safety and nature security of the area, as the dune belongs to the natural National park.
- The dune is highest in Northern Europe and Russia (64 meters). There are no similar open (not covered by plants) and moving dunes in the Russian part of the Curonian Spit, and almost has no analogues in the Northern Europe.
- The dune “EF” belongs to the Curonian Spit which is included into the UNESCO heritage list as a unique artificial nature object in year 2000.

The greatest weaknesses of the dune “Ef” are the following:

- The opposite tourist streams within the route are not segregated. It is more important especially in summer time (high-season) when there are a lot of tourists who come to the dune “EF” (organized groups and individuals). Due to the overloading of the paths within the routes by tourists, there is no free space on the paths. Thus, most of tourists have to step aside from the paths and walk on the grass and sand. It creates a danger for the nature, and makes the tourists feel uncomfortable. Also a lot of non-organised tourists (without guides) come to dune “Ef” and brings danger to the nature of the dune.
- Direct connection of sand dune with bay-waterline makes the complex more vulnerable. Every year the dune loses the sand in the waters of the Curonian bay, especially during

the stormy and windy weather. The unique flora of dune is suffering due to this nature influence.

There are 5 opportunities defined for the dune complex “Ef”. The most important of them we could define are the following:

- There is no one joint ecological route within the two sides of the Curonian Spit (Russian and Lithuanian part together). Thus, there is a good opportunity for developing such routes for tourists from Russia and Lithuania. Such routes will also be of special interest to tourists from other BSR and EU countries.
- Elaboration of schedule for visitors, and controlling of visitor’s flows by the National Park employees. This activity is needed first of all in order to make the tourist flows more organized, and to count the number of tourists/visitors of the dune complex with the aim of evaluating, monitoring and regulating the tourist flows.

There are also some important threats in the prepared SWOT analysis:

- Some of the rare plants are disappearing because of tourists, who disrupt them, but some of plants disappear due to lack of people who monitor and take care on these rare plant species.
- Very intensive development of the settlement Morskoye placed very close to the object (2 km) could create the danger for the dune in the future. As soon as the dune “EF” is a moving dune and could be easily destroyed, the close placing of the settlement makes danger for the dune. On the other hand, the dune itself could be dangerous for the buildings of the settlement which will be placed in a dangerous proximity to the dune as there are some evidences from the past when whole villages were covered with the sand of the moving dune.

Thus, we can say that the dune complex “Ef” is one of the most popular tourist objects in the Kaliningrad region. However, it is very sensitive and susceptible to external influences (natural as well as artificial). The area of the complex has a lot of unique species of fauna (some of them are endemics and included into the “Red book” of the Russian federation. The threats of the dune complex “Ef” could be closed down on the local, regional and federal level. The programmes on eco-education should be elaborated and disseminated in educational institutions for children. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen the international cooperation with close neighbors (Lithuania) in order to create the new tourist routes within the Curonian Spit and to elaborate and implement the new cross-border and trans-border projects for promoting the unique nature object in the Baltic Sea Region – Curonian Spit, and to protect the environment of such sensitive pearl of the region



# Forests



## 9.0 Latvian Country Tourism Association and Latvian Found for Nature

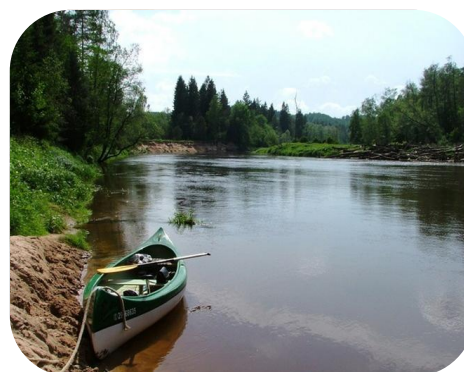
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### 9.1 Introduction

On the banks of the Daugava River, among the woodland crossed with ravines, there are more than 5 km of trails where visitors can watch wild animals and birds native to Latvia.

The Līgatne nature trails of Gauja National Park were created in 1975 to acquaint visitors with nature, the species of wild mammals living in Latvia, the natural diversity and the necessity of its protection.

Forest animals found on the Līgatne nature trails are brought from different places in Latvia. These are young animals that were either wounded when found or domesticated and which cannot survive without human care and are unable to find food themselves.



Slītere National Park is a specially protected nature territory and it is included in the Natura 2000 network of Special Areas of Conservation of European Union.

The oldest part - a relatively intact forest in extent of 1,100 ha - of Slītere National Park was taken under protection in 1921. No forest management has been carried out in this territory ever since. Slītere National Park as it is today was established in 2000. The park covers 16,360 ha of land and 10,130 ha of sea.



*(Source: [www.gnp.lv](http://www.gnp.lv), [www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de](http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de) and [www.latvia.travel](http://www.latvia.travel))*

## 9.2 SWOT-Analysis

### Līgatne Nature Trail

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destination known throughout generation since 1975 on national level.</li> <li>• Located in the Gauja National Park - close to other nature and culture heritage destinations within the NP.</li> <li>• Attractive enough to be a destination for local tourists.</li> <li>• Different offer throughout the year (animals in living conditions close to natural, horse riding, infrastructure for water tourists of River Gauja, botanical trail, national and international cycling routes, cross-country skiing).</li> <li>• Good infrastructure.</li> <li>• Local guides (multi language).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High maintenance costs – wooden paths and human resources.</li> <li>• Limited number of human resources.</li> <li>• Almost no marketing.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop wide cooperation with local tourism providers and tourism attraction points in GNP creating an eco-destination with social and economic benefit for the area.</li> <li>• Free area/territory to create additional attractions on the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depends on governmental funds, belongs to administration of NP (potential threat due to unpredictable change of policies).</li> </ul>

### Slitere National Park

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative in Latvia.</li> <li>• Attractive enough to be a destination for local tourists.</li> <li>• Located in Slitere NP – close to other nature and culture heritage destinations within the NP.</li> <li>• Available throughout the year.</li> <li>• Exclusive – only in attendance of advanced guide, professional.</li> <li>• Low maintenance cost (no infrastructure needed, no full time human resources).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Far from the capital (main markets).</li> <li>• Not flexible – advanced target audience (early morning hours, long distances, no infrastructure, not easy access).</li> <li>• Only two guides.</li> <li>• Cannot guaranty to see exact animal.</li> <li>• Not accessible with public transport.</li> <li>• Low variety of other services (restaurants etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide awareness raising (product created for the first season with high potential).</li> <li>• Develop tourism service cluster (cooperation with other local stakeholders).</li> <li>• High potential to extend related nature-based products.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disturbance of fragile environment.</li> <li>• Potential danger from animals (ticks, wild boar etc.)</li> </ul>

### **Conclusions**

As maintenance costs are high and funding is very reliable on the government seeking out corporate sponsorships can be a possibility. It would make the organization less vulnerable to governmental changes.

Furthermore, it would make it possible to improve marketing activities, as they are almost nonexistent at the moment. This would create greater awareness and thus attract more visitors.  
The amount of human resources is limited. A way to overcome this implication is to hire volunteer staff. There will be some training and administration costs, but overall, the costs will be much lower than hiring part-time or full-time staff.

## 10.0 Belarusian Association Country Escape

### 10.1 Introduction

Vitebsk Oblast is a province of Belarus with its administrative center being Vitebsk.

In 2009 the region had a population of 1,230,800 inhabitants. It also had the lowest population density in Belarus at 30.6 p/km<sup>2</sup>.

70% of the region is covered by forest. On 49% of the territory bogs can be found. In total there are 192 lakes and 15 large and small rivers.

Wildlife is immense and diverse in the region.

More than 200 bird species resides in the region together with other kinds of animals such as wolves, capercaillie, black grouse, lynx etc.



### 10.1 SWOT-Analysis

#### Rossony district, Vitebsk region

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecologically clean region.</li> <li>• Unique natural heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the most forest-covered district in Belarus,</li> <li>- unique wild nature (biodiversity),</li> <li>- two special protected areas,</li> <li>- lots of lakes and rivers,</li> <li>- marshes,</li> <li>- “gifts of the forest” (berries, mushrooms, herbs).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Human potential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hospitable people,</li> <li>- educated people,</li> <li>- experience in the field of rural tourism</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The district has already developed Local Agenda-21.</li> <li>• Unique tourist product (the first Greenway in Belarus was developed in the region).</li> <li>• Tranquility.</li> <li>• Organic traditional food.</li> <li>• Folklore.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low level of infrastructure.</li> <li>• Low accessibility.</li> <li>• Lack of information about the region.</li> <li>• Bureaucratic management system in the district.</li> <li>• Permanent conflict within the region. between local community and authorities.</li> <li>• Hardships to find financing for further rural and ecotourism development.</li> <li>• Low variety in tourism offers.</li> <li>• Lack of significant historical monuments.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of local economy on the basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass tourism development can lead to</li> </ul>

<p>of sustainable use of local resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential investments in agro ecotourism development</li> <li>• Development of agro ecotourism resort that might become national pilot project</li> <li>• Possibility of inclusion of Rossony agro ecotourism resort in the National program of tourism development with further governmental support</li> <li>• Use of Rossony experience as a pilot model for Belarus (holding various trainings, seminars, conferences, study tours)</li> <li>• Membership and cooperation with international organizations (Slowfood, Greenways international etc.)</li> <li>• Development of specialized tours (emphasis on ecotourism)</li> </ul> <p>Development of cross-border routes</p>	<p>exhaustion of resources due to their excessive use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive initiatives</li> <li>• Threat of imitation of created tourist product</li> </ul>
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### Detailed explanations to the assessment

#### Strengths:

- **Ecologically clean region**

There are no industries or other sources of pollution in the region, therefore it is ecologically clean. It means that all nature objects, air, local food and gifts of the forests are clean and safe.

- **Unique natural heritage (incl. biodiversity)**

Rossony district is situated on the top north of Belarus. It is the most forest-covered district in Belarus (around 70% of the territory of the region is covered with forests). The region is a popular ecotourism destination due to its unique wild nature. There are a lot of forests, lakes, rivers and swamps in the Rossony district. On the territory of the district one can easily find species of animals, birds and plants that are in the Red book. In the region's forests there are more than 1,500 elks and roes, more than 1,000 wild boars; one can find bears, lynxes, hares, beavers, etc. There are two republican special protected areas in the district – "Krasny Bor" and "Sinsha". They are actively involved in the promotion of ecotourism and preserving unique nature resources. Rossony district is full of lakes and rivers (192 lakes). One can find a small or big lake wherever he goes. The water in the rivers and lakes is very pure; there are good opportunities for fishing.

- **Human potential**

One of the peculiarities of Rossony district as it was indicated by all experts that visited the area is that local people are very hospitable and open to visitors and will always welcome

you in their house, provide you with meals and accommodation. It is a big advantage when you aim to develop rural tourism. Moreover, farmstead owners of the region were among the pioneers of rural tourism in Belarus. They have accumulated almost ten years of experience in this field. One more serious advantage is that local rural tourism providers are well-trained because they have participated in various trainings, educational programs and seminars. This three main aspects transfer human potential of Rossony district into its strength.

- **The district has already developed Local Agenda-21**

Rossony district has developed Local Agenda-21 for the region where the main emphasis is placed on sustainable development and “green” economy. As the prerogative for the district local community defined “green” economy and “green” tourism including agro and ecotourism, rational forestry and orientation on tourism instead of agriculture or industry. Local Agenda-21 provides local community with a vision of the region’s development and helps to develop sustainability.

- **Unique tourist product** (the first Greenway in Belarus was developed in the region)

Rossony district was the first to develop Greenways in Belarus. The Greenway “Blue necklace of Rossony” is an innovative tourist product for our country that promotes the idea of green and sustainable tourism. The concept of Greenways allows supporting local initiatives and involving various stakeholders in creation of tourist offer. This Greenway already attracts tourists from Belarus and Europe and has a potential for further development.

- **Tranquility**

Rossony district is the perfect place to get rid of stress and forget about fast-paced city life. The slow way of living and traditional countryside lifestyle is the best means of getting rid of stress and fatigue. One can hardly hear any disturbing noise (cars, industries, etc.). It is a strength, especially for the tourists from European countries, where it is hard to find such a tranquil place.

- **Organic traditional food**

Local cuisine is based on local organic food. Traditional dishes are made from gifts of the forest (berries, wild herbs, mushrooms) and other organic ingredients. Visitors can taste local natural food in the farmsteads.

- **Folklore**

The region has rich folklore and traditions, which are already integrated in tourism but can be integrated more intensively.

### Weaknesses:

- **Low level of infrastructure**



It means infrastructure of different kinds, not only tourism infrastructure. In some areas of the region mobile communication is not stable. The amount of shops, cafés, etc. is surely not enough.

- **Low accessibility**

Rossony region is a distant destination in the far north of Belarus. It is in 330 km from Minsk, the same from national airport “Minsk”. Moreover the roads to the village where rural tourism is well-developed are not asphalted and it is hard to reach this distant place in rainy weather.

- **Lack of information about the region**

There is an obvious lack of information about Rossony district and its potential both on national and international level. Even Belarusian people are not always aware of the tourism offer of the district. It means that serious promotion is extremely necessary.

- **Bureaucratic management system in the district**

Development of tourism faces the hardships connected with bureaucracy existing in the management system of the district. It provokes difficulties in organization of festivals, for example and slows down the process of tourism development.

- **Permanent conflict within the region between local community and authorities**

The main initiators of agro and ecotourism development in Rossony region are in conflict with local authorities. The initiative group and authorities have different visions of tourism development in the district. The conflict makes some initiatives such as rural tourism festivals ineffective.

- **Hardships to find financing for further rural and ecotourism development on the principles of sustainability**

The region has problems in finding financial resources to develop rural and ecotourism because it is mainly the initiative of local farmstead owners and head of special protected areas. They do not have support from governmental sources therefore it is hard to develop all necessary tourism infrastructures and promote the region on tourism market. It slows down the process of development and decreases its effectiveness.

- **Low variety of tourism offers**

Tourism providers of Rossony district have focused on rural and ecotourism. It corresponds to the potential of the territory. But in order to attract more visitors to the region they need to diversify their proposals (add some animation, use a creative approach).

- **Lack of significant historical monuments**

In comparison with other regions of Belarus the quantity of historical monuments and sites is relatively low. It means that the region needs to focus on natural heritage and use historical sites as addition.

## Opportunities:





- **Development of local economy on the basis of sustainable use of local resources**  
The region does not have developed agriculture or industry. It counts a lot on woodworking. But according to specialists it is worth reorientation towards sustainable development based on preserving nature resources of the region. The best way is to develop sustainable kinds of tourism that can result in generation of income for the region without harming local environment.
- **Potential investments in agro ecotourism development**  
Rossony district has a potential to attract investments in agro ecotourism development. There are several eco-sites and eco-routes that might be developed further and attract more and more visitors.
- **Development of agro ecotourism resort that might become national pilot project**  
It is planned (on governmental level as well) to create a rural tourism resort in the area which means that the main specialization of the district will be sustainable rural tourism and the activities connected to it. It will attract visitors to the region and at the same time contribute to sustainable use of natural heritage.
- **Possibility of inclusion of Rossony agro ecotourism resort in the National program of tourism development with further governmental support**  
Rossony agro ecotourism resort, if it is created, can become a pilot for the whole country. It can potentially be included in the National program of tourism development and receive governmental support. It means that additional financing can be provided and there will be less constrains in rural tourism development.
- **Using of Rossony experience as a pilot model for Belarus (holding various trainings, seminars, conferences, study tours)**  
Rossony district can act as a successful example that may be used in other regions of Belarus as a pilot model of rural tourism development. The first Greenway in Belarus was developed in this region. Local initiative group can share their experience by organizing trainings or study tours for those who need practical experience in this field.
- **Membership and cooperation with international organizations**  
Rossony district is already involved in Slowfood movement but it has the potential to join other international organizations and projects. It can be a serious opportunity to promote the region on international level.
- **Development of specialized tours (emphasis on ecotourism)**  
Due to rich natural heritage Rossony district can develop specialized tours for ornithologists, ecotourists, bird-watchers etc.
- **Development of cross-border routes**  
Rossony district is situated on the border with Russia and not far from Latvia. There is a possibility of developing joint cross-border routes (for example Greenways) with these countries and promote them on the market.



## Threats

- **Mass tourism development can lead to exhaustion of resources due to their excessive use**

It is important to prevent mass tourism in the Rossony district in order to save rich natural heritage. It can become a threat for the successful development of rural and ecotourism in the region. Moreover, mass tourism does not correspond to the principles of sustainable development.

- **Competitive initiatives**

Rossony district has to compete with other regions of Belarus and other countries that have initiatives in the sphere of agro and ecotourism. Their amount is significant and the main threat is that in many European countries tourist products of this kind are already well-developed. It makes it even more difficult to compete. On the other hand, Rossony district can learn of successful examples and try to avoid mistakes of unsuccessful eco-destinations.

- **Threat of imitation of created tourist product**

There is a high possibility of imitation of tourist product created in Rossony district. There will always be imitators and followers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Specialize on agro ecotourism, including **creation of an agro ecotourism resort**, based on the principles of sustainable development. This will prevent mass tourism development and follow the idea of nature protection as a prerogative for the region. Development of agro ecotourism resort gives Rossony district a chance to be involved in the National tourism development program that will make the region a pilot for the whole country. And it also means governmental support and promotion as additional advantages.
- **Establishment of partnership** between local authorities and rural tourism providers as there is a permanent conflict between them. As a possible way of establishment of interaction between these two groups is holding of a successful festival or other joint activity that will unite these conflicting parties.
- **Development of creative tourist products.** It is essential to develop various tourist products in terms of “green tourism” concept (bird watching, eco-routes, Greenways, festivals) in order to attract all types of “green” tourists to Rossony district. Local tourism developers should use a creative approach while developing tourist products and focus on interpretation of existing resources. Creative tourist products do not cost much but provide tourists with emotions and experiences which is most valuable for them.

- Try to **find the variants of attraction of additional financing** in the region. It can be done through potential donor organizations, governmental support (for example through inclusion into National program of tourism development) or private investors. The region can get involved in international projects that can also bring new sources of financing.
- Active **involvement of local community** in the process of agro ecotourism development. It means creation of micro businesses and various small initiatives directly or indirectly connected with tourism development. Local people have the potential to develop small initiatives (folklore groups, workshops, craftsmen, ecomuseums, etc.) but they need to be mobilized.
- To overcome low accessibility of the region it is worth **making informational stands and big boards** and informational signs. It is necessary to develop informational booklets about the region and tourist proposal (at least in two languages).
- Develop the **strategy of tourist product promotion** on Belarusian and European market. Such strategy is a necessity in order to find potential target group and aim promotion at them. Also detailed promotion strategy allows preventing serious competition during first period of development. Local tourism providers should emphasize their competitive advantages while promoting the region such as biodiversity, “gifts of the forest”, hospitable people, organic traditional food, folklore and rites.



# Stones



## 11.0 Estonian Heritage Society

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### 11.1 Introduction

The cup-marked stone is a stone that has one or several mainly round-bottomed small cup-marks with the diameter of 3-10 cm (most often 4-7 cm) and the depth of 0.5-2 cm chipped into it. In exceptional cases the cup-marks can also be with a pointed or oval bottom. The cup-marked stones differ from offering stones, used until the past and even this century, which sometimes have one or two large offering pits. However, cup-marked stones are believed to have been used for a variety of purposes, i.e. sacrifices, offerings and healing.



Most of the Estonian cup-marked stones are situated in the North Estonian districts of Harju-, Järva- and Virumaa. These three districts have 90% of the total number of the Estonian cup-marked stones.

The size of Estonian cup-marked stones varies greatly. The larger stones might be the size of a sauna, the smaller ones could be lifted by a man. Probably the largest cup-marked stone in Estonia is the *Lehmja-Loo Suurkivi* in Jüri parish. Its circumference is 23 meters and the height 3 meters. The majority of Estonian cup-marked stones are less than 1 meter in height. The upper part of the stone is usually relatively even, horizontal or somewhat sloping. Cup-marks are often made in the upper part of the stone, sometimes, however, they could be found elsewhere.

(Source: <http://www.folklore.ee>)

## 11.2 SWOT-Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1585 cup-marked stones in all Estonia. A numerous type of monument, spread in almost all regions in Estonia.</li> <li>• Protected by state as cultural and/or natural monuments.</li> <li>• Resistant to weather and tourism.</li> <li>• Little need for regular maintenance, suitable for local communities to take care.</li> <li>• Indicates a higher value compared with “normal” big stones; there is a responsibility by administration already (heritage inspectors, local authority, road and forest workers etc.)</li> <li>• Signposting of cup-marked stones is the responsibility of the state.</li> <li>• Stones are often landmarks or border stones – they are cared for, and not harmed or unnecessarily because of their function.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very specific type of nature, but widely spread.</li> <li>• Sometimes not in the original location.</li> <li>• Not the biggest one in the area.</li> <li>• Little scientific information available.</li> <li>• Responsibility to care for and maintain the stone lies on the owner.</li> <li>• Little money available for information boards and maintenance.</li> <li>• Stones do not stand out as tourist attractions – no infrastructure like shops, hotels or visitor centers can be built around them.</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness rising to attract people to other sites and to show the connection to similar sites across the Baltic Sea area.</li> <li>• Unknown and interesting feature for people coming from countries where such stones do not exist.</li> <li>• Eye-catcher - “core” of a rest area with further information.</li> <li>• Little knowledge about such stones provokes ideas and imagination, legends and stories connected with the stones.</li> <li>• Connecting feature between geological nature and human culture.</li> <li>• Source to learn and understand history from times when written sources did not exist.</li> <li>• Cup-marked stones are not recognized on European level; on regional level they often carry the identity of the region or local community.</li> <li>• Smaller villages or regions may promote themselves by displaying a local well-known stone – e.g. picture of the stone on brochures or post cards etc.</li> <li>• Stones offer good opportunities for schoolchildren to learn about their local history, they strengthen ties between generations – e.g. grandparents show the site of a cup-marked stone to their grandchildren who then write down memories and stories connected with the stones, research of local history and landscape.</li> <li>• Religious connotation of cup-marked and cult stones for people believing in the powers of natural objects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too small to foreigners from Sweden etc. with large rock carvings etc.</li> <li>• Difficult to analyze, get scientific information.</li> <li>• Economic activities (construction work, road building etc.) may cause removal or crushing such stones.</li> <li>• Stones as small objects are often ignored in land planning processes and as such may easily get damaged.</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusions</b>	
<p>As the cup-marked stones suffer from little awareness among tourists it is important to include trips to locations with these stones in larger sightseeing tours.</p> <p>As the stones possess great legends storytelling will be an efficient tool to explain their history in a dynamic way. This also helps making it interesting for tourists that come from countries where larger stones exist. What makes the cup-marked stones in Estonia different from these should be stressed. Even though it is difficult to obtain scientific information on the stones, this could actually be beneficial. It adds ‘mystery’ to the storytelling.</p> <p>At the moment there is limited capital available for information boards and maintenance. Thus, corporate sponsorships should be pursued. Helping preserving Estonian culture could be a very good argument why companies should provide funding.</p>	

## Conclusion on the SWOT-Analysis Compendium

The project partners in WP5 are responsible for various types of attractions, but have to deal with the same kind of internal and external issues.

In general the attractions have unique elements that make them stand out in the crowd. The project partners are very much aware of this and, thus, strive to capitalize on it. Providing ancillary

services is one way of optimizing revenues in connection to the attraction in question. However, the project partners find themselves stuck in a situation where there is little room for innovation, promotion etc. due to limited budgets. In most cases the amount of funding that each project partner obtains is too little to enable them to carry out all of their desired activities. Therefore, the importance of activities such as marketing is downgraded so capital is distributed to the most vital areas within the organizations. This also has a negative influence on the extent to which the project partners can train their employees or volunteers.

To overcome many of the hurdles that the project partners are facing external funding is necessary. This should be search after at a local, regional or national level depending on the possibilities at each level. Some might even be able/forced to search internationally.

Establishing partnerships with local companies/organizations and involving the local population are also important activities for the project partners. This helps strengthen the awareness of the different attractions and facilitates local buy-in, i.e. the local population feels that it is a part of it or has a stake in it.

Knowledge sharing is an activity that should have an ongoing focus from each project partner. The AGORA 2.0 project has facilitated knowledge sharing on an international level providing experiences and inspiration from different countries and cultures. Each project partner will not be able to implement successful activities from the other member countries right away, but they can still learn from what has worked under other conditions. Knowledge sharing should not only be carried out on an international basis, but also locally, regionally and/or nationally.