

Good Practice Cases in Sustainable Tourism Destinations

Kuldiga

ITEMS	SECTIONS	DESCRIPTION	PICTURES
NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION SUBMITTING THIS PRACTICE CASE	Name		
	Contact details	Kuldiga Active Recreation Centre Address: Baznicas 5, Kuldiga, LV-3301, Latvia Email: visitkuldiga@gmail.com	
	Name (in EN) of the destination	Kuldiga	
	Administrative Organizations and Country	Kuldiga District is one of the five administrative centres of West Latvia which unites together 14 local territorial units. The Administrative Center of Kuldiga District is historical town Kuldiga.	
	Tourism Organizations	Kuldiga Active Recreation Centre is an organization developing the sustainable tourism in Kuldiga District, Kurzeme Region (West Latvia) performing the Marketing and Branding of the Kuldiga tourism product, developing tourism events and festivals, building an image of Kuldiga as well as creating and managing innovative international projects.	
	Surface	1756,7 km ²	
	Resident population	27,272	
	Tourism Arrivals	131,936	
	Tourism nights	75,485	
WHO	Name of the leading organization	Kuldiga District Council	
	Website	www.visitkuldiga.lv www.kuldiga.lv www.kurzeme.lv	
WHY	The reason for action	In the rural regions of Europe the rural entrepreneurs are trying to deal with the changing situation in the rural areas and they are trying to keep the countryside alive. Besides tourism activities they focus on producing and selling of local/regional and home made products. But the old vision of creating new tourist products does not work. There is necessity to create all kind of innovations. Therefore the key objective of our Project Framework was to create and develop a new innovative method of creation of tourist product in combination of non-traditional way of bicycling and walking with exploring countryside products in EDEN destination Kuldiga, including original event management. The same time it was a difficult objective, because Kuldiga is a small rural tourist destination with historical and cultural traditions, it has a large number of heritage sites and is included in the National tentative list of UNESCO. We started with the new vision of sustainable development of the EDEN destination Kuldiga, Marketing and Branding plan, following with the large number of activities and EU funded projects.	
	Issues and challenge	In many periphery areas of Europe, in rural destinations, the regional products have great economic potential, especially when they are produced in harmony with the nature and environment and a regional or local identity. The challenge was because there is a trend that (the big cities) consumers are more and more interested in good and healthy tourism possibilities and food which is produced in a local and sustainable way. They often want to buy it straight from the producer and want to see where the food is produced and experience the traditional country life. Developing and implementing all these activities gives an extra dimension, because Western and Eastern European regions did not have close contacts for decades can co-operate together. This gives not only possibilities to exchange knowledge and experience how to develop the production of regional products. Moreover it gives excellent challenges and	

		<p>opportunities to exchange ideas of the best practice and develop the potential new and innovative tourism products in combination with new and traditional food processing methods, homemade products, recipes and other specialities. Often there are a lot of local ideas but what fails, is a good local or regional structure co-operation and strategy for production and marketing. Many farmers do not have the selling skills to make their regional product production really profitable and to involve it in local network and creative industries.</p>	
HOW		<p>According the aims of the overall project the main activities were targeted to analyse, identify, develop and implement the potentials of local tourist products and specialities (food and non food) in order to strengthen and diversify the rural economies in the small EDEN destination Kuldiga (and Kurzeme Region as well).</p> <p>Main activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting up a research, education and training programme the knowledge and skill on the following subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism marketing and image research of Kuldiga destination; • Local food tourism product research of Kuldiga and West Latvia, including historical top-products, traditions, recipes, etc. • New trends and methods of innovative tourism and marketing - Setting up a team of creators and innovators producing original and non-traditional ideas and projects for sustainable tourism and local development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new non-traditional cycling tourism routes, events and festivals, e.g. Kuldiga Cycling festival Day & Night, which must become the most popular in Latvia as well as in Baltic States; • Create a new innovative tourism actions to attract more sustainable tourists, e.g. National Geo-caching festival, tourist counters, web-cams, wine and alive history tours, local producer fairs, etc. • Create a new walking tourist routes included audio-guides and the mobile phone applications, etc. • Create a new tourist attraction sites and areas in Kuldiga, based on sustainable tourism and heritage protection and reconstruction; - Developing a marketing activities and material for a number of potential profitable local products in each participating area; - Setting up an exchange programme for a group of local rural entrepreneurs to the other EDEN destinations in Europe on the following subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • innovations in tourism and marketing; • most popular sustainable tourism products; • cycling and walking tourism products • developing new regional products (regional brands) and bringing traditional products back to life; • new and traditional food processing methods, recipes, regional specialities and making home made products; 	
RESULTS	Benefits	<p>The output as a result of the activities of this huge project is depending on the actual situation in each participating area.</p> <p>Project outputs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a new non-traditional cycling tourism route system, cyclist friendly hotels and cafes, cycling trails, new cycling signs, cycling digital and printed maps, roll-ups, exhibition stands, etc. • Created the new creative tourist events and festivals: 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kuldīga Cycling festival Day & Night, which is the most popular Cycling event in Latvia as well as in Baltic States - the Duke Jacobs Fair attracting farmers from all Latvia - the Flying Fish Art festival; - the International Summer School of Photography (the most popular Professional Photography workshop in Baltic States) - Romantic Wine Tour to Kuldīga, which is the first kind of Wine-Route in Baltic States <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created the new innovative tourism actions, e.g. National Geo-caching festival, tourist laser counters, web-cams, etc. • Created a new walking tourist routes, e.g. "Get away, the train's coming", "Historical Water Pump Route" and also audio-guides and the mobile phone application, etc. • Created a new tourist sites and attractions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kuldīga Town Garden Park with fountains; - the Promenade of Aleksupīte river; - Tourist Panoramic Tower over the bridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstructed Historical attractions in the new face: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Wine Cellar of old Kuldīga Castle (A.D.1242) - the Old Town Square with fountains (A.D.1610) - the Old red brick bridge of Kuldīga (A.D.1874); - the Old Town Hall (A.D.1894); - the Art House Gallery (A.D.1875) - the Kuldīga History Museum (A.D.1900) • Created the set of a new traditional and local products or specialties with a high economic potential, e.g.; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the historical Carrot-cake production workshop and tours - Dip-Dap Runway-bike production Workshop, the only in Latvia; - the historical pottery (e.g. Branch Jug) production for souvenirs, first in Latvia; - the implementation of historical meals in Kuldīga Restaurants (e.g. Biguzis, etc.) • Created the new Creative Workshops;: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Creative Photography White Studio and Professional Photography B&W Lab; - the Creative Pottery Workshop - the Artist Studio - the Glassmaking Studio • Marketing/promotion actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kuldīga participation in International Tourism Fairs and Exhibitions Vakantiebeurs (Netherlands), ITB(Germany) TUR (Sweden), Matka (Finland), MITT (Moscow), Tourest (Estonia), Adventur (Lithuania), Balttur Latvia) - International Journalist, Tour-operator and Photographer Famtrips and Tours to Kuldīga (from Japan, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Russia, Poland, UK, etc.) - Creating the new tourist websites and social media networks, tourism movies, etc. • Exchange visits to the 10 following EDEN destinations in Europe: (Zuid-Limburg(NL), Durbuy(BE), Írótkő (HU), Órség (HU), Soča Valley(SL), Colpa River(SL), Sveti Martin na Muri(HR), Pustara Višnjica (HR), Viljandi (EST) Jurmala (Latvia) and number of training sessions in each region or combined sessions/ workshops/ seminars/visits during exchanges. 	
	Recognition and Awards	<p>Award "European Destinations of Excellence(EDEN) 2007";</p> <p>Award "European Heritage Label: <i>Patrimoine Européen</i> 2008"</p> <p>Award "The best new Culture Tourism product of Latvia 2012"; Quality label "Q-Latvia" 2012; etc.</p>	
REFLECTION	Multiplier effect and	Since 2007, we started targeted development of Sustainable tourism, the town of Kuldīga was selected as one of the TOP-10 Tourist Destinations of Latvia. The	

	transferability	town of Kuldiga, located in the middle of the Baltic States could be a bridge between tourists from Europe and Russia/Scandinavia could contribute for the creation of new tourism network in this Baltic Sea region.	
	Lessons learned and critical success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Framework and Best Practices may be applied to other tourism experiences;• Successful Integration is all about Community Champions & Cooperation;• Exchange and network can discover hidden resources & opportunities• Strategic Planning requires a comprehensive, collective vision and joint actions• Impossible is possible, just do it!	