

# DIDACTIC UNIT V



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN GEOTOURISM



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## OUR PARTNERS:



*The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

## DIDACTIC UNIT V. ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN GEOTOURISM

### 0. INTRODUCTION

#### 0.1. Objectives and methodology of the teaching unit.

The following didactic unit has the main objective to collect and present the main characteristics that are at the base and that must be considered when developing a business activity related to Geotourism. Specifically, in order to guarantee the success of the training process, the following secondary objectives have been marked:

- 1. To understand how Geotourism can be a resource for the economic development of the territory;
- 2. To identify the main opportunities that Geotourism offers to those who want to start their own entrepreneurial activity;
- 3. To define the basic resources to start planning one's own entrepreneurial activity.

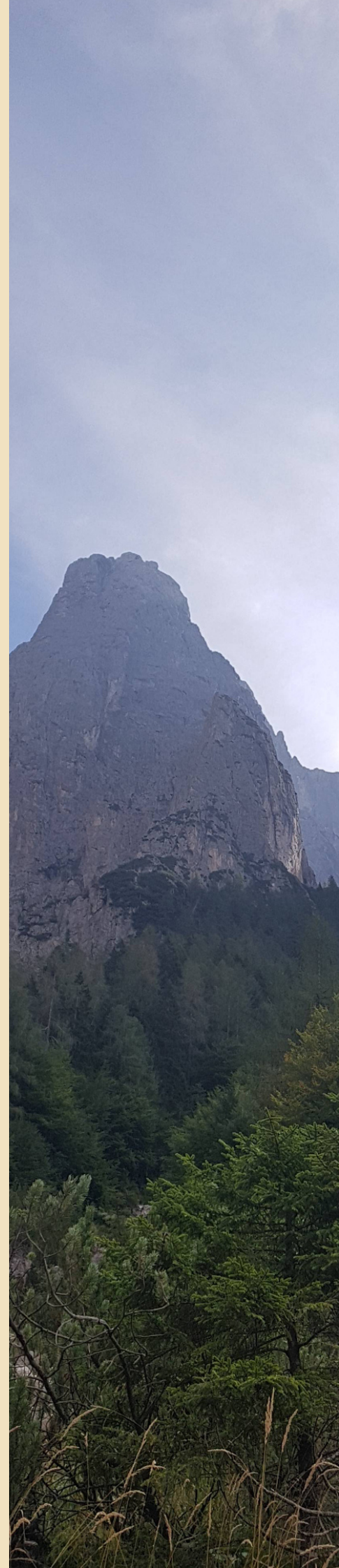
In relation to the above, the didactic unit will be developed accordingly to the following structure:

#### Module 1: Geotourism as a factor of territorial development.

This point will allow participants to understand the distinctive elements of Geotourism in relation to other types of tourism and how it can be a valuable resource for the development and competitiveness of the territory. Subsequently, the main actors, public and private, who play a central role in the design, development and maintenance of Geoparks and Geotourism will be identified and presented.

#### Module 2: Geotourism as a business opportunity: the birth of an idea.

This point will analyse the main entrepreneurial activities that could be developed in the context of Geoparks and Geotourism. The objective of this module is to stimulate the birth of a new business idea potentially replicable in the territory of the course participants, or the innovation of an already existing one.



### Module 3: The business plan: from idea to business development.

This point, of a more technical nature than the previous ones, will provide participants with the managerial methodological basis to concretize their business idea into a real and successful activity starting from the drafting of a business plan. The business plan will be able to define the guidelines to follow in a later phase of the development of the activity.

### Module 4: Case studies.

The aim of this point is to summarize all the contents dealt earlier during the course in the presentation and analysis of two cases of three successful business activities that have been developed in the context of geotourism.

The methodological approach that will be used during the course will be of a theoretical-practical nature. This means that the theory presented will be supported by the presentation of real examples where it will be applied in order to simplify, on one hand, the contents of the didactic unit and, on the other hand, to encourage a critical reflection on already existing entrepreneurial activities thus stimulating creativity and innovation.





## **MODULE 1: Geotourism as a factor of territorial development.**

### *1.1. The potential of tourism in Europe.*

Margot Wallström, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs and member of the European Environment Commission, in a public statement in 2015, referring to tourism in the general sense of the term, says:

"Tourism is playing an increasingly important role from an economic, social and environmental point of view. There are more than 2 million companies operating in the tourism industry in the European Union, mostly small and medium sized, and some 7.8 million people employed. It produces about 5% of the total GDP of the EU. Forecasts indicate that tourism in Europe is expected to grow (even double in the next 20 years) due to several factors, such as increased availability of leisure time, a higher level of income and wealth in general, and the increasing ease of travel".

Alfredo Somoza, in his article The challenge of responsible tourism, says:

"Tourism is now the main voice in world trade, more important than car, steel, electronics and agriculture. It generates 3,500 billion dollars a year in turnover, 6% of the gross product of the planet, employs 127 million people, 1 for every 15 employed worldwide".

It seems clear that tourism is, and will increasingly be in the future, not only an important source of income for States and Governments, but also -and above all- for local populations that enjoy the privilege of living in areas that, thanks to the natural and/or cultural resources they have at their disposal, are considered interesting for tourists, and attract the attention of curious travellers from all over the world.



## 1.2. Different types of tourism.

In general terms, when we talk about tourism and look up the definition in a dictionary or encyclopaedia, what we find is a definition similar to this one: 'Activity consisting in making trips, excursions, journeys, for leisure or educational purposes'. Although the definition may seem clear and concise, there are several concepts that refer to tourism that are worth distinguishing and defining.

### Ecotourism

One of the best known forms of alternative tourism is undoubtedly ecotourism. The latter represents one of the most popular forms of alternative tourism in recent years, so much so that UNEP has declared 2002 the International Year of Ecotourism and 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism. The growing importance of this market segment and, in general, the growing demand for the protection of resources, in a broad sense, by visitors, are a symptom of a cultural change that is affecting the tourism market.

The emphasis that ecotourism places on the principles of sustainability has led to consider (and sometimes confuse) the concepts of ecotourism and sustainable tourism.

Ecotourism is a tourism in natural areas that must contribute to the protection of nature and the well-being of local populations.

- It includes pedagogical aspects and interpretation of nature;
- Often organised by small local businesses or foreign operators offering ecotourism circuits for small groups;
- Minimises impacts on the natural landscape and the socio-cultural environment;
- Supports the protection of natural areas:
  - Generating economic benefits for the local community, organisations and managing authorities;
  - Providing an alternative source of employment and income for local communities, while raising awareness.

In summary, to use a definition from TIES (The International Ecotourism Society), ecotourism is "*a responsible way to travel in natural areas, preserving the environment and supporting the well-being of local people*".



## Naturalistic tourism

Naturalistic Tourism is a type of trip that has as its main destination a natural environment such as mountains, desert, lake and so on. Naturalistic tourism, in itself, is not a type of "responsible" tourism, in the sense that it does not always have as its goal the preservation of the environment, there is no upstream study on the environmental, cultural and social consequences that a trip may involve. In other words, it is not directly related to sustainable tourism (the environment is only the destination of the trip).

## Geotourism

Geotourism as defined by the National Geographic Society is a form of tourism that "supports or accentuates the geographical character of the place visited - its environment, its heritage, its aesthetics, its culture and the well-being of its inhabitants". Geotourism means traveling to discover the geological wonders of the place where they are located and the particular combination of natural and human resources that make it possible to discover the geological wonders of the place.

### *1.3. The concept of sustainability.*

When we talk about sustainable development models (models that can be applied to very different worlds and contexts, including tourism), we are referring to those systems that can meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. Sustainable development is therefore understood as the process of change whereby the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional changes are made consistent with future as well as current needs.

In short, sustainable development requires that the basic needs of all will be met and that everyone will be given the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a better life.

However, the fact that all the concepts relating to tourism described above refer to principles of sustainability does not automatically mean that a form of tourism is sustainable. For example, naturalistic tourism does not always aim to preserve the environment, there is not always a study of the environmental, cultural and social consequences of a trip. In other words, it is not directly attributable to sustainable tourism because, sometimes, the environment is only the destination of the trip.

A clearer relationship with the concept of sustainability can be found, however, in the case of geotourism. The Tourism Industry Association, T.I.A., sponsored by the prestigious National Geographic Traveller magazine, claims that geotourism represents the evolution of the best known "sustainable tourism" because we find all the characteristics of the latter.

Due to the nature of the course, this teaching unit will focus mainly on the phenomenon of geotourism, presenting, first of all, the characteristics of this sector and its growth possibilities and, subsequently, the different business opportunities that the sector offers to those who want to undertake a tourist guide activity.

#### *1.4. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.*

The EUROPARC Federation is Europe's natural and cultural heritage network. It was founded in Basel (CH) in 1973, but for most of its life it has been based in Germany, proudly supporting the work of Member States in protected areas in Europe, for over 40 years 'Working for nature'. It works to improve the management of protected areas in Europe through international cooperation, exchange of ideas and experiences and influencing policy.

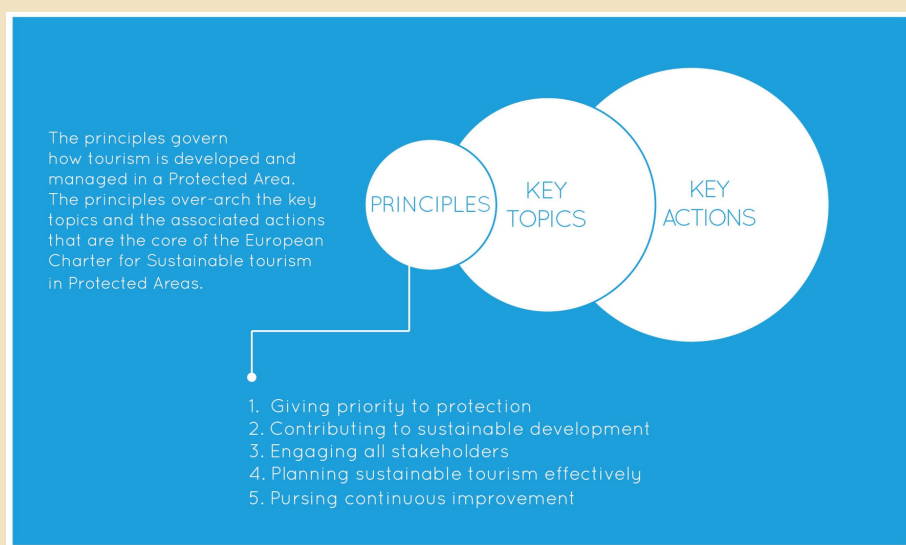
As the representative body of protected areas in Europe, it is the collective voice of all nature and landscape areas and seeks to build a stronger, unifying European network organisation in a better position to support their members and respond to the current and future challenges that European nature is facing.

The EUROPARC Federation is dedicated to nature conservation and sustainable development of European biodiversity, promoting holistic approaches to landscape management.

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (approved in 2000) is internationally recognised as a model for sustainable tourism management.







**Fig. 5.1 - Figure 5.1 Chart Principles, topics and key-actions. <http://www.europarc.org>**

The following principles should govern the development and management of tourism in protected areas:

- Give priority to protection.

A key priority for the development and management of sustainable tourism should be to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area and to increase its awareness, understanding and appreciation.

- Contributing to sustainable development.

Sustainable tourism should follow the principles of sustainable development, which means addressing all aspects of its environmental, social and economic impact in the short and long term.

- Involve all stakeholders.

All those interested in sustainable tourism should be able to participate in decisions on its development and management and partnership work should be encouraged.

- Planning sustainable tourism effectively.

The development and management of sustainable tourism should be guided by a well-designed plan setting out agreed objectives and actions.



- Pursue continuous improvement.

Tourism development and management should offer continuous improvement in sustainable environmental impacts, visitor satisfaction, economic performance, local prosperity and quality of life, requiring regular monitoring and reporting of progress and results.

### **Why become a sustainable destination?**

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is awarded by the EUROPARC Federation through an independent verification process. This recognition recognises not only a commitment to sustainable tourism, but also the implementation of sustainable practical actions by public and private partners; specifically:

- It brings measurable economic, social and environmental benefits from well-managed sustainable tourism;
- Strengthens relations with local tourism stakeholders and the tourism industry in general;
- Provides access to and membership of a wide and dynamic European network.

The Charter provides a governance model that offers protected areas as sustainable tourism destinations. In addition, all stakeholders through the application of sustainable tourism practice in their region ensure the natural habitat and landscapes on which they all depend are preserved for future generations.

The process of pursuing and achieving this recognition allows all stakeholders to receive expert advice, maintain motivation and incentives and gain international recognition. Commitment to the Charter process is a successful element and is a stimulus for the pursuit of more sustainable tourism in protected areas. It has provided an incentive and framework for protected area authorities to work with tourism businesses and other stakeholders to agree on future plans and support a range of creative actions.

## How to become a sustainable Europarc destination?

The components of the Charter involve working in partnership, preparing and implementing a strategy and addressing key issues. The Charter requires all protected areas to have the following components: Sustainable Tourism Forum, Strategy and Action Plan; Evaluation; Monitoring and Review; Partnership and Communication.

The Charter process itself provides for the development and recognition of partnerships between the authorities of the protected area and tourism businesses through the granting of Charter partner status to tourism businesses that meet the criteria agreed under Part II of the Chart (for local tourism businesses) and Part III of the Charter (for tour operators).

### *1.5. The ecosystem and functioning of a Geopark.*

In 1999 UNESCO, following the creation of the programme to establish and maintain a worldwide network of geoparks, defined a geopark in this way: A territory with geological aspects of special importance, rare or beautiful. These aspects must be representative of the geological history of a specific area and the events and processes that formed it.

In 2011, Margarida Belém, president of the management committee of the Aouca Geopark, and responsible for the Arouca Declaration, acknowledged the need to clarify the concept of geotourism. Thus, geotourism is defined as that tourism that supports and improves the identity of a territory, considering its geology, its territorial context, its culture, its aesthetics, its heritage and the (broadly speaking) well-being of its residents. Geological tourism, therefore, becomes one of the multiple components of geotourism.

Summarizing both definitions, we can say that a geopark is made up of a territory defined by a series of special or geological, but also ethnographic and cultural places. Therefore, we should not see a geopark exclusively as a set of natural elements of a territory, but as the set of all the elements present on a territory. When we talk about a geopark, we are therefore also referring to the people who live in the territory, as well as their settlements (villages or towns), their societies and their cultures. Consequently, when we talk about geotourism, it is important to think that when a tourist decides to visit a geopark, it may be that he or she is not exclusively interested in the geological heritage of the territory, but that he or she is attracted by knowing more about the people of a place and their activities.



A Geopark is not an entity that functions autonomously because it needs different actors, each with different roles and responsibilities, to cooperate in order to ensure the geopark's survival. These actors can contribute to the maintenance of the park in both passive and active ways, both from the public and private sectors.

The first distinction to be made is between active and passive actors. We define as active actors those who actively contribute to the functioning of the park, maintaining its management and operational infrastructure and creating and managing products and services related to the territory. Passive actors are those who, by taking advantage of the products and services generated by the active ones, contribute to the start-up and survival of the system, of the park, understood in this case as economic.

Below we list the main actors, active and passive, of a Geopark and define their respective roles.

### **Passive actors**

By passive players we are referring mainly to those who, in a way that can be understood as passive, benefit from all or some of the services or products that the geopark offers. These are those who, in a market dynamic, constitute the demand and are mainly of two types:

- Local citizens: those who permanently reside in the Geopark or in the surrounding areas and who therefore in their daily life are in contact with the geopark and the ecosystem of services and products built around it.
- Tourists: those who visit the geopark territory for a limited time will benefit from the services and products offered by the park and the territory.

### **Active Actors**

The actors we call active are those who produce those services and/or products and offer them for consumption to the passive ones. They are those that, always in a market system, constitute the offer and that make the geopark a habitable and liveable territory for people. Their composition is not always the same and varies according to the characteristics of the territory and what, on a naturalistic, cultural and social level, it offers. Below we can identify some of them:

- Private and third sector companies, which mainly deal with the production, management and offer to consumers of services and products.





- Public bodies, which deal with the management of the territory in a wider sense and, among other things, with its regulation through the implementation of public policies.

In this complex system, an important role is played by the tourist guide who acts as a connector between the park and one of its greatest economic resources, the tourist. The tourist guide is in fact in a central position from which it is able to transmit to the tourist and educate him/her on the values of the place and its population, as well as on the naturalistic peculiarities of the territory and its local productions.

In the following module we will see how geotourism is a promising business opportunity for those who want to undertake the job of tourist guide.

In summary:

- **The guide should always consider the impact his/her job may have not only on the environment, but also on the local society; his/her job should always contribute to the well-being of local population.**
- **Since the beginning, the guide should design his/her job taking into account the principles of sustainability.**
- **The guide should try to involve actively “active” (private & third sector companies and public bodies) and “passive” (local citizens & tourists) stakeholders of the geopark.**



## **MODULE 2: Geotourism as a business opportunity: the birth of an idea.**

To start thinking about an idea to be developed in relation to the work of a tour guide, you first need to understand in detail who a tour guide is, what he or she does and, above all, who his or her main clients, tourists, are looking for. Let's start this module by talking about tourists.

### *2.1. What do tourists look for when they travel? Different types of tourists.*

In the same way we have previously distinguished different types of tourism related to the naturalistic context (ecotourism, natural tourism and geotourism), let's now see which are the different types of tourists, identifying and analysing for each of them, what are the interests and objectives that motivate their travel. In this way, those who are interested in developing an activity in direct contact with the tourist - as is the case in the tourist guide profession - will obtain the basis on which to build an offer for a personalised service according to the needs and wishes of their future clients. Below are some distinctions between different types of tourists, which are the result of research carried out by experts in the field.

Francesco Di Pietro, in an article published in the Journal of Tourism Science, distinguishes four types of tourists. His research was developed by studying, with the help of a personality test, the characteristics of 740 tourists from 71 countries around the world. Once the results were obtained, it was possible to create groups (clusters) with common personality traits and, therefore, to infer on the behaviour of different types of travellers. As already mentioned, the study identified four types of tourists:

- 1. The escaping self-centred traveller;
- 2. The socio-adrenaline traveller;
- 3. The dreamer-emotional traveller;
- 4. The programmer-introverse traveller.



## The escaping self-centered traveller

In the case of the self-centred traveller we are faced with a traveller for whom discipline and order are important. The safety aspect is crucial: safety and control, in all areas; such as health or hygiene or the quality of food, right down to dealing with the unexpected. The escaping self-centered traveller, before booking, must be sure of the level of professionalism and the quality of assistance he will find. He is pessimistic, always assumes the worst-case scenario, does not make decisions on his own and looks for information and confirmations on the internet.

At the time of booking, he prefers to rely on a tour operator because he prefers safe travel and contexts, he loves neither risk nor adventure. He is hardly emotionally involved, he is not affected by advertising campaigns with visual connotation or emotional impact, because he has little imagination and empathy, he is more sensitive to practical and pragmatic aspects. He is wary of cultures that are not his own, he doesn't like travelling in close contact with other cultures, most likely not even foods other than his own; he doesn't like overcrowded contexts.

He is a practical person, for him reality must be measurable. He finds it difficult to experience himself in a new way, or in too different contexts, he prefers a journey with reassuring and welcoming aspects. In the journey he tries to satisfy the need for relaxation and escape. He loves luxury hotels and comfortable contexts, he would never go camping and would not choose trips that include even just an overnight stay in an uncomfortable place such as a hut, a tent or a house of locals; he does not like dynamic trips or that propose many activities.

The two fundamental aspects of any holiday are relaxation and comfort, giving much more weight to these two elements rather than the price of the holiday. He is looking for a trip that will allow him to make a clean break from everyday life and escape from everyday life.



## The socio-adrenaline traveller

The socio-adrenaline traveller is a sociable and uncomplicated person, he has no targeted or punctilious requests; he is not very imaginative, not emotionally involving, he is more sensitive to measurable dimensions such as the price and the characteristics of the destination such as fun or variety of things to do. He loves fun, he likes to spend time with other people and will look for types of travel that put him in contact with people, being they friends to go away with or new acquaintances to do on site.

He organizes his trips based on his friends' stories, he has no problem staying in very crowded places or sharing his spaces with others. For him, the social aspect of the holiday is fundamental. He is on average dynamic, he chooses a trip based on the destination he has decided to visit or the type of activities he has decided to undertake. He likes doing new things, even adventurous ones, letting go and doing things he has never done before, he is autonomous and enterprising.

He doesn't need to have every moment planned, but he loves trips with different activities, such as a touring tour with the visit of several cities or museums, he is interested in learning new things, both on a cultural and physical/sporting level. It is important to him that there is a reliable structure behind him that will take care of his holiday. He is communicative and talkative, he is enterprising in moving around, he needs to feel his own choice of itinerary; he doesn't like to plan, he prefers to decide on the road and have a margin that allows him to organize the trip as he prefers; he is interested in experimenting his autonomous spirit and he doesn't like rigid and pre-constituted "vacation packages".



**Image by Matheus Bertelli from Pexels**



## The dreamer-emotional traveller

The dreamer-emotional loves emotionally involving trips, those in contact with people, full of adventures, without planning too much, to tell friends once back. He is a strongly empathic subject with a high imaginative capacity, looking for a journey in which to blend in with the culture he visits, live like a local, get out of the usual itineraries and mix with the locals. He loves contexts full of people, making new friends, group situations, social contexts that allow him to get in touch with new and different people.

He looks for an intense emotional experience in the journey. He usually has confidence in others, has a positive view of life, is not worried about risks or health and safety issues. He is a passionate traveller, he is practical, he is looking for surprise and adventure, he is a dynamic person, he is not looking for relaxation, but for a holiday in which to satisfy his need for knowledge and fun.

He doesn't plan much before leaving, he decides the trip on the road; he doesn't need to receive detailed information and detailed programs, he doesn't like holiday packages or rigid itineraries. He is a dreamer, he likes to imagine what he will do even before going to the places he will visit, to feel the smells and tastes. His strong imaginative ability takes him away from reality; therefore, he needs a "guide" who will shape his holiday, someone who will make him dream, but who will then bring him back to the ground and will be able to define times and spaces in a clear way. He is sensitive to communication plans that focus on emotionality using videos, stories and blogs on the subject.



*Image by Oliver Sjöström from Pexels*

## **The programmer-introverted traveller**

The programmer-traveller is meticulous and precise; he organizes the activities specifically, he usually loves to plan everything, he doesn't like adventure, he looks for safe trips, he doesn't like risk. He is concerned about the safety and health associated with the places he visits; therefore he needs to be reassured and to receive an adequate amount of information. He prefers trips that involve a series of different activities, including sports; he is an average dynamic person, driven by the need for knowledge, especially for the historical-cultural aspects of a region.

He chooses trips organized in detail, does not know how to deal with the unexpected, does not like changes of schedule. He leaves nothing to chance, he has a methodical attitude, very reflective in decisions, he is wary of cultures that are not his own, he does not like trips in close contact with other cultures, he does not like contexts that are too crowded. He tends to re-propose his scripts and his lifestyle even while travelling, he does not want to experience himself in a new way, nor find himself in too different contexts; he prefers a journey with reassuring and welcoming aspects. The level of comfort offered for him is a very important variable; he is sensitive to the prestige of the place or how fashionable it is; he loves comfort. Price is not a determining variable, especially if the service is adequate.

He is introverted, he prefers to be alone or with his loved ones, to devote his time to finding himself or to the intimate relationship with the people he loves and to sharing his emotions with them. When he chooses a trip, he asks advice from friends and family, the aspect of sharing with loved ones is important to him, he shuns crowded environments, he does not want attention for himself, nor does he want to spend time with people he does not know.

He prefers to rely on a tour operator rather than organise a trip himself. Before making a decision he needs to be reassured; the ideal tour operator should organize the trip in detail, already taking into account all kinds of problems that could happen, clarifying how he intends to solve them, be willing to clarify any doubts and ensure his constant presence in case of mishaps.

Thanks to Francesco di Pietro's study, we were able to identify and present four different types of tourists, as well as their respective behaviours, the desires and the motivations that drive decisions about the type of trip. A tour guide who aims to offer an experience aligned with the real needs of his clients must therefore consider these characteristics and understand that, if he wants to meet the expectations of those who trust him/her for his trip/excursion, he has two options:



1. Decide who is the type of tourist he wants to work with and then offer him a service (or a series of services) designed ad-hoc for him;
2. Have a series of services for tourists with distinct characteristics and/or needs.

In the next section we will see what the work of the tourist guide consists of in practical terms and what are the skills and competences he or she must have in order to carry out his or her job in the best and most successful way.

## 2.2. The work of the touristic guide.

Let's start with a generic definition of the job of tourist guide:

*A tourist guide is someone who by profession accompanies individuals or groups on visits to works of art, museums, galleries, archaeological excavations, illustrating historical, artistic, monumental and landscape attractions.*

This profession should not be confused with that of tour guide who accompanies groups of tourists on trips organized by agencies or tour operators, taking care of the success of the trip.

Once agreed with the travel agency or with the tour leader of the group on the tourist-cultural route in the territory of competence, the guide's task is to welcome tourists and "direct" them to the places to visit, providing historical and cultural information about the individual monuments and the characteristics of the territory and the surrounding area.

The job of tourist guide is part and parcel of the definition of cultural activity. The task of a tourist guide, in fact, is to tell through an itinerary, the story of a people, a country and, in the more specific case of a geopark, a territory and its peculiarities. His field of action, therefore, is the tourism sector. A serious, reliable and prepared guide, therefore, must have basic knowledge of the characteristics of the area of interest but, more importantly, must be able to explain its history, origins and evolution over time.

His figure, as previously mentioned, acts as a connector between a group of curious people and the object of their curiosity. The curious -the tourists- decide to rely on the guide to look at the reality that surrounds them with different eyes to know in depth the details and characteristics. The boundaries within which a tourist guide moves fall within the tourism sector but, in fact, they define a very specific area, namely: that of cultural tourism.



Therefore, a tourist guide can help:

1. Foreign tourists visiting a country and interested in its history and traditions, curious to know more and to enrich their cultural background with new notions and knowledge;
2. Commercial activities operating in the tourism sector (such as a hotel, a restaurant, a local producer) who want to propose and guarantee their guests and/or clients a complete and unique travel experience in relation to the territory of which they are part;
3. Schools or associations (cultural, artistic, recreational, sports, etc.) whose objective is to give their members the opportunity to deepen, through a guided tour, skills and awareness possibly already learned theoretically.

### *2.3. What are the main roles played by the tourist guide?*

The tasks of the tourist guide and the activities they include can be summarised as follows:

- Welcome and receive one or more groups of tourists.
- Organising and planning an itinerary to follow, showing and explaining in words and pictures to the people who have requested the service.
- Provide clear, true and interesting information on the places of interest chosen and/or encountered along the way.
- To be able to answer questions and curiosities related to the history, culture and traditions of the country visited.
- To arouse interest and satisfy the curiosity of the listener.
- Show that you are able to manage, not only on a theoretical but also on a practical level, large group of people who need to be oriented.
- To be able to logistically organize and plan trips, visits and excursions (for example, taking care of the purchase of tickets and/or solving problems that arise before, after or during the journey).



These will be the main tasks and responsibilities of a tour guide who, as a reference point within a more or less large group of people, should be sociable, open to dialogue and available but, at the same time, act as a leader acting as a reference point for the group.

#### *2.4. The tourist guide in the geopark.*

Below, it will be presented how the work of a tourist guide adapts to the specific context of geopark and geotourism. We will focus on what are the fundamental elements of the territory and the concept of geotourism that must be considered in order to successfully carry out the work of tourist guide in a Geopark.

Tourists who decide to rely on a guide to visit a geopark will be interested in a travel experience that is based on the basic concepts of geotourism. Therefore, a tour guide will have to consider the following elements to satisfy the geotourist:

- Medium-environmental sustainability: the guide's offer must be made with total respect for the environment and must not in any way generate a risk for the territory. For this reason, it is necessary to consider all the possible impacts, negative and positive, that the exercise of the activity can have on the territory.
- Socio-cultural sustainability: the guide's offer must consider, respect and defend local cultures and ensure that they do not expose themselves to the presence of visitors in a risky way.
- Synergy of the offer: a successful tourist offer for a geotourist should include as many unique elements of the territory, population and local activities as possible in order to create a unique travel experience.
- The concept of local: the guide's offer to be successful will have to be based on the concept of local and create opportunities, both for tourists to discover something new and for locals to take advantage of the presence of tourists (for example, through the presentation of geoproducts to tourists).

Once we understand who the different types of tourists are and what they are looking for and what tools a guide can use to meet their needs, in the next module we will see how a commercial tourist guide activity is formally developed, starting with the development of a business plan.

In summary:

**When designing products/services, the guide should always consider motivations, needs and expectations different type of tourists may have.**





## MODULE 3: The business plan: from the idea to the development of the activity.

The aim of this didactical unit is to enable participants to draft a business plan for the creation of new entrepreneurial activities operating in the geotourism sector. The goals to achieve in this module are the following:

- Learning the main techniques and methodologies that can be used to carry out a market and competition analysis;
- Being able to develop a business project, from the birth of the business idea to the creation and implementation of the plan.

### 3.1. The business plan.

The new company usually starts from an idea, an intuition: the discovery of a new technology, the expansion of the demand for a product/service, the modification of consumers' tastes and purchasing propensities, the success of other companies, the identification of a need and a market shortage.

From this intuition an organized process of idea verification must start. This analysis process leads to the drafting of a business plan, in order to ascertain whether the business idea has an outlet market, whether the product/service can be purchased by the consumer and what the selling price could be.

In the business plan will emerge:

- the technical characteristics that the product/service will have
- the necessary technology/equipment
- the type of market you intend to serve
- the image you want to give the company
- the promotional policies to be implemented







- pricing policies
- the capital needed to start up and run the business
- members/collaborators to be involved
- the most appropriate legal form
- the bureaucratic formalities to be carried out.

At the end of this analysis/research process, the potential entrepreneur will be able to enter the market with a reasonable degree of certainty about the potential of the idea and the feasibility of the project having identified the main actions that will be undertaken in the first three years of the company's life.

The business plan is fundamental for all types of activities: an entrepreneur must always be able to know what he wants to do and how to do it, he must have a tool that can help him in the evaluation of the idea. This allows to verify the feasibility of the project, trying to transform the generic risk into calculated risk. The business plan then becomes a management control tool that allows you to find any deviations from the forecasts.

The objectives of the business plan are therefore the following:

1. Provide fundamental information for the start-up of the activity, (what and how many economic, financial and human resources are needed, what are the characteristics of the product and the market, what are the competing activities, who are the typical customers);
2. Allow the entrepreneur a global vision of the factors that characterize the company, providing a basis on which to plan strategies and actions;
3. Emphasize the originality of the business idea;
4. Verify the interest of potential customers;
5. Monitor the achievement of the set objectives;
6. Verify consistency between the individual actions indicated, and in particular between the description of the activity and related revenues and costs;



7. Define the legal form in relation to the characteristics of the future company;
8. Formulate reliable forecasts by simulating the various hypotheses of development of the company's activity;
9. Serve as a "business card" to present the enterprise to the outside world (potential partners, lenders, banks, customers and suppliers).

In summary, two macro functions of the Business Plan are identified: an internal analysis and planning function, to clarify the ideas to the future entrepreneur on all the various aspects of starting a new business, and an external communication function, to expose the idea to potential partners, financiers, suppliers, customers and banks.

### *3.2. Market and competition analysis.*

It often happens that, in love with your idea, you do not see or underestimate the context in which you are going to operate: the market. It is a frequent mistake that can sometimes generate serious problems for the company, to start your own business is essential knowledge of the market of reference. This means carrying out in-depth and concrete analyses on potential direct competitors (those who produce the same good or provide an identical service) and indirect competitors (those who produce a good or provide a similar service that can easily represent a substitute), and on potential customers (analysing their needs, their characteristics, their purchasing processes).

It is the reference market that dictates the "rules of the game": knowing them and making them their own creates a competitive advantage over the competition. Adequate market research, flanked by a detailed and accurate analysis of the subjects acting within the reference context, offers a series of valuable information, which leads to define the strategy with which to face the market.

The questions that therefore need to be asked are: which is the reference market? Who are the competitors and customers?

To answer these questions, the following aspects will need to be analysed.





## **A) ANALYSIS OF PRODUCTS - SERVICES:**

The analysis of the market applications of the company's products/services makes it possible to define the optimal combination of these products/services and will therefore have to be valued from an economic point of view. The "Product System" is then defined by describing the products/services and their attributes that the company has developed or is theoretically able to develop, the range and the product families available. Each of them can be addressed to a well-defined segment of potential customers. It is also necessary to define the development status of each product/service (commercial prototype).

## **B) ANALYSIS OF TARGET CUSTOMERS:**

The characteristics of the customers to whom the market application (or market applications, if there are more than one) is addressed are described, i.e. the product/service combination, the needs it satisfies and the advantages offered to the customer. For each of the products identified in the product/service analysis it is necessary to identify which are the potential customers. This is done initially through the identification of the needs that the product intends to satisfy (identification of the needs that the product/service meets) and the description of the products/services themselves, highlighting the distinctive competitive advantage of the new product proposed compared to competing products.

Particular attention must be paid to those customers who have expressed interest in the product/service, providing a brief description of the parties who have concretely expressed interest in the initiative and which elements have been assessed with greater interest by them. Then we will proceed to the subdivision of potential customers with respect to their geographical location (provincial, regional, national, European), demographic and socioeconomic status (small users, large users, public bodies, businesses, etc.).

It may be useful, for each grouping, to identify the possible reasons for purchasing (cost, quality, reliability, service, etc.) and the related procurement methods (on the market from a few selected suppliers, through tenders, with deferred payment or immediately, seasonally or continuously, etc.). Finally, it must be stated whether it is considered that the entry of the new company on the market could create a new market by bringing out still unexpressed latent needs of potential customers and, if so, to what extent this could happen (e.g. increase in the total number of potential customers, increase in capacity and propensity to spend, increase in average purchases, etc.).

### C) COMPETITION ANALYSIS:

Competition includes all those companies that meet the same need as the company to be launched (even with different technology/methods). In the competition analysis, the main companies operating in the same market/sector as your company are examined.

For each of the identified products it is necessary to carry out an analysis of the competitive environment, that is:

- Describe the products/services on the market today that meet the same needs (or how those needs are currently met by potential customers) and then identify potential competitors;
- Report the characteristics of the main competitors identified;
- Identify the main companies operating in the sector, their average size (assessed in terms of turnover, employees, etc.), market shares, if available location and outlet markets, product/service characteristics and distribution channels, marketing strategies.
- On the basis of this information, particular attention should be paid to the competitive advantage of competitors, the likely response of competitors to the entry of a new competitor and the level of interest in the target markets of the new company;
- Highlight the main differentiators of the start-up from competitors identified, based on the above variables, as most dangerous;
- Detect the presence of possible barriers to entry (high capital requirements, need for patents and licenses, difficulty in accessing distribution channels, lack of specific requirements, etc.);
- Finally, summarise the strengths and weaknesses of our competitors, as identified above (to understand what our competitors will be and how to define competitive strategies).

In this process the WEB represents a resource to find information about competitors.

### 3.3. *The development of the business plan*

The business plan generally consists of three parts:

- An introductory part that describes the business idea, the genesis of the idea and the promoting members of the initiative;
- A technical-operational part that analyses the feasibility of the business idea on the market and the organization of the activity;
- A quantitative-monetary part that develops the economic-financial forecasts of the company.

#### 3.3.1 Mission and business idea

This is an introductory section in which the mission and the business idea is described, i.e. the function and role of the company in the market and the reason for its existence, as well as the professional and personal path that led aspiring entrepreneurs to decide to start a business.

It is a moment of reflection in which the motivations that led to the decision to start a business must emerge and be analyzed: any business activity involves risks and certainly generates problems of various kinds (from relationships with partners to those with suppliers, defaulting customers and any lenders). It is therefore important to pause and think about the context in which the idea was generated and the basic motivations.

The questions that need to be asked are: what is the objective of the company (mission)? How did the idea come about and on the basis of what motivations? Who are the promoters?

**PURPOSE:** a summary of the basic information from which to develop the business description path.

Points to analyse:



### THE MISSION

- a) Definition of the company mission (planned objectives)

### THE BUSINESS IDEA

- a) Description of the idea
- b) Birth of the business idea
- c) Progress of the project
- d) Reasons for entrepreneurship
- e) Distinctive features and possible elements of innovation

### PROMOTERS

- a) Professional characteristics
- b) Previous personal and family business experience

#### 3.3.2 The location of the activity.

The choice of the location of a new company is generally made on the basis of its resources and the offers available locally and in relation to the type of activity to be carried out and its market, as well as the distribution policies to be implemented.

This choice is particularly important for commercial and service companies because their sales potential depends on the catchment area that surrounds them and the location influences their image.

These choices might include the decision to purchase or rent the properties in which the activity will be carried out.

The elements that influence the choice can be:

- Proximity to the outlet markets and the possibility of reaching them easily;
- Existence of infrastructure (service centres, railways, motorways);
- Use of qualified professional services;
- Possibility of obtaining public incentives in the case of economically disadvantaged areas.



Questions to ask: Which location allows me to minimize costs? Are there areas where special incentives are available?

PURPOSE: To find the right location for the activity.

Points to analyse:

### LOCALISATION

(a) Location of the undertaking and reason for the choice

(b) Economic situation of the territory

#### 3.3.3 Market strategies: promotion policies.

For an activity that is born it is absolutely essential to be known in the right way. Promotional activities that are wrong or aimed at everyone without distinction are a waste of time and money. In light of the identification and definition of the type of market in which it is intended to operate, initiating the right promotional policy becomes consequently simpler. In the language of marketing we talk about four components: product, price, communication and distribution.

Questions to ask: How do I make my company and my products known? What are the most effective advertising tools?

PURPOSE: To identify the possible tools to make yourself known and identify the right promotion channels.

Points to analyse:

### PROMOTION POLICIES

a) Promotional policies envisaged;

b) Price policy for each homogeneous product/service category;

c) Planned distribution or disbursement policies;

d) Advertising and communication.





#### 3.3.4. Operational plan and organisation of the activity.

The company structure can be defined as the set of resources on which the company relies to achieve its objectives, it is necessary to consider not only resources of a material nature but also those typically intangible. We can trace the company structure back to the following variables:

- Commercial
- Administrative
- Staff - organizational

It is necessary to identify what are the technical resources, i.e. tangible and intangible assets, that are needed to start the business. In fact, critical points that were previously underestimated may emerge, such as bureaucratic constraints or problems with customers. Not having the goods or services at the time of the request, especially during the start-up phase, can be detrimental to the image and credibility of the company.

It is then useful to establish and define the organizational processes of the activity: the roles and responsibilities of those who work within the company, identify the right person to refer to, who is competent for every aspect related to the tasks entrusted to him/her. Hence the importance of choosing collaborators suitable for the type of company to be created and the positions to be filled.

The promoters must, by mutual consent and with respect for their personal characteristics, define their respective roles, establishing positions, responsibilities, decision-making methods and remuneration expectations.

With respect to employees, the initial and potential staff requirements, the necessary profiles and costs must be defined. It is also necessary to evaluate the possibility of entrusting part of the work to external collaborators, without increasing the number of employees.

Defining the need for resources in advance therefore serves to coordinate all the start-up phases.



Questions to ask: What resources are needed? Who does what?

PURPOSE: To plan the operations in detail in order to define the need for resources and skills for the development of the company.

Points to analyse:

### HUMAN RESOURCES

- a) Partners and owners (curricula and role in the business project)
- b) Employees and collaborators (number, characteristics, age, qualifications, duties, professional requirements)

### INTANGIBLE "TECHNICAL" RESOURCES

- a) Professional requirements;

### ORGANISATION OF THE VARIOUS AREAS AND THEIR CRITICAL POINTS

- a) Delivery of the service (from the identification of the need to the implementation of the service - ability to customize the service)
- b) Purchases (main external purchases, main suppliers and related behavioural logic, financial aspects related to purchases, critical issues)
- c) Administration, accounting, fiscal aspects, economic-management control (outsourcing and/or internalisation, control instruments and methods)
- d) Entrepreneurial coordination (the functions envisaged, if any)

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Description of the structured relationships between those who work in the company (graphic representation, if any: organisation chart).

#### 3.3.5. The legal structure

In order to be able to carry out an entrepreneurial activity, it is necessary to identify oneself in one of the legal forms provided for by current legislation. An enterprise can be carried on in the form of:

- Individual enterprise.
- Company (partnership/capital/cooperative).
- Other forms of self-employment.

The choice must be made on the basis of various considerations related to subjective and objective aspects:

- Number of promoters.
- Nature of the activity carried out.
- Size of the enterprise.
- Availability of capital.
- Degree of responsibility that partners intend to assume.
- Taxation system.
- Possibility of resorting to particular forms of financing and facilities.

Every legal form has in itself advantages and contraindications: there is no ideal legal form, it is necessary to take into account the needs and characteristics of the activity to be carried out.

PURPOSE: to identify the appropriate legal form to be given to the new business activity.

Points to analyze:

#### LEGAL FORM

- a) Legal form chosen;
- b) Necessary Fulfilments for the constitution;
- c) Bureaucratic and administrative procedures;



### 3.3.6. Investments.

This section must indicate the investments necessary to start the business: equipment, furnishings, any renovations and the related costs that must be incurred or have already been incurred.

The questions that need to be answered: What is needed and how much does it cost?

PURPOSE: To prepare an "expense note" that serves to plan what and how many material and economic resources are needed to start the activity.

Points to analyse:

#### INVESTMENT PLAN

- (a) Description of investments (made and planned) and related depreciation;
- (b) Production capacity and competitive benchmarking;

### 3.3.7. The provisional budget.

The previous part of the business plan served to provide all the information related to the business idea, the professionalism necessary for its development, the chosen market, the people involved, the necessary means and equipment. From the qualitative data it is necessary to extrapolate quantitative information: it is necessary to develop a prior analysis of costs/revenues, identify the items of cash in and out, the amount of investments needed and any financing to be requested.

An entrepreneurial project must be feasible from both an economic and financial point of view: it is convenient if it allows to reach an income balance within a reasonable time and then to achieve a positive result, while it is financially feasible if the appropriate cover is provided for the expected monetary needs. It is necessary to draw up economic and financial projections and then draw up a forecast balance sheet.

Questions to ask: How much does it cost and how much does it pay? Do I have the necessary funds to start the business? How quickly can I get back into the capital invested? Is the idea economically viable and therefore feasible?



PURPOSE: Check the profitability and feasibility of the business project

Points to analyze:

#### BUSINESS PLAN

- a) Investment plan;
- b) Sales budget;
- c) Cost budget per product/service;
- d) Calculation of the break-even point;
- e) Audited Profit and Loss Account;
- f) Financial plan: budget for revenue and expenditure;

#### *3.4. Final considerations.*

Remember that the Business Plan is a dynamic, non-static tool that must be progressively adapted to changes in ideas and objectives.

Once the analysis of all the elements has been completed and the feasibility of the project has been verified, the company is potentially able to start its activity. The strengths and weaknesses of the company must then be identified and the chances of success or failure assessed: in the light of the data collected, it is possible to establish whether the idea is feasible or whether it needs corrections and adjustments. After the start-up, it will be necessary to constantly check and maintain the forecasts made, implementing a strategic control, i.e. an estimate of the progress towards achieving the set objectives.

In summary:

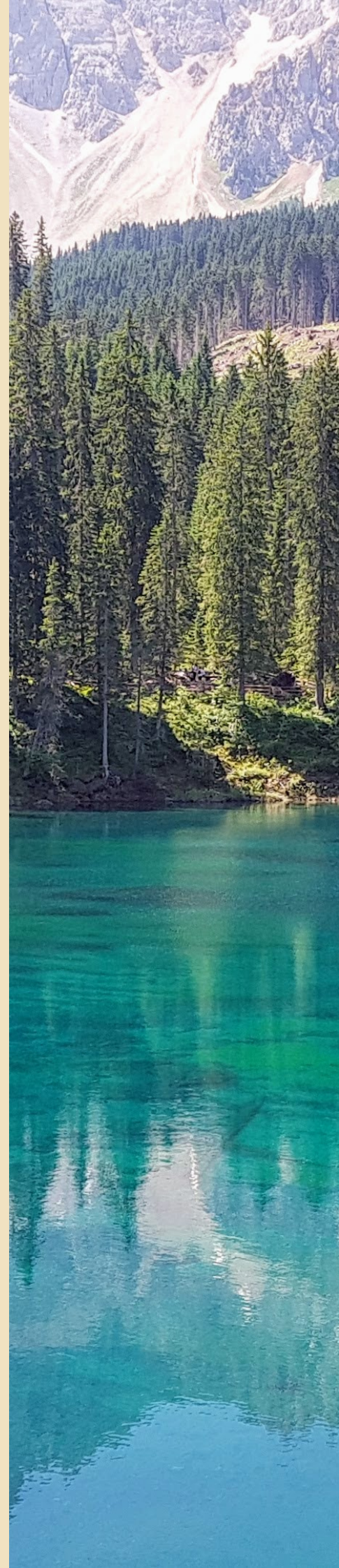
**Before launching a product/service in the market, the guide should always spend some time trying to find answers to the questions at the base of a business plan.**



## MODULE 4: Success cases.

This point will present four cases of four different projects that have been successful in designing activities for tourists. The examples have been selected for their affinity with the objectives of the course, for having developed one or a series of successful tourist activities for all the actors involved in the ecosystem of the territory. The templates that follow have been filled by people that are directly responsible of the design, launch and follow-up of the activities.

The aim of this module is therefore to stimulate participants in the development of a business idea or, if possible, in the innovation of an existing one. The working approach that will later arise is therefore replicable by a person or organisation that has an interest in developing a tourism activity in a geopark.



#### 4.1. Case Study 1 - Cross-Border Photo Marathon - Novohrad-Nógrád UNESCO Global Geopark

##### **Name of the activity and detailed description of the activity and its mission.**

###### Cross-Border Photo Marathon

This 3 day-long media event held in every second year provides for the amateur photographers from all over Central Europe an opportunity to meet and capture the natural, historical and cultural assets of this borderless and photographer-friendly Slovak-Hungarian Geopark, which proudly maintains its identity. The field of these experiments is the picturesque Medves Plateau, the largest basalt lava plateau in Central Europe, a protected landscape which extends from the Hungarian to the Slovak territory of the transborder Geopark.

The photographers, participating in several specific and guided programmes, can compete with their best photos taken during the event in the categories of landscape, people and living nature.

The programmes by themselves are exciting. For night photos, ruins of the fortresses standing on volcanic peaks were illuminated and experts deliver field lectures about astrophotography under the night sky. The dawn and sunset photo taking activities embrace the cycle of the day, accompanying people could discover then rich folklore of the Palóc ethnic group inhabiting the Geopark.

There is a focus on controlling environmental impact, only small-group guided tours are allowed to enter the area, the tracks have to have prior nature conservation authority permits in both sides of the border. The tours start from Hungary and end in Slovakia, linking the two sides of the frontier.

The mission of the project is to enhance the recognition of the geopark's natural-cultural assets, maintain and rediscover its traditions, increase the number of visitors' staying overnight, generate income for local enterprises and strengthen cooperation among stakeholders of the Geopark.

#### 4.1. Case Study 1 - Cross-Border Photo Marathon - Novohrad-Nógrád UNESCO Global Geopark

##### **Name of the activity and detailed description of the activity and its mission.**

###### Why do you consider this activity as successful?

It has already proved to be exceptionally effective tool for raising public awareness towards nature conservation issues, for promoting the geopark idea and sustainable tourism and for strengthening the co-operation among the main stakeholders of the Geopark and of the local inhabitants. Besides, more than 100 volunteers help managing the event, who during their work unwittingly become advocates of the Geopark.

As follow-ups exhibitions of the best photos are circulated in schools, public cultural institutions and visitor centres on both sides of the Geopark. 800 photographers and 2500 other participants took part in the photo competitions more than 850 photographs, taken by 300 photographers competed for prizes.

###### Describe in which ways this activity is adding value to the Geopark and local communities.

The unique and multifaceted Photo Marathon is a very successful grassroots marketing tool of our modern time. It brought people of different interests together, made them sensitive to nature and landscape protection and strengthened the identity of the Geopark for outsiders and inhabitant alike. Its large scale forced effective cooperation among geopark staff members and stakeholders, like the Bükk National Park Directorate.

As a side effect, the output has been viewed so far by hundreds of thousands of people using different social media platforms. Through their experiences, the participants became advocates of the Geopark, shared their photos on their own websites and blogs.

#### 4.1. Case Study 1 - Cross-Border Photo Marathon - Novohrad-Nógrád UNESCO Global Geopark

Describe the final consumers/users/clients of the activity.

Photographers and their accompanying people within and outside the region, social media and photo exhibition viewers of the end results / local businesses, experts, legal stakeholders and volunteers.

Which skills are necessary to develop and manage this activity? Who is in charge/responsible of/for the activity?

Special skills and expertise on photography and natural-cultural resources, organizational and interpretative skills beside fund raising abilities are important. The two photographers owning the brand are needed to take part in the project as authorised personnel from the geopark. Local municipalities and nature conservation agencies have to endorse the project of the geopark.

Which are the main problems that this activity faced/is facing?

It depends on the cooperation of the two photographers and the geopark staff, beside the stakeholders. Weather conditions can spoil the outdoor activities, huge number of volunteers are needed. Time consuming and complex preparations can be exhaustive. Lodging facilities are not well developed.

Which parts/elements of the activity are the ones that you consider as more successful ("best practices")? Why?

The brand name of the Photo Marathon gives an idea about the project for natives and foreigners alike as a good marketing tool. Best photos are exhibited at the gateways of the geopark extending the impact of the event. The social media platform of the project gives a boost to advertising the photographed geosites and other natural resources.

## 4.2. Case Study 2- Cabra Jurásica - Sierras Subbéticas UNESCO Global Geopark.

### **Name of the activity and detailed description of the activity and its mission.**

#### Cabra Jurásica

Cabra, the village from Sierras Subbéticas with the deepest historical connection to the geology and geoheritage of the territory, inaugurated in 2015 Cabra Jurásica, nowadays one of the reference interpretation centres in the Geopark. The germ of Cabra Jurásica was the route proposed by Sierras Subbéticas Geopark for the commemoration of Geolodía 2014, Córdoba. Geolodía is an annual day devoted to the dissemination of geology in Spain through geological excursions in each of the provinces. The urban route proposed a visit to the City of Cabra to contemplate the innumerable geological vestiges scattered through its streets, squares, fountains, columns, paving stones, facades and church altarpieces. The Geopark guided the activity and produced a specific brochure for it.

After the celebration of the Geolodía, and in view of the exceptional reception of the initiative, the Cabra City Council integrated the urban route into its cultural and tourist offer. It was even exposed during the 2015 edition of the International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR), Madrid. Over time, the initiative gained importance and thanks to the disinterested cession of several naturalists from the territory, the Cabra Jurásica Interpretation Centre was founded in 2016. This museum exhibits, very didactically, one of the best collection of ammonites in Spain. Apart from the ammonite collection, the centre also includes a small laboratory, a sample preparation room, and several other areas dedicated to the Geopark, the fossilization process, the geological time, or the karstic cave formation.

Currently, the urban route in Cabra and the Interpretation Centre are both operated by a private stakeholder. This has given a new dynamic impulse to the project, not only implementing the existing activities but also projecting a battery of actions of great significance for the most immediate future. Some of these actions include the organization of the First National Forum of Paleontological Tourism, to be held in Cabra, the implementation of a more dynamic and interactive website, the generation of didactic material for teachers and students of primary and secondary schools, and the erection of the forum "Friends of Cabra Jurásica", an initiative for empowering locals and making them participant of the project, which, in ultimate instance, it would make them participant of the Subbéticas geoheritage.



#### 4.2. Case Study 2- Cabra Jurásica - Sierras Subbéticas UNESCO Global Geopark.

##### Why do you consider this activity as successful?

The development of Cabra Jurásica has been a successful enterprise because it virtually deals with all the missions that European Geoparks are committed to:

- Sierras Subbéticas Geopark had an active role in the economic development of the territory, triggering a geotouristic initiative that are now indeed successfully handed since the private sector.
- The initiative represents an example of cooperation with Geopark inhabitants and stakeholders since this project was moved from the Geopark to the local administration of Cabra and then, to a local private company. Furthermore, the geopark also provided very active technical advice during the preparation of the interpretation centre.
- The erection of an interpretation centre that focuses on the geoheritage of a territory not only offers inhabitants the possibility to didactically learn about it, but also provides public awareness towards nature conservation.
- The urban georoute focusses the interest not only on geoheritage but also on historical, cultural and architectonic heritage. Apart from being a fulfilled commitment, this initiative represents an innovation that, in ultimate instance, also raises awareness of geoheritage conservation.

##### Describe in which ways this activity is adding value to the Geopark and local communities.

Cabra Jurásica is a stockholder that share objectives with the Geopark. These basically include the promotion of geoheritage in conjunction with cultural, architectonic and historical heritage, the development of sustainable geotouristic activities, and the protection of the geoheritage and nature. Having a partner with the same objectives definitely strengthens the Geopark mission.

At the other hand, the demonstration to local people that the Geopark can act as triggering engine for the promotion of economic activities has an enormous impact in its own reliability.

#### 4.2. Case Study 2- Cabra Jurásica - Sierras Subbéticas UNESCO Global Geopark.

The local community have been clearly favoured with this initiative because they find now a much better touristic, educational and cultural offer.

Describe the final consumers/users/clients of the activity.

Local and foreign people interested in nature as well as culture, history and architecture, students and teacher from primary and secondary schools.

Which skills are necessary to develop and manage this activity? Who is in charge/responsible of/for the activity?

Apart from motivation and enthusiasms, all the skills required for successfully develop an enterprise like that deal with knowledge on geology, geoheritage and tourism, the three pillars that sustain the present Guide-Interpreter of Geotourism.

Which are the main problems that this activity faced/is facing?

Cataloguing the large amount of ammonite fossils that compose the exposed, and unexposed, collection at Cabra Jurásica Interpretation Centre requires the collaboration of specialists and researchers. For reasons of agenda, the work and time that these professionals can dedicate to this initiative is unfortunately limited.

At the other hand, the urban georoute in Cabra depends on the weather conditions, as occurs with any other outdoor route, but in this particular case, it also depends on the authorizations and approvals from hose owners and local/ecclesiastical authorities.

The geoturistic activities proposed by Cabra Jurásica are still in their youth. By the moment, they have being more widely used by scholars, but this is a matter of time.

Which parts/elements of the activity are the ones that you consider as more successful ("best practices")? Why?

The harmony and good level of connection between the Geopark, the local administration of Cabra and the private stockholder that is finally managing Cabra Jurásica was essential for the success of this enterprise.

## 4.2. Case Study 2- Cabra Jurásica - Sierras Subbéticas UNESCO Global Geopark.

Regarding the best practices adopted in the running of the initiative, it must be said that none of the fossils that are now in the interpretation centre was bought. All of them, without a single exception, were obtained by voluntary donations. In that sense, the centre has contributed to the recovery of a geological heritage that, otherwise, was bound to be forgotten. Therefore, the Cabra Jurásica Interpretation Centre has represented an impressive movement of geoconservation and recovering in Sierras Subbéticas. Besides, the information and panelling at the centre was carefully composed to fulfil the expectations of people of all ages and abilities.

For the urban georute, a descriptive brochure and a toolbox with a brush, a magnifying glass, cleaning water, modelling clay, a pen, a notebook and a scale are offered to visitors so that they, by themselves or with the help of local guides, can complete the challenges proposed by the brochure in each observation point. This provides a more complete experience to visitors. The exquisite care with which the “urban outcrops” are treated is also an example of good practices.



### 4.3. Case Study 3 – Youth and locals in the aspiring Bükk-region Geopark's turistic caves.

Name of the activity and detailed description of the activity and its mission.  
Youth and locals in the aspiring Bükk-region Geopark's turistic caves

#### **Main goals:**

- Students were able to learn more about aspiring Bükk-region Geopark's turistic tasks and its developments from first steps.
- Get local people more sensitive about geosites of their nearby surroundings.
- Raise awareness of the importance of caves.

It is extremely important that students studying at universities in Northern Hungary be familiar with the ecotourism offers of the region, and that lecturers and students are also involved in the regional development work related to the Geopark. Thus, students from two large universities in the region were able to visit the geological values of the geopark.

Not only addressing university students is important, but high school students as well. At the secondary school level, a pilot project was developed and implemented together with the Eventus Vocational School in Eger, within the framework of which students can get to know the geological values of Bükk several times a year.

#### Why do you consider this activity as successful?

For locals: According to surveys, the citizens of Miskolc do not, or very rarely, visit the caves, which are otherwise close to them. In the St. István Cave last year, we launched a series of programs specifically for locals. They were able to visit the cave at a discounted ticket price.

During the organization and the elaboration of the tour, we paid special attention to the fact that the citizens of Miskolc would get acquainted not only with the geological, but also with the cultural and historical values related to the cave, which has an extremely important identity-enhancing role.

The program can strengthen pride in their narrower living environment and increase the positive attitude of the local population towards geotourism. At the same time, it is also important to highlight that geological exploration of caves in the Geopark area is ongoing.

### 4.3. Case Study 3 – Youth and locals in the aspiring Bükk-region Geopark's turistic caves.

For students: Children get to know their wider environment. They hear and learn about the natural and geological values in their vicinity. They see and experience what tourism sector offers in live, and they can hear reports on strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats from previous experiences from professionals. The students of the Eszterházy Károly University (Eger) whose are majoring in tourism got to know the geological values, wildlife and ecotourism offer of Szilvásvár village. Students of the University of Miskolc visited the caves of Lillafüred.

Describe in which ways this activity is adding value to the Geopark and local communities.

The series of programs introduces the local population to the values of the geopark (geological, cultural, archaeological), thus strengthening their identity and attachment to the area. Furthermore, the positive attitude of the local population towards geotourism can be increased. Last but not at least, it's also important to reach citizens of Miskolc. According to the statistics they are also part of the visitors, but they are the rarest, as we experienced, they mostly visit this type of attractions ones, two times in their lifetime. If we consider the locals as our target, we have to highlight the fact those don't just only have touristic value only for them, but they can carry cultural and historical values as well.

Describe the final consumers/users/clients of the activity.

The caves have the most significant number of visitors. Those have approx. 80.000 visitors yearly. As a tourist destination it's selected by not only Hungarians, but foreigners as well, such as Slovaks and Polish mostly.

Caves play a key role in geological and geographical education, as students can physically see what they have learned about in school. From kindergarten to university students, we are wide open. University students visit us during their professional fieldtrips to know more about the formation of caves, karst hidronimics and other cave formation related knowledge. Many classes visit the area, and their week program more than often includes the visits to our caves.



### 4.3. Case Study 3 – Youth and locals in the aspiring Bükk-region Geopark's turistic caves.

Which skills are necessary to develop and manage this activity? Who is in charge/responsible of/for the activity?

It is crucial to have knowledge of the local citizens. Furthermore, we have to keep in mind the usage of a suitable way of communication. The role of the research and tourism group's members are also mandatory part of the whole picture.

Skills that follow are the important to develop in order to successfully manage the activity: Active Listening, Adaptability, Communication, Creativity, Interpersonal Communication, Management, Problem-solving, Teamwork, Public speaking, Storytelling, Verbal communication, Visual communication, Creativity, Critical observation, Critical thinking, Design aptitude, Innovation, Problem solving, Research, Thinking outside the box, Tolerance of change and uncertainty, Troubleshooting, Value education, Willingness to learn, Conflict management, Conflict resolution Talent management.

Which are the main problems that this activity faced/is facing?

Problems, tasks to be solved:

- Management of a large number of visitors in the area.
- Finding a balance between presentation and conservation issues.
- The effect of the artificial light in caves (light-generated flora in caves), to the natural cave environment.
- For university students: Emphasize the field education and fieldtrips for university students. Currently is limited.
- Communication of the Geopark Values.

Which parts/elements of the activity are the ones that you consider as more successful ("best practices")? Why?

The most successful element of the program is that local residents can get an idea of the geological and cultural values of their narrower living environment. Both caves of the geopark of the Bükk region in Lillafüred can be accessed and virtually explored with the help of a mobile application (GUIDE @ HAND BNPI). Promoting this is also effective not only among tourists, but also among locals.

#### **4.3. Case Study 3 – Youth and locals in the aspiring Bükk-region Geopark's turistic caves.**

The caves can also provide place for introducing the goods of the local producers, which can help to spread the product knowledge among the tourists, including the locals, Hungarians and on the top of it that works on abroad too. The caves and their products/services are represented at the accommodations also. As a solution for this, we introduced the "Geo-kult" program, which contains discounted ticket prices for the citizens of Miskolc. They will know the caves not just only from geological and touristic perspective but in addition they gain connection with the local history and folklore, what can be considered as a solution for strengthen the identity.

We have introduced an online ticketing and booking system, so the issuance of a paper-based ticket was bypassed. Visitors can pay for tickets through multiple payment systems, this helps us with sales. One of our goal is to use as little paper as possible, thus reducing the environmental impact.



#### 4.4. Case Study 4 – House of Volcanoes – Hateg Country UNESCO Global Geopark

##### **Name of the activity and detailed description of the activity and its mission.**

###### House of Volcanoes

The House of Volcanoes is an interpretation point and educational space created by the Hateg Country UNESCO Global Geopark (HC UGGp) and managed by a local NGO. It was built in 2014 through the work of volunteers and with the community involvement. It is part of the HC UGG's geotourism network of 6 interpretation points called „Houses”.

The actual house is a construction made of earth, which tells the story of Earth, particularly the geological story of the Hateg Region. It is a place where you can encounter the volcanoes which dominated Hateg Island 70 million years ago. The construction is made of cob (clay, sand, straws and water). The orchard in which the building is located, also houses several interpretative installations.

Since 2017 the House of Volcanoes offers various educational programs. In 2019 it attracted almost 1500 paying visitors. Moreinfo at: <https://www.casavulcanilor.ro/en.php>

###### Why do you consider this activity as successful?

The House of Volcanoes is successful because:

1. It brings together the core elements of a geopark: geodiversity, community involvement and local sustainability. It follows the scientific work about the ancient volcanoes, it is a community driven project and it is self-sustained.
2. It brings economic benefits to the locals directly (three persons from the village work as guides/animators) and indirectly (the tourism flow is diverted into the Densus village).
3. It is the main place of meeting and activity for the youth involved in the Geopark's volunteer program.
4. It is contributing to promotion of geosciences, local geological assets, education and public awareness. It is also contributing to new research activities dedicated to volcanism, geomorphology and local heritage;

#### 4.4. Case Study 4 – House of Volcanoes – Hateg Country UNESCO Global Geopark

5. It is a good place to develop educational activities for local schools;
6. It can attract more financing projects for further activities;

Describe in which ways this activity is adding value to the Geopark and local communities.

1. Geoheritage – every year the place is host to more studies about the late Cretaceous volcanism and marine paleoenvironments.
2. Community involvement and sustainability – see point 2 above.
3. Volunteering –see point 3 above
4. It can stimulate other local initiatives;
5. The earning money are used locally contributing to local economy;
6. Could be a good model for other geoproducts development and is supporting the geoparc in its social entrepreneurship approach.

Describe the final consumers/users/clients of the activity.

The target groups of the House of Volcanoes are school groups and families with children.

Which skills are necessary to develop and manage this activity? Who is in charge/responsible of/for the activity?

The responsibility for this project belongs to Drag de Hateg Association, namely it's manager, Alina Ciobanu, helped by two volunteers, Vlad and Bianca Iorgoni.

The necessary skills are the: ability to work with people, basic geological knowledge, communication (performance) skills and managerial abilities.

All promotional and educational activities are connected with the geopark strategy and management plan.

#### 4.4. Case Study 4 – House of Volcanoes – Hateg Country UNESCO Global Geopark

Which are the main problems that this activity faced/is facing?

- The lack of a parking place dedicated to the facility. The visitors have to park their cars on the side of the street.
- Access difficulties – the House is located on a hill without road access.

Which parts/elements of the activity are the ones that you consider as more successful ("best practices")? Why?

Please, give a detailed description of 2-3 best practices in the running of the activity.

1. The connexion between geoheritage and practical development:  
The House of Volcanoes, as a geoproduct, successfully ties abstract research to economic local benefits. Based on the scientific studies of the Cretaceous volcanoes made by scientist from University of Bucharest and using the community and volunteers as a catalyst, a geotourism infrastructure and offer were built.
2. A successful community involvement in a geopark:  
The project goes well beyond the simple building of a cob house. It comprises local awareness campaigns, educational activities with local schools, numerous meetings with the community to make it aware of the importance of the geological elements interpreted and of the overall purpose of a geopark.
3. A recognised youth volunteer program:  
The House of Volcanoes was the first major project where the young Volunteers for the Geopark were decisive. This program is now well-known in Romania and in the European and Global UNESCO Geoparks Network.
4. A model for interpretation of local, regional and global geological assets:  
Late Cretaceous volcanism, a tectonic contact between volcanic rocks and marine sedimentary rocks, relation with the dinosaur's life in Hateg Island, internal heat, plate tectonics, paleogeography and. Andi Andesite, the mascot, is also part of the interpretation and communication strategy. The inner and outer installations are connected and are introducing other local elements: local biodiversity, local morphology, soils, tangible and intangible heritage.



## REFERENCES

- Calaforra, J. M., & Fernández-Cortés, A. (2006). Geotourism in Spain: resources and environmental management. *Geotourism*. Oxford, 199-220.
- Di Pietro, F. (2013). Le quattro tipologie di viaggiatore. Uno studio sui tratti di personalità. *Rivista di Scienze del Turismo-Ambiente Cultura Diritto Economia*, 3(1), 43-65.
- Grigolli, P. (2011). *Turismi responsabili, Teorie, Pratiche, Prospettive*, Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Papaluca, O., & Tani, M. (2016). Entrepreneurs' Experiences, Motivations, and Sustainability of Tourism. In *Tourism Management, Marketing, and Development*, pp. 239-258. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Samoja, A. (2003). The challenge of responsible tourism. In *Tourism, economical developement and sustainaibility: theory and practice*, pp. 151-155.
- Webpages:
- The Arouca Declaration (2012). Unesco. [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/Geopark Arouca Declaration EGN 2012.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/Geopark_Arouca_Declaration_EGN_2012.pdf)
- <https://ecotourism.org/>
- <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/>
- <https://www.europarc.org/>
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/unesco-global-geoparks/>
- [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/Geopark Arouca Declaration EGN 2012.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/Geopark_Arouca_Declaration_EGN_2012.pdf)

## ANNEX 1. Example of an index to be followed when drawing up a Business Plan

### Example of a trace for the drafting of a BUSINESS PLAN

Premise	
Index	

## CHAPTER 1 - The mission and the business idea

Objectives envisaged	
Description of the idea	
Genesis of the idea	
Promoters of the initiative	

## CHAPTER 2 A - The product / Service

	Characteristics of the product lines
The product / service	Industry characteristics and innovative elements of the product
	Critical factors

## ANNEX 1. Example of an index to be followed when drawing up a Business Plan

### CHAPTER 2 B - Customers and the market

<b>Customers and the market</b>	Potential customer characteristics
	Market identification
	Development prospects
	Market research

### CHAPTER 2 C- Competency

	Direct and indirect competence
<b>Competence</b>	Competitor strengths and weaknesses
	Barriers to entry

### CHAPTER 3 - Localization

	Company location and motivation for the choice
<b>Localization</b>	Economic situation of the territory

## ANNEX 1. Example of an index to be followed when drawing up a Business Plan

### CHAPTER 4 - Promotional policies

<b>Promotional policies</b>	<b>Objectives and promotional strategies</b>
	<b>The price</b>
	<b>The distribution or product / service distribution system</b>
	<b>Communication plan</b>

### CHAPTER 5 - Operational plan and organization

<b>Operational plan and organization</b>	<b>Implementation program (human and technical resources)</b>
	<b>Organization of areas</b>
	<b>Organization chart</b>

### CHAPTER 6 - The legal structure

<b>The legal structure</b>	<b>The legal form</b>
	<b>Aspects and bureaucratic procedures</b>

## ANNEX 1. Example of an index to be followed when drawing up a Business Plan

### CHAPTER 7 - Economic and financial plan

<b>Economic and financial plan</b>	<b>Investment plan</b>
	<b>Sales budget</b>
	<b>Cost budget for product / service</b>
	<b>Break-even point calculation</b>
	<b>Forecast income statement</b>
	<b>Financial plan: estimate of income and expenses</b>