



The DUNC Success Story



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THE SUCCESS STORY



For the past three and a half years (2017-2021), a unique partnership has been working together for the sustainable development of our South Baltic Region's heritage and to strengthen its identity. Partners from the Interreg South Baltic project '*Development of UNESCO Natural and Cultural assets*', (DUNC) including the Municipality of Karlskrona (SE), Municipality of Mörbylånga (SE), EUCC - The Coastal Union Germany (DE), EUCC – Baltic States Office (LT), Tourist offices of Stralsund and Wismar (DE) plus the Curonian Spit National Park Administration (LT) have been working together to develop the South Baltic's UNESCO sites into sustainable tourist destinations. They have done this by addressing the challenges of a growing tourism sector including visitor flows, resource protection and activity management.

South Baltic UNESCO sites: Coastal UNESCO sites, including World Heritage and biosphere reserves, are among the South Baltic Region's most popular tourist destinations. The UNESCO inscription attracts millions of tourists to the area year after year. Being shortlisted as a UNESCO site, is a powerful asset for heritage sites but it also comes with responsibilities. All DUNC activities were designed to reconcile economic value and the protection of the very essence of what makes the sites and the UNESCO network valuable. The project also acknowledged that UNESCO sites have the potential to be role models for sustainable tourism, they can empower local communities and by coordinating efforts, together they can contribute to the whole region's development.

UNESCO Ambassador Network: An important part of DUNC's work was strengthening the knowledge and pride among local residents about their unique World Heritage sites. The team recognised that active community involvement in World Heritage conservation is challenging but brings huge possibilities. It became clear that UNESCO Ambassadors are not just those working directly for heritage sites, such as site managers and tour guides, they can also be pupils from local schools or business people like hoteliers, restaurant owners and shop keepers – in fact an ambassador can be anyone who speaks positively about a UNESCO site and is an advocate for its sustainable development. Through dedicated work by the DUNC team, the South Baltic Region now has an *Ambassador Concept* which can be used as a guide by heritage sites outside the partnership too

The concept can help people understand and acknowledge the obligations of living and doing business at UNESCO sites, the responsibilities and great opportunities that come with it. Sites have established structured, local ambassador networks with training/awareness raising plans in place. Together these networks form a transnational network www.balticheritageideas.eu/en/heritage-ambassadors/



Mini Guides of Southern Öland →



Meet Karlskrona's ambassadors →



Ambassadors Club of Curonian Spit →



Stralsund - Because we Live Here →



Wismar's Young Ambassadors →



Heritage Quiz →

Products and Services: For the development of new tourism products, cross-border cooperation and addressing seasonality were priority considerations for the DUNC partnership. Product criteria that all UNESCO sites can now follow have been developed.

<https://balticheritageideas.eu/en/sustainable-entrepreneurship/quality-criterias-for-sustainable-products/>

The set of criteria is a tool that can be used to ensure that newly developed tourist products fulfil certain environmental, social and economic standards and thereby help preserve sites, address tourism flows, respect cultures/traditions and truly support local economies in the long run. Over the project's lifetime, each partner UNESCO site developed a number of sustainable quality tourism products, from cycling infrastructure, new exciting guides, trails, an innovative virtual experience to theatrical excursions.

A full list of the sustainable products and services that have been developed over the project's lifetime can be found at

<https://balticheritageideas.eu/en/inspirational-products/>



Theatrical Excursions, Curonian Spit (LT)



Heritage Trail, Wismar (DE)



Virtual Reality experience, Karlskrona (SE)



Cycling infrastructure Curonian Spit (LT) and Öland (SE)



Children's colouring book, Stralsund (DE) with pages for each partner region.



New and exciting guide books, Wismar (DE), Öland (SE)

The 'Quality Criteria for Sustainable Products & Services' developed within the DUNC project' works hand in hand with its newly published South Baltic Heritage Entrepreneur Concept

<https://balticheritageideas.eu/en/sustainable-entrepreneurship/sustainable-entrepreneurship-concept/>

The concept promotes business opportunities created through the connection with UNESCO sites, whilst guarding their unique values. The *Criteria for Quality Products & Services* and the *Sustainable Entrepreneur Concept* both meet local community needs but also serve the South Baltic Region as a whole.

Sustainable Tourism Development: A pivotal project activity, in the final phase of the DUNC project, was the joint development of a 'Sustainable Heritage Tourism Framework'

<https://balticheritageideas.eu/en/tourism-action-plans/cross-border-framework-for-sustainable-heritage-tourism/>

This framework now provides a solid basis for continuity of project achievements, each partner having signed a letter of endorsement to show their commitment to it and the continued cooperation between the coastal heritage sites of the South Baltic Region. Plus, the partner UNESCO sites each have unique *Heritage Tourism Strategies* with accompanying *Action Plans* which are now recommended for consideration when each of the UNESCO sites update their management plans.

[Karlskrona Heritage Tourism Action Plan](#)

[Karlskrona Heritage Tourism Strategy](#)

[Southern Öland Heritage Tourism Action Plan](#)

[Southern Öland Heritage Tourism Strategy](#)

[Stralsund and Jasmund National Park Heritage Tourism Action Plan](#)

[Stralsund and Jasmund National Park Heritage Tourism Strategy](#)

[Curonian Spit Heritage Tourism Action Plan](#)

[Curonian Spit Heritage Tourism Strategy](#)

A Common Identity & Vision

The South Baltic UNESCO Network, with a common identity and vision, will live on after the project's lifetime.

Common Mission: *To connect people and develop tourism strategies that help build inclusive communities, provide 'future-friendly' economic growth and safeguard coastal heritage assets for future generations.*

Vision: *South Baltic Region UNESCO sites are role models for sustainable tourism development*

The Network is made up of sites managers, ambassadors as well as entrepreneurs with its own new dedicated website www.balticheritageideas.eu, a unique portal of information and exchange for all UNESCO stakeholders and interested parties.

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