

STUDY TRIP TO DENMARK

D3.3.1

WP 3 - CB PLATFORM FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT
OF ADRIATIC REGION

July 2022

Project Acronym: TAKE IT SLOW
Project ID Number: 1025547
Project Title: Smart and Slow Tourism Supporting Adriatic Heritage for Tomorrow
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Activity Title: CB platform for quality management of Adriatic Region as integrated&sustainable tourist destination
Partner in Charge: PP7/ER
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1. Introduction

According to the AF, PP7/RER is the partner in charge of organising “5-day study trip to Baltic Sea as cross border tourism destination management held (2 pax per PP)”.

The study trip program proposed by PP7/RER was approved by the partnership. The study trip took place from the 2nd of May 2022 to the 5th of May 2022.

2. Purposes of the study trip

The goals were learning good practices in tourism cross border cooperation between Denmark and Germany and getting to know some experiences of green slow (sustainable) tourism.

Also, it was requested to meet tour operators who could explain the needs of Danish tourists, when they travel to Italy and Croatia.

Also, for the Italian partners, since the Regions in Italy (maybe except for Trentino) do not directly

make incoming actions as a policy, which are often developed directly by territorial destinations (DMOs), the study trip was aimed to raise awareness of the management models of a destination.

3. Participants in the study trip

No.	Name of the participant	Organization
1	Ana Orlović	LP/Dubrovnik Neretva County
2	Marija Laznibat	LP/Dubrovnik Neretva County
3	Mirela Raič	Regional Agency DUNEA – LP/DNC
4	Marjan Dumanić	PP1/RERA
5	Maja Vukan	PP1/RERA
6	Mira Lepur	PP2/SKC
7	Karmela Crnica	PP2/SKC
8	Anita Štrkalj	PP2/SKC
9	Ivana Bagić	PP2/SKC
10	Katarina Kokić	PP3/ZAD
11	Irena Dominiković	PP3/ZAD
12	Alessandra Fogar	PP5/FVG
13	Ilaria Formentin	PP5/FVG
14	Maura Mingozi	PP7/RER
15	Cinzia Bortolotti	PP7/RER
16	Cristina Fiorini	APT Servizi (in house RER Tourism Promotion Agency)
17	Maria Tirabasso	PP10/MOL
18	Oscar Vetta	PP10/MOL's stakeholder
19	Lino Manosperta	PP11/TPP
20	Pietro Chiatante	PP11/TPP 's stakeholder: he is the coordinator of the LCP
21	Concetta Boggia	PP11/TPP 's stakeholder: Municipality of Fasano - Tourism Office
22	Maria Luisa Caringella	PP12/PUG

4. Meetings' report

2nd of May: meeting with tour operator Vitus Rejser: what Danish tourists want

On the 2nd of May, in the afternoon, we met **Heidi Maak**, CEO of the tour operator Vitus Rejser (<https://www.vitus-rejser.dk/>).



Vitus Rejser has more than 45 years of experience in organizing group travel for social and active adults, who wish to visit new places and meet new people. Geographically the agency offers a wide range of travels to very different countries and locations. They all share a focus on the historical, gastronomical, and cultural aspects of the destination. There is no age restriction, although most customers are mostly 60+. The tourists travel in groups for social togetherness. They travel by coach and/or by plane. The CEO acknowledges that a coach is not a sustainable mean of transport, but she justifies this choice explaining that in Europe there are too many train changes to reach a destination by train and it is a waste of time for their clients.

Before COVID-19 the number of clients per year was 30.000. The top destinations are: Germany, Spain, Sweden, Italy, Portugal, and Austria. She explains that Croatia is way down the list, probably because there are only direct flights to Croatia in the summer, but Croatia is a growing market.

The policy about the reimbursement to the client is that if something goes wrong the travel agency is 100% responsible and the agency had to refund (sometimes double) the amount paid by the clients, according to the Package Travel Act. During the COVID-19 outbreak, this policy has obviously hit hard the company, because of the number of early returns of the clients that was travelling at that time.

Their clients are frequent travelers around the world, and 50% of them books online.

Because of the reimbursement policy, the tour operator must be very clear about what they sell to their clients (giving detailed description of the accommodation in hotels and of the excursions, of the local transport, etc), which means that tourism incoming companies (hotels, etc) must be trustworthy. The company hand-picked 3-, 4- and 5-star hotels and other incoming services (for example ships).

The CEO specifically referred to the experience with Italy: the tour operator has been working with Italy for 25 years and "*it is a nightmare*" in terms of correspondence between what is booked and what is then given (She gave us the example that if the agency books 10 rooms with balcony, at the check-in it can happen that there are not 10 rooms with balcony, but fewer, and the other rooms do

not match with what was booked, and then Vitus Rejser has to refund the clients that do not get the room with balcony).

With reference to the hotels, the CEO said that their clients want an “atmosphere”, they are looking for cozy hotels, so hotels with big dining rooms (that the CEO called “eating factories”) are not chosen by the tour operator.

Also, in the last ten years, the company has received lots of complaints about the behavior of the children, so the tour operator chooses adult-only -hotels. The clients of Vitus Rejser are willing to pay more to stay in hotels with the above characteristics. Heidi Maak remarks that Danes want hotel rooms with good furniture, with chairs, place for suitcase, more hangers for clothes and light for reading.

The CEO then presented what the Danish tourists want from a trip:

- ABC (not **A**nother **B**loody **C**hurch! 30 years ago this was ok, now we have to think differently)
- Local culture
- Local food gastronomy
- Nature and environment
- Meets the local
- Show us how you treat the local environment

The above list shows that Danish tourists want to do something else, besides visiting churches. They want experiences. On some tours they visited schools, harvested olive (in autumn, during the period of the production of olive oil), attended cooking schools (experiencing, for example, how to make pasta), searched for truffles, etc.

The CEO in her presentation addressed the topic of what we can do for the Danish tour operators: the main point involves hotels (“*suggestions for hotels which fit our clients*”, “*more single rooms without additional cost*”, because 50% of population aged 60-70 years are divorced). Also, due to Covid, the company is receiving in this period the bookings for June. Before Covid the company had most of its summer bookings by Christmas, so the CEO said that the hotels should have short deadlines (“*clients book very close to departure*”).

And if a destination wants to propose itself to Vitus Rejser, the company needs professional photos and videos of the destination (photos in which Vitus Rejser does not want to put the name of the photographer, which is useless, and it is not interesting to anybody).

Their clients, before booking a trip, search on their website and their social networks. The TO recently bought two large advertisements on two newspapers, and the TO noticed that, in analyzing the web traffic data, people typed the URL of the TO website directly in the address bar, which is a sign that the advertisements were seen. Normally, 40% of their website visitors are coming from Google.

Q & A section:

One participant asked how long last their tours: one week in average, if the destinations are cities, 4 nights-5 days, for a trip 9-10 days.

A Croatian participant asked an interesting question: in Croatia there are big hotels, are there some suggestions to meet the expectations of the clients of Vitus Rejser? The question is relevant also for the Italian participants since the CEO in her presentation referred to the Italian hotels built in the '70, which have big dining rooms. The CEO suggested that the huge space of the dining room could be divided in some ways to create smaller cozy places.

Another question regarded the protection of the environment: the CEO answered that their clients (60+) don't expect that other countries are "clean" like Denmark and they don't demand to have the same lifestyle they have in Denmark: for example, they are not bothered if a tourism destination still uses plastic or if they eat more at lunch (Danish people usually have light lunches but the TO never received a complaint of Danish tourists eating too much at lunch during a trip). There is one exception: Danish tourists want the same level of technology they have at home. They want wi-fi, and they are used to pay with a credit card or with a smartphone.

3rd of May: Visit at the workshop of the creative artist Thomas Dambo: connecting people internationally through creativity and art

On the 3rd of May, in the morning, we met **Troels Nielsen**, Thomas Dambo's Business Relations Manager. Thomas Dambo is a Danish artist with a master's in design, he is a recycling and graffiti artist of international fame (<https://thomasdambo.com/>).

His pieces of art can be found in the USA, in Chile, in China, he travels a lot, in fact he was not present during our visit since he was in London.



Troels Nielsen, Thomas Dambo's Business Relations Manager



Thomas Dambo is mainly known for his huge wooden trolls. (picture from <https://thomasdambo.com/>)

His pieces of art, when made of wood (he also works with plastics and with any recycled materials like tyres, corks, plastics, etc), are entirely built using the wood from discarded pallets, scrap wood, twigs, etc. In Denmark, after a pallet has been used once, it is not used anymore (while in some other countries there is a trade for used pallets).

During Covid-19, Thomas Dambo had to stop every project. He had nothing to do. After the initial shock, the artist decided to build 10 trolls which was placed in various parts of Denmark, immersed in the nature. And then he launched the "Treasure Hunt for Giants in the Wild!" (ed: found this Facebook post about this initiative: <https://fb.watch/dWNXbMLqad/>). These places in the nature were not visited by Danes (or tourists) before the trolls were placed there, after the launch of the treasure hunt there has been a constant flow of visitors, including pupils from schools.

Thanks to his success, he was able to buy a big plot of land where he built his workshop, his office, his house, and a barn which he uses to store the recycled materials. Every material is store in a specific place. 17 carpenters work for him.

The process of creating his art is quite interesting: in the case of the trolls, he builds the head and the hands in his workshop, but he cannot finish the work there because of the height of the piece of art. The trolls can be from 2,5 meters to 7 meters high so they could get damaged during the transportation to the final location of the installation.

That's the reason why the head and the hands are transported to the final location and then Thomas Dambo searches for volunteers on location to help finish the piece of art that he is working on. The volunteers are also involved in organise the related events. An example of event has been involving a boarding school: every student had to create a finger from a piece of wood, then all the fingers made by the students were used the build a necklace to be put around the neck of the troll.

The cost of a piece of art can range from 74.000,00 euro to 200.000,00 euro.

3rd of May: Visit in Odense to Bike Island Fyn and Hike Island Fyn

Odense is the third biggest city in Denmark and is located on the Fyn's Island, in the South of Denmark. In the afternoon of the 3rd of May we met **Anders Franz Johansen**, project leader of Hike Fyn, at the Destination Fyn (<https://www.visitfyn.dk/destination-fyn/om-destination-fyn>).

www.visitfyn.com/fyn/outdoor-and-bike/bike-island-fyn

www.visitfyn.com/fyn/experiences/hiking

<https://northsearegion.eu/circ-nsr/project-pilots/destination-fyn/>



Destination Fyn is the official Fyn cluster within tourism and experience economy. The cluster is based on a public-private partnership, which is facilitated by a cluster secretariat under Erhvervshus Fy and has close to 100 members (ed: Erhvervshus Fyn <https://ehfyn.dk/content/ydelser/om-erhvervshus-fyn/31340e4a-0d6b-4460-bea3-5b98b1da3a45/> is a company, owned by the Fyn municipalities, that helps create sustainable growth in competitive, innovative Fyn companies. The company helps with independent specialized sparring and offer individual mapping of companies' growth potential and opportunities for enhanced sustainability).

Franz Johansen started his presentation explaining what Destination Fyn is:

- it is a non-profit organization;
- it is owned by 10 municipalities (ed: according to Wikipedia, 10 are the total number of municipalities of Fyn, they were 32 then reduced to 10 on the 1st of January 2007, by “The Danish Municipal Reform”);
- it has 100 business partners;
- the mission is: support the tourism businesses.

The financial resources of Destination Fyn come from:

Municipalities: 55%

Projects: 38%


Business: 7%



Fyn' island has 1.100 kilometres of coastline, 1.200 kilometres of signed routes. The island is flat, the highest point is Frøbjerg Bavnehøj, which is 131 meters above sea level, and it is the highest natural point of the island.

The most popular outdoor activities in Fyn are the seatrout fishing, known the world around, that is managed in a sustainable way, the biking activity, and the hiking activity.

The vision, the mission and the results of the biking activity are shown in the following slides:


Bike Island DESTINATION FYN 

Vision

- Best Bike destination in the Northern Region
- Awarded Best Outdoor Destination 2019 (Scandinavian Outdoor Award Travel)

Mission

- Top of mind destination - international events
- Strong cooperation with touroperators
- Here we are! Internationally and nationally
- Certified routes
- Strong network



Guest review (2020) DESTINATION FYN

Results

- 96% satisfaction
- General spending 842 kr. (112 Euro)
- Reason to go – Nature and coast
- 28% use the bike entirely for transportation





Franz Johansen stressed that if a destination wants to develop biking tourism it has to offer all the necessary services. In the case of the hotels, the cyclists could arrive with wet clothes (how the hotel manages that?), a cyclist could own a very pricey bicycle (where the hotel will store it?). These examples seem trivial, but these are situations that hotels have to handle if they want to be “bike” hotels.

Bike Island has 110 bike friends: hotels, restaurants, shops located on the coastline selling local products, etc.

Moving on to the hiking tourism, Franz Johansen said that they managed to develop it even if there are no mountains in Fyn and the land is flat. The real challenge has been creating the paths. When a paths network crosses 50 private properties, the owners have to be convinced of the economic

benefit that the hiking activity will bring them.

During the Covid there has been the boom of hiking activities, but the problem is that also unskilled hikers showed up. But they have a lot of volunteers (“the hiking squat”) that regularly check the paths and report problems to the PAs (for example problems with signs, trees, etc). There are twelve observation points.

Hike Funen DESTINATION FYN

Vision

- International Hiking Destination of high quality

We are on a mission

- We will prove you wrong!
- Build strong business collaborations
- Build networks
- Certify paths
- Improved data
- Touroperators

Facts

- 11,5 mio. kr. (1, 5 mio. Euro)
- 9 municipalities



Yes. You can hike in Denmark!

Hike Funen DESTINATION FYN



Improve and develop hiking paths



Business development



Better information and data



Marketing



Sustainability

Future plan:

- They want to have more guided hiking tour;
- Business development: there is space for that, hikers want to sleep in a comfortable bed, they want to eat well and drink good wine;
- Better information and data: they want to improve the data, especially regarding the number

of hikers, the problem is where to put the counters?

- Marketing: they want to become visible, to become an international hiking destination.

Their strategy is the same for the three tourism activities: fishing, biking, and hiking.

Q & A section:

One participant asked what surprised Franz Johansen the most during the hiking offer's process. He answered that he did not expect how long would be the time needed to build a collaboration within PAs and business operators. Also, he did not expect how quickly the landowners wanted to gain money from the hiking offer (ed: he mentioned having 12.000 hikers but not in which interval of time). Also, he had to attend every meeting regarding the building of the path network.

One participant asked if the "businesses" that finance Destination Fyn for the 7% of their resources, are only investors or also offer services? The answer is that they offer services, and small B&B are included. For the tour offers they have to choose tour operator since Destination Fyn has not the skills to carry out this activity. The main target is Danish people, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Holland. One participant asked which are the target visitors: a big segment is represented by people without children, and retired people, these people have more money to spend.

One participant asked who oversees the obtaining of the paths' certification. FJ answered that they are supported by their public administrations to meet the criteria to obtain the certification.

Still about certifications, in developing the Bike Hotels, they took as example the "Bike and Bed" model from Germany (ed, maybe it was "Bett and Bike", the certification from ADFC, the German Cyclists' Association).

One participant asked which criteria they apply to certify the path. Franz Johansen said to search on the web for "leading quality trails" (ed: <https://www.era-ewv-ferp.org/> - <https://www.era-ewv-ferp.org/lqt/lqt-standards/> - <http://www.era-ewv-ferp.com/programs/lqt/step-by-step/> - [LQT brochure EN 02.pdf \(era-ewv-ferp.com\)](#))



3rd of May: meeting with ranger Jan Ravnborg

On the late afternoon of the 3rd of May we met on the North Sea shore the ranger/nature guide **Jan Ravnborg** who showed us how a unique nature can be used in a commercial and still sustainable way.

<https://marskture.dk/>

[Experience the Locks in Højer - Visit Rømø & Tønder \(romo-tonder.dk\)](http://romo-tonder.dk)



On the shore and in the wetland that lies behind the shore the following activities can be carried out with the presence of a ranger:

- “the black sun” guided tour: in September/October hundreds of thousands of starlings (Jan Ravnborg said they could be between 300.000 and 500.000 birds) gather in the marshes looking for rest and for food on their way south for the winter. When the birds attempt a landing, they perform aerial ballets and formations to avoid or counter- attack birds of prey trying to enter the flock. These moving formations block the view to the sky and the phenomenon is therefore called "Black Sun." The phenomenon, which lasts for about an hour, usually ends no later than twenty minutes after sunset;
- Guided “Oyster tours”: an oyster tour can take place when the tide is low. The guide takes the tourists beyond the ford to the oyster banks. The tourists can taste the oysters right away, raw or grilled, or take them home. The oysters are an invasive species, and the number of tourists and the way the tours are managed maintain this activity sustainable for the environment;
- Eagle (and birdwatching) trips: a guide will help visitors to look for sea eagles in the National Park. It can happen to watch one or more of them as they hover over the calf looking for prey but if the sea eagle should not pass by, visitors can see some of the Wadden Sea's many other bird species, as up to 15.000.000 migratory birds pass the Wadden Sea every year.

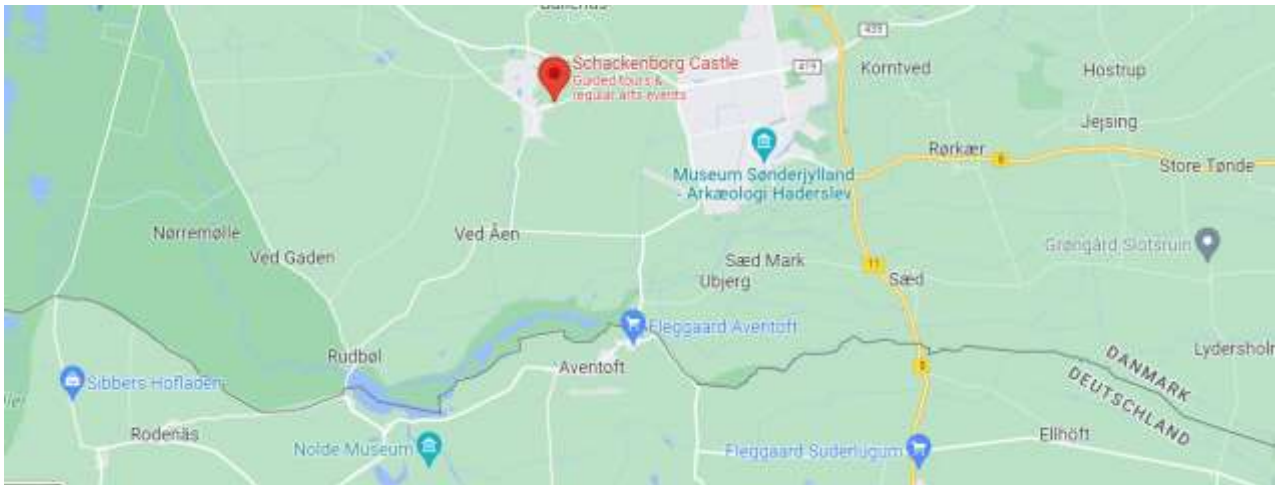
All the tours can be booked online.



4th of May: Guided tour at Schackenberg Castle (www.schackenberg.dk/)

In the morning of the 4th of May, in a stopover during a cycle trip of about 15 km from Tønder to Nolde, the study group was in Møgeltønder, a few kilometres from the border. We met **Morten Gliemann**, freelance journalist and guide at the Schackenberg Castle. The castle is distant nearly 4 kilometres from the Danish – German border.





Morten Gliemann did not explain the origin of the castle, so the following information are extracted on the official website. Lush arable land and strategic location have made the area around Schackenborg attractive and rich since ancient times. No one knows for sure when or who first settled on Schackenborg's lands, but the area has in all probability been inhabited since ancient times. Before Denmark became Christian in the 10th century, there was probably a large farm where Schackenborg is located today. There are many indications that around 1050, there was a fortification in the earliest Middle Ages. Where the earliest history of Schackenborg's earth is associated with great uncertainty, however, the history became much more concrete in the 13th century. In 1234, Møgeltønderhus was

mentioned for the first time in the written historical sources.

Morten Gliemann told us that Møgeltønderhus is the castle that King Frederik III gave to Hans Schack and the place where Hans Schack later built Schackenborg. Hans Schack was a member of the north German noble family Schack, who after many years in French service, entered the Danish service, made major contributions during the war with Sweden (as military governor, Schack commanded Copenhagen during the Swedish siege of 1659), and loyally supported Frederick III when he overthrew the Danish constitution. He became a Danish field-marshal, commander-in-chief of the Danish army, member of the Board of State, and of the Danish Privy Council, and made a Danish count (ed: The importance of this part of the history will be clearer later).

In 1978, the castle returned to the Danish Royal House. The prince and princess lived at the castle until 2014 and now use it as their second home.

A tourist cannot visit the castle and its garden by him/herself. Only guided tours are allowed so tourists and visitors can hear all the stories from one of the skilled guides and see the beautiful buildings up close, also from the inside. There are also guided tours to discover Møgeltønder's history and to experience Møgeltønder Church. The scope of the guided tours is to tell a story, a recurring topic that the participants of the trip will hear often during the meetings.

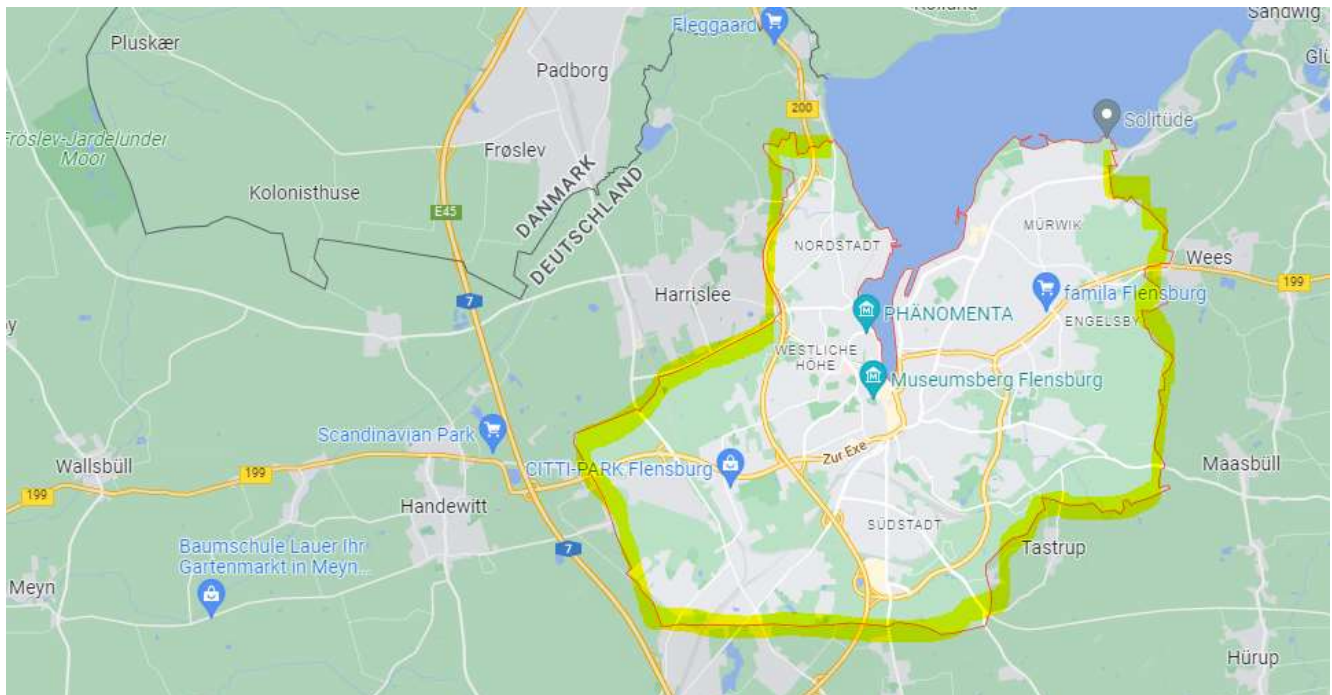
Since Hans Schack was a German that became a Danish national hero, Morten Gliemann said that they are planning to create tour packages for the Germans, relying on the fact that Hans Shaft, the Danish hero, was German. They have a problem: despite the castle is in a cross-border zone, young people living in the Danish part of the border don't speak German anymore, they prefer to learn English. So, they are organizing free German courses for young people to have German speaking guides.

In addition, there is a lack of staff capable of satisfying German tourists: they can't find chefs capable of cooking German dishes and are considering hiring people with this skill from Germany. **The topic that in the border areas it is hard to find some type of vocational jobs will come up again during the visit to another tourist activity.**

4th of May: Meeting with VisitSydslesvig and Flensburg Tourism Office

In the afternoon of the 4th of May, the study group was in Flensburg, a German city right across the border.

----- Flensburg's extension

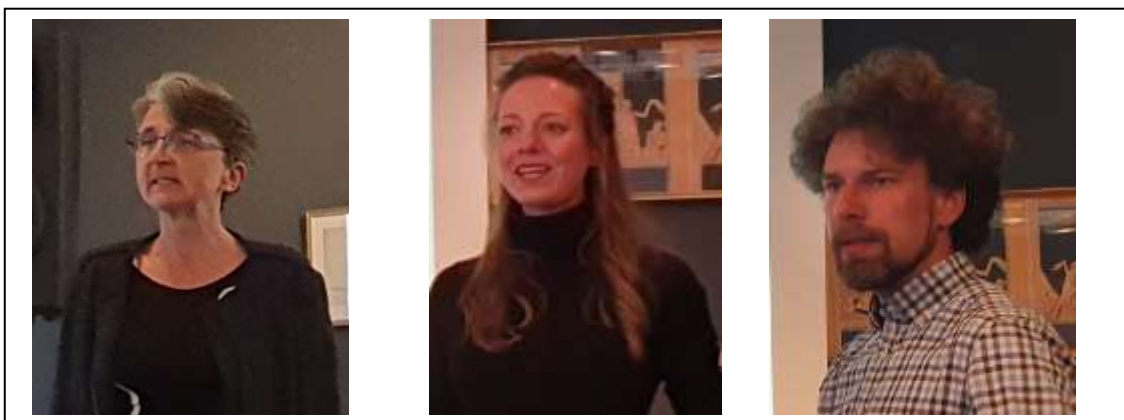


Flensburg is the centre of the region of Southern Schleswig (ed: “Southern Schleswig” in Danish is “Sydslesvig”). Flensburg is the third largest town of the Schleswig-Holstein Region (ed: The Danish minority in Flensburg and the surrounding towns run their own schools, libraries and Lutheran churches from which the German majority is not excluded. The co-existence of these two groups is considered a sound and healthy symbiosis. In Denmark, Flensburg seems to be mainly known for its "border shops" where, among other things, spirits, beer, and candy can be purchased at cheaper prices than in Denmark. The prices are lower because the value-added tax is lower and excise taxes are either lower (e.g. on alcohol) or do not exist (on e.g. sugar). Nearly 15.000 people live near the border.

We met with VisitSydslesvig (<https://www.oplevel-sydslesvig.dk/>) and Flensburg Tourism Office (<https://www.flensburger-foerde.de/en/>) and in particular with:

- Iris Uellendahl**, project leader of the Interreg Deutschland-Danmark Project: Blumen bauen Brücken – Blomster bygger broer (project website: www.bbbprojekt.eu/) (ed: in English “Flowers Build Bridges”);
- **Keike Faltings**, project worker of the Interreg project;
- **Nikolai Lengfeldt**, project leader of “Oplev Sydslesvig” (ed: Danish for “Experience South Schleswig”).

(ed: from left to right in the following pictures)



Iris Uellendahl presented the project “Blumen bauen Brucken – Blomster bygger broer”. It started on the 1st of July 2019, and it will end on the 31st of December 2022. The lead partner of the project is the city of Flensburg with the cities of Aabenraa (Apenrade), Sønderborg (Sønderborg) and Glücksburg as well as the tourism associations Destination Sønderjylland (DSSJ) and Tourismus Agentur Flensburger Förde (TAFF) as project partners. Each partner has dedicated itself to realize a number of projects within the overall project in cooperation with the partners.

The overall goal of the project is to create and develop a common cross border destination based on sustainable nature-based and cultural tourism. The project combines the German idea of a GardenFestival with active tourism, which is popular in Denmark.

The scope is to make tourists not stop at the border but to make them visit locations more distant from it.

Four gardens are being created in Flensburg (Germany) as well as in Gråsten (Denmark) and Aabenraa (Apenrade) on the Danish side along the Flensburg Fjord, more precisely;

**The Gardenfestival:
 Four gardens in Germany and Denmark**

- ✦ The “Amphitheater” in Flensburg
- ✦ The “Floating Garden” in Flensburg
- both gardens are located directly at the harbour in the city
- ✦ The Nature Garden at Gråsten harbour in Denmark
- ✦ The “Gardenstairs” in Aabenraa (opening June 14th, 2022).

blumen-bauen-bruecken.de

The gardens invite locals and guests to experience nature in the region and get to know it better. All gardens are in places that tell a piece of German-Danish border history and stand for a common cultural heritage.

They then extended bicycle routes that stopped at the border and now continue to both side of it:



The Flensburg Fjord Route:
A new cohesive cyclistroute in the German-Danish border region

- 307 kilometers, 6 stages, 5 castles
- 1 bicycle ferry crossing the fjord (Interreg Tour-Bo)
- Tour-guide comes in 4 languages plus GPX-file
- The new route combines existing routes on both sides of the border, such as the Baltic Sea Route and the Hærvejen in Denmark and the Baltic Sea Coastal Route in Germany
- They have been combined routes, that have been newly developed within the project.
- The tour has been developed in cooperation with local and regional bicycle organisations

www.BBBprojekt.eu

They are implementing a website to promote the tourism in both sides of the border:



New personalised planning tool for tours and experiences

- Webbased platform (Progressive Web App)
- Presents guests for sights, gives recommendations for places to eat and sleep and more on an individual route based on the duration of the guests' stay.
- Fokus on castles and gardens in the region.
- The content will be embedded in the general historical narrative of the region and connected to sights and places that witness the past German-Danish history using storytelling elements such as film, special stories or blogs.
- Content creation in various workshops with stakeholders within culture, history and tourism
- Expected release: Summer 2022.

(Demoversion)

www.BBBprojekt.eu

The project requires the involvement of the stakeholders, and the challenge is if the relationships created within the project and the website will survive the end of the project.



The core of Interreg:
Establishing new cross border networks and relations

Cooperation with network-partners and local engagement

- Events focussing on "natural" gardening in cooperation with garden organisations in Aabenraa
- "SeedFestival" | cooperation with the local library in Flensburg
- Cross-border competition "Who harvests most potatoes grown on seaweed" with partners within gardening and tourism
- Other partners: university students ("musselgarden"), Adult Education Institutes, libraries and more

→ Goal: Creating sustainable crossborder networks 11

blumen-bauen-bruecken.de

Keike Faltings presented with more details the website (ed: in the presentation and in the speech, she called it an App, but it is actually a website).



A digital cross-boarder travel- and adventure-guide

- Goal: **Plan your individual journey** in the boarder-region with our **new progressive web-app** (via smartphone, tablet, PC)!
- **Practical information and travel tips**
- Target group: **tourists, but also locals** of all age groups
- Language versions: **German, Danish, English**
- Storytelling: **entertaining narrative elements on our common cultural and natural heritage** (film-clips, audio-clips, short-texts, pictures, an interactive quiz....)

→ **What makes our region unique?** (history, nature, traditions, food, castles...)

- Expected launch: **Late summer 2022**

The website provides useful information for planning a trip (where to sleep, where to eat) but serves above all as a storytelling tool on the history of the border area: an area that must be described in an interesting way for all tourists.

The website is not ready yet, the expected launch is in late summer 2022.

Keike Faltings insisted on the concept of storytelling, which should also be present in the services offered to tourists. For example, a restaurant could emphasize in its communication the proximity of some point of interest (a beach, etc.)

For the implementation of the website, they had 8 meetings during the pandemic. They collaborate with many stakeholders. She remarked that cultural institutions are fundamental for the storytelling of the history of the place.



Partners from both sides of the border

That's us:

- Tourismus Agentur Flensburger Förde (TAFF)
- Destination Sønderjylland (DSS)
- Aabenraa Kommune
- Sønderborg Kommune
- Stadt Flensburg
- Stadt Glücksburg

Our network:

- Tourism**
Tourism organisations, projects, companies
Fk. Visit Denmark, Dansk Cykelturisme, Oplev Sydslesvig, Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme, Tourismus Agentur Schleswig-Holstein (TASH), OstseeFjord Schlei GmbH...
- Nature and Gardening**
Associations and projects
Fk. Haveselskabet, Stiftung Naturschutz SH, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Landesgartenschau Schleswig-Holstein
- Cultural Institutions**
Museums, libraries, archives, projects, initiatives...
Fk. Museum Sønderjylland, Stiftung Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesmuseen, Slots- og kulturstyrelse, Kunstkultur, Dansk Centralbibliotek

... and many more!!



How do we cooperate and/ or extend our network across the border?

- Exchange ideas and best-practice in **workshops and meetings**
- Collaboration through own **events**
- Creating of content** for the web-app
- Marketing** (On- and offline campaign cross-border)
- Keeping each other up to date through **newsletters and participation** in each other's activities

How is the new web-app actually implemented?

- ◆ **IT/ technical development**
 A company specialised on digital solutions in tourism; creating interfaces with databases of our partners (OpenData)
- ◆ **Storytelling**
 Reserach and concept done by us in cooperation with our partners; implementation through a team of authors, a filmcrew, photographers - from both sides of the border! -, feedback in workshops
- ◆ **Products that can be promoted and sold through the web-app (service for free!)**
 Development of all-inclusive-packages (accomodation, catering, transport, experiences) done by us; workshops with touristic providers

They have high expectations for the website:

Who is gaining from the new web-app?

- A positive holiday experience and service for our guests
- Better visibility and more revenue for local companies as well as touristic and cultural operators
- A positive image for the whole region

→ **The new web-app can be a corner stone for cross-border-collaborations that can last and develop over the years!**

Q & A section with Keike Faltings:

A participant asked if visitors are expected to post content on the site. The answer is no, the content is created by the project and the stakeholders.

A participant asked if the survival of the site when the project will finish is guaranteed by a binding contract. The answer is no, they hope that the good relationships established during the project will continue, but they believe that the risk of asking to sign a document, even a MOU (ed: the MOU was explicitly mentioned in the question) is that of losing the collaboration of some stakeholders.

Another question was if it was difficult to gather all the stakeholders and create a single brand for two different states. The answer to the first question was yes, the answer to the second question was more articulated. They organized workshops, one focused on the technical part of the site, another on the

storytelling and more workshops on the product. Some stakeholders participated in all the workshops. Most of the stakeholders were well disposed towards the website, some were skeptical. A participant asked how they will promote the website: the answer is that they are thinking about this topic, probably one tool will be the advertising.

Nikolai Lengefeldt presented the “Oplev Sydslesvig” website (<https://www.oplevel-sydslesvig.dk/>)

There are around 50.000 people in South Schleswig who profess the Danish minority. The border country can be described as a cultural overlap between Denmark and Germany. The demarcation of the border because of the referendum in 1920 led to a German ethnic group remaining north of the border and a Danish ethnic group south of the border.

The intervention of Nikolai Lengefeldt is all about how they created the website and the future development, also with many technical details.

The website has 2.500 unique users per month and the 82% of the visitors are Danish.



Screenshot of the website (ed: by the report's writer)

TRAVEL TIPS



(ed: the website is in Danish language, the screenshot is taken after the translation in English available in the browser)

The goal of the website is to advance in becoming a cultural link between Denmark and Southern Schleswig with tourism as the first point of contact to create interest for the region, its Danish history, and the Danish minority. The primary target group is the Danish population: one of the objectives of the website is to develop tourism and the target is the people from Denmark that cross the border for shopping reasons.

5th of May: Meeting with Destination Sønderjylland

In the late morning of the 5th of May, after a cycle trip of about 15 km, the study group was back in Denmark, in the city of Gråsten, a few kilometres from the border.

In Benniksgaard Hotel we met **Karsten Justesen**, the CEO of Destination Sønderjylland (ed: Sønderjylland is the Danish word for Southern Jutland) (www.visitsonderjylland.com/)



Destination Sønderjylland was established in 2015 by the four municipalities in Sønderjylland. The Destination Management Organisation (DMO) is responsible for the overall marketing and development of tourism in Sønderjylland.

Destination Sønderjylland is one of Denmark's largest holiday destinations (the fifth in terms of 2021 overnight stays, considering domestic and international tourists). More than half of the overnight stays in Destination Sønderjylland are from domestic tourism, nearly the other half are from Germany. Being a border area, they pay particular attention to the needs of German tourists.

The DMO has three focus areas:

- **Marketing:** they want to move from small, local efforts to a joint marketing effort that covers Sønderjylland as a whole in both Denmark and on foreign markets. Through this approach they wish to create the best possible marketing platform for the tourism industry in Sønderjylland;
- **Sales:** they want to develop the best and most current sales channels for the tourism industry in Sønderjylland and ensure that the tourism products are easily accessible for the area's visitors (ed: on the website it is possible to buy tickets for tours, book for restaurants and hotels);
- **Development:** they want Sønderjylland to be in front regarding tourism development and therefore they participate in development programs as well as competence - and business developing activities that can improve the tourism industry in Sønderjylland: one important way of doing this is by participating in cross-border projects.

They collaborate with small tourism activities that don't have the resources to develop a website and or online booking system. The destination platform gives visibility to these small activities: at the same time the DMO can check if these small tourism activities are doing well in term of business.

With reference to the participation in cross-border projects, the CEO said that they usually participate in projects, but the projects must contribute to the realization of their own strategy (ed: the exact words were: "when we know what we will get") and made the example of the new cycle route, in the "Blumen bauen Brücken – Blomster bygger broer" project. The CEO also listed the pros and cons of cross border cooperation:

Pros:

- As a border area, access to EU development programs is relatively easy;
- There are good programs for tourism development;
- There is a good degree of co-financing (up to 75%);
- By working together, you get a better understanding of your market.

Cons:

- There is a surprisingly big cultural difference between a Danish way of doing things and a German one (the CEO compared the meetings with Germans and the meetings with Danes. In the meetings with Germans the decisions are made with no need of follow-ups; meetings with Danes can be decisive, but follow up are often needed);
- The administrative burden is often too great to pay for small projects;
- Projects often have to drive political agendas as well as development agendas.

The CEO then answered a question on how the website works: when somebody books and pay a tourism activity (a tour, an accommodation, etc) the money goes directly to the stakeholders. For this service the tourism activities pay nothing, hence the DMO does not gain anything from the transaction. The DMO actually has a negative balance sheet, and it is funded by the municipalities.

5th of May: Meeting with Mads Friis, owner of Benniksgaard hotel

After the speech of Karsten Justesen, the participants listened to the experiences of a tourist activity operator: **Mads Friis**, owner of the Benniksgaard hotel (<https://www.benniksgaardhotel.dk/>).



Before starting the current tourist activity, the land on which the hotel and restaurant stands was used for farming activity (the history of the farm dates back to 1300 AD). He decided to turn it into a golf club many years ago because he was unable to increase the arable area. It took 8 years to get permission to use the land as a golf course. After 5 years from the opening (1997), the business did not take off, people did not want to spend on his golf course as much as they paid in other golf clubs. Therefore, he decided to sell the golf course and then invest the amount in opening a restaurant (because in Denmark taxes are very high unless earnings are invested) and a hotel with 10 rooms. He wanted a cozy place not a luxury resort, and now the facilities (restaurant and hotel) have clients that come back regularly.

During the years, Mads Friis diversified the offer, also to match his clients' requests: for example, cyclists often just want to eat in his restaurant and not to sleep in the hotel, and when they ask for a room, they are not interested in luxury. So, the hotel has different type of accommodations: suites, rooms, apartments, rooms in the annex (some of them with the bathroom in the hallway), and B&B. The total capacity is of 200 overnight guests in 69 rooms in three facilities (the hotel in the old farmhouse, and two separate buildings, Luksus Ferielejlighederne and Benniksgaard Bed & Breakfast). There are conference rooms in the old granaries at the historic farm and a farm shop, which, in cooperation with the hotel's restaurant, offers traditional South Jutland food experiences. The golf club is owned by another subject, and the golf club brings 12% of the clients (ed: He did not mention if they were clients of the restaurant or of the hotel). But the golf club is open only 4 month every year (during the summer).

Before Covid-19 the hotel had a considerable number of international tourists but with the pandemic these arrivals are over. On the other hand, Danish tourists have increased because, due to Covid, they have started to choose tourist activities closest to home. It is now very difficult to predict what will happen, even just in the coming months. In these 2 weeks the restaurant has 5 cooks and other 14 employers. He usually tries to have cooks from different countries (Italian, Spanish) but it is not easy since cooks travel a lot for work. He did not manage to find a Danish cook.

5th of May: visit Dybbøl Mølle, an educational museum

In the afternoon of the 5th of May, the study group is in Sønderborg, visiting Dybbøl Mølle, an educational and experiential museum regarding the war between the Danes and the Prussians in 1864 (www.1864.dk/en/). The guide made us enter directly into the soldiers' daily life during the war in 1864. We entered a barrack and the guide explained us how a Danes barrack could become a death trap when the Prussians used their cannons. Two of the participants wore the Danish and Prussian uniform to make us understand how similar they were and the risk to kill, for both parts involved in the hand-to-hand battle, their own comrades. What the reason why, the guides explained, the Prussian added at the uniform a white band in the arm. Also, we experienced holding the rifles (ed: very heavy). We were shown a barrack where the soldiers slept, the guide spare us the experience of lie down on the straw bed or write a letter with pen and ink, but this is what visitors, including children, experience at the museum. The guide told us that the children, when visiting the museum, also prepare the meals the soldiers ate.

The war was lost by the Danish soldiers in the battle of 18th of April 1864, one of the bloodiest in Danish history and the last major battle on Danish soil. About 2.800 people were mutilated or lost their lives. The main reason why Danish lost the war is that ordinary Danish soldiers could not withstand the much larger and more professional Prussian army.

Despite the outcome of the war, the guide told us that they are careful to tell the story in a balanced way between Danes and Germans. A final battle that is fought hand to hand have victims who, despite their different nationalities, are united by the cruelty of the war.



6th of May: Meeting with the owners of Krusmølle

In the morning of the 6th of May, the study group met **Henrik Loff** and his daughter **Cathrine Loff**, owners, with other members of their family, of Krusmølle (<https://krusmoelle.dk/>), located in the beautiful countryside of Aabenraa, 26 kilometres north of the Denmark–Germany border.



Krusmølle was founded in the 16th century. Until the middle of the 19th century, Krusmølle had, in addition to the grain mill, a rolling mill that rolled woolen fabrics. From 1852 to 1877 there was a brandy distillery on the property. In 1877, Krusmølle was nearly destroyed by a fire: the farmhouse, the barn and distillery went into ashes and nine years later, the old half-timbered mill house burned. Apart from the brandy distillery, the buildings were quickly rebuilt – in the form they have today, with some alterations and extensions. In 1972, the mill pond and the mill building were parceled out from the agricultural property. The property with farmhouse, operating buildings and land was taken over by Henrik Loff and his wife Nina in 1986. It took them 10-10 years to get the business (before buying the property, they were farmers)

Henrik Loff described the offer of Krusmølle: there is a café (where is possible to have a brunch or a lunch), two areas for events, a shop, an art gallery, creative workshops, and glamping. Every year there are many parties at Krusmølle (weddings, birthdays, corporate events, etc). They have two areas for the events:

- The old cowshed, with the preserved tethers, drinking troughs, under whitewashed ceiling vaults, with wooden, stone and tiled floors. In this area there is room for parties of up to 80 people;
- The straw warehouse, with walls made of recycled wood, high ceilings, wooden and stone floors. There is room for 60 people.

During November and December, the shop (which is quite big), turns into a Christmas exhibition visited by many guests from all over Denmark. The event has become important and many return year after year. The owners decided 25 years ago to open a shop, because they wanted people to stop there and experience what they was doing in Krusmølle.

Everything (from a table in the café or a party) can be preorder on the website, which give the owners the possibility to build the menu according to the season and what their suppliers can deliver.

Glamping was developed during Covid-19 (ed: “Glamping” derives from the words ‘glamorous’ and ‘camping’, glamping is an outdoor escape that combines the closeness to nature associated with camping with the convenience of proper self-catered accommodation. It is a form of outdoor holidaying that means you don’t need to bring your own tent, sleeping bags, etc, instead, you can turn up to ready-pitched accommodation that is already kitted out with all the essentials that you need).

When the first wave of COVID-19 hit (nearly three years ago), everybody cancelled their bookings, there were no parties anymore, and the calendar of Krusmølle was empty. It took Henrik Loff nearly a month to react to this situation and decide what they could do because there was nobody calling and nothing to do. Six years ago, they went to the USA to see some small trailers: during the Covid period, they took the opportunity to dive full time into this idea: in six months they built 10 trailers and on the 1st of July they opened the tourist season. They had bookings of 87% and a rate of 8,4 on Booking.com in just one year (<https://krusmoelle-glamping.dk/book-glamping-vogn/>). They were surprised of how fast this business became successful, but one reason was that, after people had stayed at home during Covid, they wanted to go out in nature. So, it was the right product at the right time.

His daughter Cathrine knew that they would have no time to take care of the check-in of the trailers, and the booking and the check-in online of the trailers were implemented on the website. The first year they did receive telephone calls from those who had booked saying that they could not find the place or the trailer, but in the second year, after all the signage was on, nobody called. The online check-in was working. And this is a great saving of time for the Loff family (the website and the part of booking and check-in online has been developed by the son of the Henrik Loff).

Cathrine Loff took the floor and she said that all the family is involved in tourism activities: she bought the café and restaurant of Krusmølle the 1st of April 2022 and she has another restaurant in the city, her brother has developed the website and the part of booking and check-in online.

She said that they are working with a lot of local tourism guides because they are always the ones that guide people to Krusmølle. They work with local farms, Krusmølle tries to bring customers to them and vice versa, local farms bring customers to Krusmølle. Krusmølle also collaborate with other local tourism activities. They don’t go to Germany trying to advertise in the newspapers or getting article in magazines. This works in Germany but not in Denmark: Cathrine Loff said that she works with Google, trying to write articles online, managing social media, but now that she owns the café and the restaurant, she has not time, and she is searching someone also for making videos, which are very important. Most of what they use and sell at Krusmølle is locally sourced, they buy from local farmers. For the next couples of years Cathrine Loff will focus more on companies getting to Krusmølle, not so much on tourists and small guests because they are already strong in that field, they need another business area and they are interested in companies organizing events which require more than one day. One of the reasons is that, explained Henrik Loff, they are fully booked during weekends, and they want to focus on the other days. And from September they will have to focus on Christmas, in Christmas time they take no parties, because they have 300 hundreds lunches a day, a lot of people come with buses, and they have not capacity to do extra parties in wintertime. Beside the Loff family, there are usually 6 employers but in wintertime there are 25 employers.

An interesting approach is that the guests of Krusmølle cannot choose the menu of the brunch or the lunch. The plate of the lunch changes from week to week. They build it according to the season and what their suppliers can deliver. Guest can warn, even when booking a table of line, if they are vegan

or vegetarian and Krusmølle will accommodate. Same approach with the party: the reason is that at Krusmølle they know what can do best, that's the reason why if someone wants a party and wants to offer four dishes of pasta, he will be convinced to choose something else. Pasta is not what Krusmølle can do best. This approach also depends on the size of the kitchen: they have no space to do a lot of single dishes. Another positive aspect of booking a table or a party in advance is that Krusmølle can plan the quantity of fresh food to order.

Their target clients are women of 45-year-old or more, because they are the ones who decide where the family go.

Q & A section with Henrik Loff:

One participant said that in Croatia there are beautiful countryside and a lot of places based solely on food, and in terms of atmosphere and what they look like, they all look the same, because they think that if they serve traditional food they have to look traditionally but most of these places lack atmosphere or magic and they all look quite plain. So what was the vision of Henrik Loff about that? It was his idea to create an atmosphere in Krusmølle or if he managed to find someone early on to help with the lighting, the furnitures, etc? Henrik Loff answered that the aspect and the atmosphere of the place was in his vision from the beginning, even if he had no previous experience (he was a farmer before taking on Krusmølle). I did the most, with his wife, during a process of learning and developing over time. They have a very clear vision of what they want, they don't need to do what other similar tourism activities are doing, he trusted his own instinct, he wanted a place to be nice and cozy, but this does not mean painting all the walls. He knew his approach was riskier because nobody could guarantee that this was going to work. But he got inspired also by seeing other places during weekends, looking for ideas, and understanding what it was possible to realize in Krusmølle.

(ed: to watch a video of the café/restaurant:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sXdgEdLBSy8EQnHTI9DSaGbomArX4juM/view?usp=sharing>)

He finished saying that the development part never ends. They recently won a prize for the best water bottle.



Pictures of the (big) shop (divided into two areas):



Pictures of the Art gallery (ed: the website says that there are creative workshops where different artists exhibit).



One of two areas for events:



Trailers and their locations:





6th of May: Meeting with the owners of Gram Castle

In the early afternoon of the 6th of May the study group met with Sanne Brodersen, owner, together with her husband, of Gram Caste and other annexes (in Gram, nearly 40 kilometres from the border).



Before buying the castle, Sanne Brodersen and her husband were organic farmers (her husband's family has been organic farmers for three generation). She studied art and literature at the University. When her husband proposed her to buy a castle, after visiting it (the castle was a private property), she agreed: for her was a dream that came true, she wanted to open the castle to the people. So, they bought the castle in 2007. Gram Castle, after standing empty for 25 years, was inhabited and brought back to life. Since then, the owners have created a versatile company located in the heart of Southern

Jutland. Gram Castle has been transformed into a living cultural heritage, where many different events such as concerts, parties, courses, and conferences are held while running a large organic farm. The organic farm was an important part of their business plan: in the property there are 3.000 ha of organic farm and three other organic farms connected. They are open farms: anyone can go to see the animals. The owners live with their children in the castle's oldest wing, the east wing, which was built around 1470, while the south and west wings are publicly accessible and used for tours, parties, and courses.



The owners' vision was to create a cultural and commercial lighthouse in the area and a shining example of sustainable organic farming, driven with respect for nature and focus on animal welfare – and products of unique quality. Their vision was that the renovated castle should open its doors to events of all kinds, and inspire artists, the business community, and ordinary people.

That was not an easy task. Shortly after the acquisition of Gram Castle in July 2007, the owners embarked on some restoration projects. They have carried out a thorough restoration and refurbishment of the castle in accordance with the original craftsmanship methods and materials. The owners also bought the Breeding farm "Gramgård", that has been restored and converted into a concert hall, hotel rooms, farm shop, banquet rooms, restaurant, and associated kitchen.

The buildings of Gram Castle go far back in history, the oldest wing was begun at the end of the 15th century. Most of the buildings were listed (ed: "listed" as in "considered of historical interest") and restoring them has been a major challenge for the owners. During the restoration, the permanent craftsmen have learned to work with many of the old craftsmanship traditions and use lime mortar, glue dye and canvases in their work. All materials used in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

The specialist knowledge the craftsmen have gained through the restoration work will not only benefit Gram Castle's buildings, but also other listed and preservation-worthy houses, as these craftsmen also carry out restoration tasks for others.

With reference to the Restaurant & Farm Shop, the chefs spend a lot of time familiarizing themselves with the South Jutland food traditions, to put them into a new and modern interpretation. The raw materials used in the kitchen come mainly from the owner's organic farming. The farm shop is a natural extension of the restaurant. Most products in the farm shop are organic.

The restaurant:



The farm shop:



The farm shop opened in 2013 in the newly restored horse stable from the 1800s. In the store's food department people can buy Gram Slot's own products (milk, flour, grits, sausages and fresh vegetables and freshly dug up potatoes in season). Milk, cereals and other products (for a total of 65 products) produced from Gram Slot can be bought also in REMA1000's many stores.

Despite their inspirational vision, their tourism offer is various: in addition to the guided tour in the Gram Castle (which are conducted by Sanne Brodersen, because she wants to tell the story of the place and inspire people that dreams can become true), the owners offer a stay with many different activities in idyllic surroundings. In between the castle lake, the river, and the beautiful beech forest, they offer accommodation in 33 modern furnished rooms. All rooms have been restored with respect for the castle's history. The rooms are in the old driver's residence or in the dairy manager's residence, which has come back to the castle and converted and 100% renovated into hotel rooms along with some of the other old employee residences, such as the inspector, steward and herdsman's residence. There are also four large apartments in Gramgård, the old breeding farm.

They can organise parties, Gram Castle at Haderslev has banqueting rooms for every occasion. If it is to be elegant, the castle's beautiful halls are used with entrance via the elegant staircase in the castle courtyard. If it is better to be a down-to-earth party, the banquet rooms in both the manor house and the historic Holstein barn from 1670 are used.

The tourism' offer also include the hosting of meetings and conferences, and corporate events: the owners specialty is to create individual solutions for meetings and conferences. At Gram Castle there are rooms and facilities that are suitable from 10 to 1.000 people.

Sanne Brodersen said that they did not advertise to launch the business: the business took off also thanks to the attention that the newspapers gave to the purchase and restoration of the Castle and to the words of mouth of the first visitors.

Q&A section:

Basically, all the participants were interested in knowing how the Brodersen family could afford all the investments. Sanne Brodersen was evidently quite evasive on this subject, she said that they bought the castle for 90 million kr (12,1 million of euros), and its renovation costed 7 million euros (ed: not including all the other buildings). She said that they got a loan of 50% for their latest purchase. Some of the information above have been taken by the official website since her speech did not give enough information about the tourism' offer of the castle and the other buildings of the property).

Take it slow gadgets

The Croatian and Italian participants brought with them their Take it slow gadgets to donate them to all the people we met, thanking them for their availability, hospitality and kindness.





Conclusions

One of the goals of the trip was getting to know some experiences of green slow (sustainable) tourism. During the trip we learnt that active tourism is popular in Denmark. In all the meetings with the Destinations the main activities that have been developed are cycling and hiking, especially cycling, and a lot of stakeholders of these destinations provide services for cycling.

“Story telling” has been repeat a lot during the meetings: none of the tourism activities that we met and that require visiting a place allow people to go around by themselves. There is always a guide that explain a visitor the story of the place and of what he/she is visiting. The people in tourism business on both side of the border have understood that memorable travel experiences are all about stories - stories of the local communities and their cultural traditions, stories told by the expert local guides, and stories about the travellers themselves that become part of the travel experiences. Also, considering the common history of the German and Denmark cross border territories, storytelling is a tool to incentive people to cross the border and visit the other side.

On cross border tourism and cooperation: cross-border tourism with Denmark is very important to German territories near the border (for example Flensburg) and vice versa, Danish territories near the border have as their main target German tourists. Regarding cross border cooperation and tourism development, it appears that, even if a couple of experiences are not a fact, it is important for both territories to keep teaching in school the language of the other side of the border and develop jobs in tourism to accomplish Germans and Danes needs.

The Cross Border destinations management we met have obviously as the main target the people living on the other side of the border (Germans from Danish and Danes from Germany). As already said, storytelling is an important tool to make tourists cross the border, since the two population share a common history and after the referendum in 1920 the distinction between Germans and Danes living

near the border has become blurry. Cross Border destination management Sønderjylland have been very clear that its main goal is developing tourism but that they take part in cross border project when the result can be useful for the Destination' goals.

In general, all tourism destinations take part to European Projects(Interreg, North Sea Region, Germany-Denmark, etc)

The cross-border project that was described in Flensburg (Blumen bauen Brucken – Blomster bygger broer) has some characteristics in common with “Take is slow” but their project has a powerful component regarding creating a common cross border destination. The building of the four gardens could be compared to what every partner of Take it slow is doing in his chosen territory, what it is different is the way to connect them. In the “Blumen bauen Brucken – Blomster bygger broer project” they have created the “Flensburg Fjord Route”, a new cycle route to connect places in Germany and Denmark. The reason is that the “Blumen bauen Brucken” has “only” two confining territories, and Take it Slow has a wide territorial extension. The two projects have in common the difficulty of involving the stakeholders.

It has been interesting and inspiring to see how the tourism activities have modified old buildings (farms, castles, the buildings in Krusmølle) while maintaining their characteristics. The buildings have not become impersonal places that they all look the same but have retain the original flavour and visitors can understand the history behind them. Also, tourism activities work closely with operators in the surrounding, from farmers who provide fresh food to organic farming developed directly by the owner of the facilities.

Another interesting point is that everything is online and everything can be book online, even for activities in the most remote places.

The experience of Thomas Dambo and some tourism activities taught us that, in time of troubles, and not only, being creative can help finding an alternative, sometimes funny or out of rules, which helps to attract tourists' attention and interest.

All pictures are for internal use only