The Need for a Common Voice

A Collaborative Approach to Foster Sustainable Tourism Development

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Abstract

This research explores the development of sustainable tourism in destinations in the Baltic region and in the case of Visby, Gotland. The purpose is to contribute to the understanding how destination management organisations and local communities in these destinations work together to develop the destination. The aim is to investigate how these actors work together in practice and to compare the findings with an ideal collaborative approach. The research design consists of a mixed-method approach and uses two web-based questionnaires to investigate the destinations in the Baltic region and in-depth interviews to gain insights into the case of Visby, Gotland. The research findings provide information on how sustainable tourism is targeted and understood in the destinations and what drivers and barriers for a collaborative approach exist. The findings create a better understanding on how different actors in the destination work and why an ideal collaborative approach is a necessity for the development of a sustainable destination. Overall, the results shed light on the fact that an ideal collaboration can overcome the four major lacks (lack of communication, lack of knowledge, lack of responsibilities, and lack of support) as found in the destinations. This study provides an understanding of factors affecting the development of a collaborative approach and thereby, the development of sustainable tourism. Further, the study highlights how an ideal collaborative approach in a destination can foster sustainability in the tourism industry.

Keywords: Baltic Region, Collaboration, Destination, DMO, Gotland, Local Community, Marketing, Sustainability, Sustainable Tourism, Tourism-Related Organisations
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<tr>
<td>CMP</td>
<td>Copenhagen-Malmö Port</td>
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<td>DMO</td>
<td>Destination Management Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGC</td>
<td>Museums and Galleries Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>No Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private-Partnership</td>
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<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<td>SMTE</td>
<td>Small and Medium Tourism Enterprise</td>
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<td>TBL</td>
<td>Triple Bottom Line</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Programme</td>
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<td>UNGA</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly</td>
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<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organization</td>
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<td>WCED</td>
<td>World Commission on Environment and Development</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic and background of the research project, starting with the research objects – the Baltic region and Visby, Gotland. Furthermore, the socioeconomic phenomenon of urban tourism is emphasised and put in the context of sustainable tourism development, whereby the research subjects – local communities and destination management organisations (hereafter: DMO) – are highlighted. This provides the foundation for the problematisation and relevance of our research and leads to our research question.

1.1 The Baltic Region and Visby, Gotland

The socioeconomic phenomenon of urban tourism is strongly promoted around the world and therefore growing increasingly. This is not only recognisable in the top metropolises around the world. Meanwhile, it can also be recognised in different cities within the ten respecting countries of the Baltic region - Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. When talking to local communities from respective cities or reading media releases one can more and more see that the local communities' dissatisfaction about decision made for their home destination by tourism organisations and local governments or about the general tourism development grows. However, on the one hand the Baltic region's city destinations want to attract more tourists and strengthen the destination's tourism and economic development by offering new or extend existing tourism products such as cruise tourism. Especially, the cruise tourism sector is strongly market across the Baltic region which is already well-known for its cruise tourism industry (e.g. Cruise Copenhagen, n.d.; Kalmar, n.d.; Cruise Helsingborg, n.d.; Goteborg, n.d.). From 2016 to 2017 the number of cruise tourists increased by 16.6 per cent to around five million cruise tourists with a growing tendency for the next years (Cruise Baltic, 2018). On the other hand, destinations in the Baltic region promote localness and sustainable development. In fact, the term sustainable development is strongly used across the Baltic region in relation to the general tourism development but also in relation to cruise tourism (e.g. Visit Stockholm, n.d.; Visit Copenhagen, n.d.; My Helsinki, n.d.; Visit Petersburg, n.d.).

One of our personal interests was to investigate Visby, Gotland, as part of the Baltic region. In spring 2018 the new cruise berth in Visby on the island of Gotland opened, welcoming cruise tourists to the medieval and Hanseatic town of Visby (Thuresson, 2018). Even though cruise tourism already exists for 30 years on Gotland it is expected to double the cruise tourist number from 2017 to 90,000 passengers in 2018 and to further increase it up to 150,000 passengers within the following years (Bond, 2018; Copenhagen-Malmö Port [CMP], 2018a; CMP, 2018b). In the same turn, the aim is to foster and strengthen Gotland's sustainable development as well as the general tourism development on the whole island through the
extended cruise tourism. Thereby, the cruise tourism is supposed to act as a starting point for
the development of a comprehensive sustainable tourism strategy on the island (Larsson,
2016).

The growing number of tourists, which has a great impact on environmental and social aspects
seems to be quite contradictory to sustainability. Therefore, this research investigates the
Baltic region while focusing in-depth on Visby to create an understanding of how destinations
target sustainability.

1.2 Background
'The eleventh plague' – that is how the increasing number of tourists arriving annually in
European city destinations is often called (Laudenbach, 2013). Especially during the peak
seasons European cities turn into 'cultural Disneylands', whereby tourists stroll around the
cities often without respecting and appreciating the places they visit – much to the chagrin of
local communities. However, tourists are no longer visiting only the historical and classical
sightseeing spots. Predominantly they are seeking for authentic places and experiences within
cities, they want to live and feel like locals. To get these experiences, tourists spread more
and more throughout the city into neighbourhoods and hotspots for locals, which in turn get
more touristified. Thus, locals become increasingly annoyed by tourists and claim that tourists
are neither polite nor showing respect by littering, being loud and ruthless. However, there is
no end in sight to this new urban tourism development (Füller and Michel, 2014; Kagermeier
cities are also some of the world’s greatest tourism destinations. Tourists are drawn, in
growing numbers, to the vibrancy, excitement and diversity on offer in cities worldwide” (p. 4).
Nowadays, tourism is part of the everyday urban life, however, to attract even more tourist
and to stay competitive cities have started to develop and manage the city around the wishes
and needs of tourists from a top-down approach, leading to a negligence of locals’ and local
communities’ demands, well-being as well as sustainable development (Urry, 2002; Koens,
2017). Nevertheless, according to the UNWTO (n.d.) the tourism industry is one of the “fastest
growing economic sectors in the world […] and a key driver for socio-economic progress”.

Koens (2017) states in his presentation for the 6th Global Summit on Urban Tourism that cities
need to take part in the new urban agenda to develop sustainable tourism. In many cities the
pressure lays on the local communities, culture, heritage and the environment. However, the
responsibility should be taken by public authorities and tourism-related organisations that
need to have a “linked vision of future for cities where urban aspirations of prosperity and
sustainable development are linked by desire for equality”. Therefore, he further suggests that
a “sustainable and participatory people-centred approach with inclusive economic growth,
social and cultural development” should be used to provide “long-term benefits of all stakeholders – tourists, business and citizens”. The tourism industry involves many different stakeholders, actors as well as networks in which private and public stakeholders collaborate. As a destination is one of the most difficult and complex products to manage, developing sustainability is a huge challenge (Fyall et al., 2006). The concept of sustainable development, which has become an important and fundamental principle for managing global development addressed by the Brundtland Report, also refers to the importance of empowering community participation in decision-making processes (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 1987). Furthermore, it is stated that the quality of life of communities influenced by tourism development should be protected and improved (Sebele, 2010). In addition, the in 2015 introduced Sustainable Development Goals (hereafter: SDGs) also highlight sustainable tourism development that strengthens local communities (United Nations General Assembly [UNGA], 2015):

| Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth | Target 8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products |
| Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production | Target 12. B: Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products |

Table 1: Sustainable Development Goals – Goal 8 and 12. The table shows an extract of the SDGs targeting sustainable tourism development. Own Illustration Based on UNGA (2015).

Tsartas (1996) argues that the involvement of local communities in the formation of the tourism product of a destination and the tourists’ experience is a necessity. This group of stakeholders should highly participate in the decision-making processes, the planning, and implementation of sustainable tourism by using a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach. The importance of local communities relies on the fact that these communities shape tourists’ experiences of a destination (Ryan and Montgomery, 1994).

Besides that, focusing on the general challenges for sustainable tourism, a high impact on social, cultural and environmental issues occurs due to mass tourism. To target this high impact, sustainable tourism development must focus on local communities’ involvement as this stakeholder group is often overlooked (Zouganeli et al., 2012). Regarding the Triple Bottom Line (hereafter: TBL) framework sustainability can be reached by balancing the three pillars: 1) social, 2) economic and 3) environmental (Elkington, 1997). Therefore, DMOs should not only focus strategic decision-making on the economic results, which are gained from marketing the destination, but need to engage all stakeholders and especially the salient ones (community) in the decision-making process to support the ‘social pillar’ of the TBL and the development of sustainable tourism (Papaluca and Tani, 2016). By involving and empowering local communities, the socio-cultural authenticity is respected, the cultural
heritage is conserved, and cross-cultural understanding and tolerance are created and supported (Stange et al., 2011). Thus, this paper focuses mainly on the social aspects of the TBL as well as, in combination with the economic aspects, on the long-term socio-economic benefits. These include for example the insurance of an equal and fair distribution of benefits to all stakeholders as well as employment and income-earning opportunities (Stange et al., 2011).

1.3 Problem and Aim

One of the greatest challenges for destinations is to develop a sustainable destination while increasing the number of tourists to support the local economy, as an increasing number of tourists brings greater impact on the social and environmental aspects of the destination. Especially, the empowerment of the local communities plays an important role in the SDGs. Further, local communities are responsible for the destination itself as local communities have an influence on how tourists perceive the atmosphere of a destination. Thereby, to empower the local communities and enable the destination to become a sustainable destination, all stakeholders within a destination have to collaborate.

The aim of the present study is to explore how DMOs and local communities of the destinations work together to create a sustainable destination and foster sustainable tourism. Moreover, this study investigates how marketing can be used as a communication tool for both the different stakeholders of the destination and for the tourists to communicate sustainability and inform about decisions made for the destination. Using a mixed-method approach – two web-based questionnaires and in-depth interviews – our study provides information on the different perspectives on sustainable tourism and on the influencing factors for an overarching collaboration among the destination. Finally, the analysis compares the ideal collaborative approach within a destination with findings on the real-life practices in the Baltic region and specifically, Gotland. Thereby, this study aims to answer the following research question:

**How do destination management organisations and local communities collaborate to foster sustainable tourism development in the Baltic region while focusing on Gotland?**

In this study, a local community is defined as a “group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations or settings” (Green and Mercer, 2001, p. 1926). In this case, the geographical location is defined by the destinations in the Baltic region. The decision for investigating the Baltic region while focusing on Visby Gotland was based on the increased interest in this region as a travel and cruise tourism destination. Moreover, this study uses the terms tourists and visitors as synonyms as especially the in-depth interviews showed that the terms are used interchangeably.
2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides the theoretical framework based upon three themes. First, the concept of sustainable tourism is defined and explained including a closer look on the tourism industry's actors thereby highlighting the importance of DMOs and local communities. Second, the importance of destination marketing is shortly discussed. Third, the ideal collaborative approach, on which the research project is based on, is drawn. Thereby, the aim is to understand and provide a basis on how local communities can be involved and empowered in developing a sustainable destination to create social sustainability. Thus, we set our focus on an ideal theory whereby locals are actively empowered and integrated into a collaboration among a DMO and other tourism stakeholders to develop jointly a sustainable destination.

2.1 Sustainable Tourism

Over the last decades sustainability and sustainable development have become increasingly important throughout different industry sectors. According to the UNWTO (n.d.) the tourism industry is one of the biggest and fastest growing as well as the most influencing economic sectors in the world. Furthermore, tourism plays an important role in many economically weaker destinations and developing countries becoming a major economic player providing an economic boom for many businesses. However, tourism has also great impacts on the natural environment, local communities and cultural heritage of a destination as well as local resources (Meuser and von Peinen, 2013; Buhalis, 2000). Even though tourism is constantly changing and developing, bringing economic prosperity to many destinations, it also has negative environmental and social impacts as well. The term ‘sustainable tourism’ has become a buzzword but is still often used in a misleading way. When referring to ‘sustainable tourism’ one needs to consider the difference between ‘sustainable tourism’ per se and tourism development on the principles of sustainable development.

After the Brundtland Commission introduced the concept of sustainable development in 1987, research concerning ‘sustainable tourism’ and the development of tourism on the principles of sustainable development increased rapidly, thereby providing numerous and often misleading definitions of sustainable tourism (Butler, 1999). As Butler (1993) states the term ‘sustainable tourism’ is often used in a misleading way by emphasising the term ‘sustainable’, which derives from the verb ‘sustain’ (to maintain). Therefore, ‘sustainable tourism’ in this context can be defined as “tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time” (Butler, 1993, p. 29). In fact, this definition only highlights on the maintenance of tourism at a destination. In contrast, Coccossis (1996) has suggested at least four different ways to interpret tourism in the context of sustainable development, whereby however the competitiveness and maintenance of a destination are still put in the foreground:
2. An ecological viewpoint: Emphasising the need for ecologically sustainable tourism.
3. A long-term viability of tourism viewpoint: Emphasising the competitiveness of a destination.
4. As a viewpoint accepting tourism as part of a strategy for sustainable development throughout the physical and human environments.

The complexity of definitions and the differences between the meaning of the term ‘sustainable’ shows that it is important to differentiate between sustainable tourism and tourism development in the context of sustainable development. To simplify the terminology in this paper we work with the terms ‘sustainable tourism’ or ‘sustainable tourism development’ according to the definition of the World Trade Organization [WTO] "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (as cited in United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP] and UNWTO, 2005, p. 12). Here we mainly focus on the social aspects proposed by the TBL. According to Hunter (1997) destination managers and policy makers need to understand and contribute to three basic principles on which sustainable tourism development is based on. Therefore, tourism development in the context of sustainability should:

"meet the needs and wants of the local host community in terms of improved living standards and quality of life; satisfy the demands of tourists and the tourism industry and continue to attract them in order to meet the first aim; and safeguard the environmental resource base for tourism, encompassing natural, built and cultural components, in order to achieve both of the preceding aims" (as cited in Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p. 34).

Hereby, the definitions presented by Hunter and the WTO differ in emphasising the tourism actors. In Hunter's definition the local host communities' well-being is put in the forefront.

### 2.2 The Complexity of the Tourism Industry and Its Actors

In general, the tourism industry is quite complex regarding the different types of destinations, classification of travels, target markets and activities as well as the relationship of many diverse stakeholders and actors. Therefore, the following subsections will present the complexity of tourism actors and their relationships with a closer look on the importance of DMOs and the local community.
2.2.1 Tourism Actors, Stakeholders and Networks

A major factor adding to the complexity, are the diverse stakeholders, actors and networks which are involved in destination development and marketing as well as in shaping tourists' experiences. In addition, the different relationships, partnerships and collaborations among them, stakeholders need not only be considered when understanding the tourism industry, but especially when looking at the development, management and marketing of local destinations. On the global as well as national levels many alliances and industry networks exist whereby destination boundaries blur. However, on the regional and local level multiple and interdependent stakeholders work side by side to establish, develop and promote a destination (d'Angella and Go, 2009). Furthermore, a destination's central resources "are neither owned nor controlled by one single actor, but may be referred to instead as public or common goods" (Elbe et al., 2018). Thus, according to Sautter and Leisen (1999) destinations are some of the most difficult and challenging entities to manage, due to the complexity of the relationships of local stakeholders and the variety of stakeholders involved in developing and providing tourism products and services. Traditionally, the marketing and development of a tourism destination was closely linked to the increase of visitations and competitiveness but failed to recognise the unique needs and limitations of each destination as well as their geographical, environmental and socio-cultural characteristics. Consequently, the impacts of tourism and limiting tourism development as well as integrating societal marketing strategies became more important. Therefore, Buhalis and Fletcher (1995) developed the dynamic wheel of tourism stakeholders (see Figure 1) to give an overview about the different actors and how they affect each other. All actors mentioned in the wheel are equally important in representing professional and personal interests of all people who live and work in the destination's area, so that the destination can be managed and market according to the destination's strategy. Hence, strategies and actions should consider the wishes and needs of all stakeholders (Buhalis, 2000). While, for locals a destination is their place of residency, the local authorities see it as an "administratively bounded area for which they are responsible in terms of sustainable development" (Elbe et al., 2018). In turn, tourism businesses perceive a destination as the market for providing services and products (Elbe et al., 2018).
2.2.2 The Importance of Destination Management Organisations

Destination management organisations are an important actor in establishing and managing a tourism destination including a corresponding brand. In general, local DMOs (DMOs located in a destination and managing this one) are part of the local, regional and national government and build the connecting link between public authorities and private tourism businesses, forming a network of diverse stakeholders related to a specific destination and its tourism sector (Buhalis, 2000). Once DMOs were mainly responsible for the marketing and promotion of a destination. Nowadays, however, they provide leadership in market the entire destination to consumers, thereby ensuring a destination's attractiveness, competitiveness, longevity and local resources but first and foremost enhancing the well-being of the destination's local community (Bornhorst et al., 2010; Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Buhalis, 2000). Thus, some of the main tasks of a local DMO are:

- To coordinate the different interests and demands of tourism stakeholders and public authorities to "achieve a single voice of tourism" (Bornhorst et al., 2010, p. 573).
- To cooperate with and support external tourism organisations (Bornhorst et al., 2010).
- To serve as a collective marketing vehicle to plan, develop, manage and promote the entire destination to consumers according to the interests of all stakeholders (Wang, 2008).
• To meet and satisfy politically defined goals and community interests (Elbe et al., 2018).

Destinations are multifunctional in nature and attract different types of tourists for diverse reasons (e.g. shopping, sightseeing, business trip, fairs and events etc.). These diverse tourism products, services and facilities offered by different types of stakeholders contribute to the complex structures of a specific destination (Asprogerakas, 2007). To handle these complexities, to ensure the destination's competitiveness and the well-being and interests of the local community and all stakeholders, DMOs need to act throughout a collaboration network to lead and coordinate the destination (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003) and "to manage the complexity of the tourism system" (Bornhorst et al., 2010, p. 586). However, DMOs are also strongly depending on the other actors. As Elbe et al. (2018) emphasised DMOs are financially depending on the public and private sectors. Without the mutual support and public-private partnerships (hereafter: PPP) a destination cannot work in a successful way.

All in all, DMOs are not only the connection between different tourism stakeholders but also the point of intersection where all stakeholders come together to form and develop for successful sustainable tourism development.

2.2.3 The Importance of Local Involvement and Empowerment

Other important stakeholders in forming strategic objectives and a branding identity and image for a specific destination are local communities. Even though previous research highlights the importance of involving local communities in planning, marketing and decision-making processes of destinations (e.g. Ritchie, 1993; Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Jamal and Getz, 1995), there is no clear theoretical and practical evidence how this is done. In contrast, research shows that local communities are often left aside (Campelo et al., 2014; Okazaki, 2008).

However, locals can be extremely valuable for DMOs in branding a destination successfully. According to Campelo et al. (2014) the values and attributes, which represent the appeal of the place for the destination brand, are mostly embedded in the environment and its natural features as well as in the social and cultural capital of the destination. Thus, they argue that local communities’ expertise for the place (destination) can lead to an effective destination branding. Local communities create and shape the culture, image and attractiveness of a destination, establishing the feeling of being welcomed in a community and building the authentic flair and spirit, which in the end will influence the overall perception and experience of tourists (Ryan and Montgomery, 1994; Bornhorst et al., 2010). Furthermore, tourists interact either passively or actively with local communities through diverse places and activities (Bock, 2015). Therefore, locals can enhance the quality of tourist's experiences when the destination represents the values and attributes of locals, which they set, based on personal experience,
in the centre of the destination's brand strategy (Campelo et al., 2014). Another reason why locals should be involved are the use of local knowledge, community needs and expectations as well as appreciation of the local character and cultural incorporation (Bramwell and Sharman, 1999; Theerapappisit, 2012). Thus, researchers suggest that tourism activities should be initiated by local communities and that they must take part in the tourism development processes (Theerapappisit, 2012; Zamfir and Corbos, 2015).

Ritchie (1993) states that "tourism is being critically assessed concerning its net contribution to the well-being of the community or region which it both serves and impacts on" (p. 379). Therefore, he suggests that resident responsive tourism needs to be emphasised including active participation of communities in setting the tourism agenda. In fact, community involvement in tourism planning and marketing ensures sustainability and the balance of benefits and costs as well as local resources. As mentioned in Section 2.1 the goal of sustainable tourism (development) is to meet the needs and wants of the local host community and in order of the Brundtland Report to promote community participation (Hunter, 1997; WCED, 1987; Sebele, 2010). Hence, an active involvement of local communities in planning and marketing is not only of advantage for the local community itself and the cultural stability of the destination, but also for DMOs to increase sustainable tourism development in order to achieve social sustainability.

2.3 Destination Marketing and Branding

Marketing plays a key role in the competitive environment of our economy. It is increasingly important to create and manage an appropriate destination image to effectively position products (Hosany et al., 2006). Especially in the tourism industry, competition is increasing by growing numbers of destinations and the ability of tourists to choose the destination from their awareness set (Woodside and Sherrell, 1997; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989, as cited by Kozak and Andreu, 2006). The awareness set of the tourists can be described as all destinations the tourist can recognize and remember while thinking of travelling. Therefore, destination marketing is used to make tourists aware of a destination.

One area of marketing is the creation of a product brand (Aaker, 1997). Halliday (1996, as cited by Aaker, 1997) states that a brand aims at the differentiation between products and services. According to Porter (2004), the differentiation strategy is used to achieve an above-average performance in an industry. Consequently, a brand is a strategic decision of a product differentiation (Kapferer, 2008), in this case the destination differentiation. The brand contains the ideal combination of attributes to fulfill the expectations of the customer. These attributes (tangible, intangible, sociological and psychological nature) a tourist has in mind while thinking about the destination (Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009).
According to Middleton and Hawkins (1998), marketing is “certainly concerned with delivering products that meet customer expectations, securing additional sales, extra revenue yield per sale, and defending and gaining market share in a highly competitive world” (p. 8). This marketing perspective strengthens the argumentation that the usage of marketing to promote the destination to tourists and to create a competitive destination is necessary. Nevertheless, Middleton and Hawkins (1998) argue that this perspective on marketing is over simplified. They state that “in the case of travel and tourism, [marketing] must balance the interests of shareholders/owners with the long-run environmental interests of a destination and at the same time meet the demands and expectations of customers” (p.8). The latter perspective on marketing highlights that marketing as a tool must balance the different interests of the stakeholders within a destination and that the long-term perspective also on environmental aspects has to be included. In the context of this study, marketing serves as a tool to balance the interests of all the actors within the destination. It will be investigated how marketing can be used to promote sustainability and to communicate between the different actors within the destination.

Generally, the terms sustainability and marketing are often seen as contradictory to each other as marketing is often seen as a tool to increase purchases and sustainability as the conscious use and consumption of products or resources (Emery, 2012). Other researchers see marketing and sustainability as going hand in hand to support sustainable development and thereby, using marketing as a driving force for sustainable agendas (Jones et al., 2008). Therefore, the aim of sustainable tourism marketing aligns to the definition of societal-centric marketing by Kotler (1991) which states that marketing is “satisfying needs and wants through an exchange process [...] in a way that preserves or enhances the customers’ and the society’s well-being” (as cited by Middleton, et al., 2009, p. 28). Based on this definition, sustainable destinations must be conscious about the expectations of the different stakeholders to create a prospective brand and marketing for the destination.

According to Moilanen and Rainisto (2009), in the marketing and branding process, local businesses and local communities are crucial factors. Therefore, the main challenges for a destination brand are the individual needs, priorities and expectations of the different stakeholders (Trueman et al., 2004). Trueman et al. (2004) state that a negative perception of a destination can have negative consequences for the destination such as the decrease of investments in the economy, damage for the local businesses, and the decline of numbers of tourists. Thus, a negative image can lead to a negative impact for all stakeholder groups of a destination. Thereby, the marketing and the brand of a destination is a highly important aspect for sustainable destinations.
2.4 A Collaborative Approach towards Sustainable Tourism Development

According to Fyall and Garrod (2005), a collaborative approach is needed to overcome the challenges faced by sustainable development. To make changes towards more sustainability an integrated stakeholder approach is often used in the tourism industry. Herein, the most common form of collaboration which integrates stakeholders is the PPP. (Fyall and Garrod, 2005). Public-private partnerships are used to bring together the “interests of the tourism industry, the local resident groups, community interest groups and public-sector organisations” (Fyall and Garrod, 2005, p. 17). This form of collaboration empowers the weak stakeholder groups which might be unheard otherwise (Fyall and Garrod, 2005). Fyall and Garrod state that empowering the weaker groups can strengthen the organisation in general as the collaboration creates a common voice throughout all stakeholders of the destination.

A well-fitting definition of a collaboration is given by Himmelmann (1996, p. 28):

“Collaboration is defined as exchanging information for mutual benefit and altering activities and sharing resources and enhancing capacity of another for mutual benefits and to achieve a common purpose.”

Applying this definition for a collaboration within the tourism industry would mean that the DMO which is responsible for the marketing activities works jointly with local communities which would create an ideal form of a collaborative approach towards marketing and sustainability. If the ideal theory would be applied, the marketing of the destination would consist of a common voice between weaker and stronger stakeholders. The framework of Bornhorst et al. (2010) depicts all the important aspects a successful destination has to consider in order to reach an overarching collaboration (see Figure 2).

Our study focuses on seven different aspects of the ideal collaboration framework which include the DMO, the supplier and other organisations relations, the visitor numbers and experience, the marketing, the community support, and the destination.

Firstly, the DMO function as the organisation which leads the collaboration and brings all actors together. Thereby, the DMO fulfils the task of creating a common voice among the destination (Bornhorst et al. 2010).
Secondly, the supplier and other organisations relations in the framework of Bornhorst et al. (2010) cover the small and medium tourism enterprises (hereafter: SMTE) and tour operators as illustrated in the dynamic wheel of tourism stakeholders (see Figure 1). On the one hand, these small and large business actors provide the destination with offers for the tourists. Since the number of products and services a destination has to offer influences the satisfaction and experience of the tourists, they plan an important role regarding the overall success of a destination. On the other hand, the small and large businesses are financially depended on the number of tourists and of the overall satisfaction with the destination. If the number of tourists decrease due to a negative image of the destination in general, these businesses can feel a financial burden (Trueman et al. 2004).

As explained in Section 2.3, the marketing and the brand of a destination should include all the individual needs, priorities and expectations of the different stakeholders (Trueman et al., 2004). Further, marketing and a strong brand can improve the competitiveness of a destination and increase the awareness of tourists for the destination (Molananen and Rainisto, 2009). Hence, marketing and branding is an important aspect to maintain a destination and to increase the awareness of tourists for the destination.

The penultimate part of the ideal collaboration framework by Bornhorst et al. (2010) is the local community or community support. Besides the fact that this stakeholder group has its own
wishes and needs for the destination as the destination is the place where the locals live and work, the local community is also influencing the experience of the tourists. According to Ryan and Montgomery (1994), the local community and the DMO influence how tourists perceive and experience a destination.

The last aspect of the ideal collaboration framework this study focuses on is the destination itself. As demonstrated before, the destination combines many actors within the tourism industry. On the one hand, the tourism industry brings economic growth to the destinations, on the other hand, the increasing number of tourists brings an increase in social and environmental impacts for the destination. To achieve the balance of all three pillars of the TBL, the ideal collaboration framework has to be applied in the destinations to balance the weaker and stronger stakeholders and to fulfill and balance the different wishes and needs. Therefore, Buhalis (2000) argues that DMOs "should act as tools and facilitators to achieve a complex range of strategic objectives, which will ultimately need to satisfy the needs and wants of stakeholders" (p. 99). The DMO as an overarching collaboration would thereby be responsible for communicating and marketing the destination to all stakeholders consisting of business partners, local community and tourists (Pencarelli and Splendiani, 2009). Marketing and branding the destination respective to what it offers is vital to shape the identity, image and experiences of the brand and to facilitate the destination's development in the long-term.

Nevertheless, a collaborative approach can be difficult in practise as it requires individuals from different organisations or within one organisation to work together which is often unsuccessful (Huxham, 1996). On the other hand, Huxham (1996) illustrates that collaborations are also valuable as this approach offers a joined procedure to achieve a common goal which in case of sustainable destination is the maintenance of the destination. Table 2 and Table 3 summarise factors for successful and unsuccessful collaborations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successful Collaborations</th>
<th>Unsuccessful Collaborations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The involvement of key stakeholders</td>
<td>An equity share arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A chemistry of good interpersonal relations and the development of trust among participants</td>
<td>The balance of management resources and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A suitable inclusive management style and organizational culture</td>
<td>A well-planned project, carefully chosen partners, balanced structure and subsequent high payout in relation to cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain similarity and goal compatibility among participants</td>
<td>Decisive leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration and nature of previous relationships among collaborating partners</td>
<td>Sound administrative support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective contractual conditions and exit barriers</td>
<td>A tight focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transparent implementation of policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Factors Contributing to Collaboration Effectiveness. The presented aspects cover the factors which support a successful collaboration. Adapted from Fyall (2008).
• Lack of clear objectives
• Lack of staff time
• Slow decision-making process
• Changes in personnel
• Lack of new ideas/new initiatives
• Lack of adequate negotiation

• Responsibility not sufficiently established at the outset
• Lack of capital
• Lack of communication and vacuum of objectives

Table 3: Reasons for Collaborative Failure. The presented factors are considered as influencing factors for an unsuccessful collaboration. Adapted from Museums and Galleries Commission [MGC] (1998), as cited by Fyall (2008).

The provision of success and failure factors is important to elaborate the reasoning behind a collaboration or non-collaboration between DMOs and locals. As the ideal theory is to jointly work together to create a sustainable destination, the interest of this research lies within the investigation of the influencing factors for the development of an ideal collaboration.
3. Methodology

After reviewing the literature on which this study is based, this chapter will outline the methodology for our empirical research. Based on the ideal collaboration between DMOs and local communities, this study explores the real-life situation in the tourism industry in the Baltic region and specifically in Visby, Gotland. The general procedure of the methodology will be explained. Furthermore, a detailed overview of the research approaches used will be presented in the Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

3.1 Research Design

The present study uses a mixed-method approach to explore how different actors collaborate for sustainable tourism development in the Baltic region while focusing more specifically on Visby, Gotland. Therefore, two different approaches were used to collect data from the Baltic region and Visby, Gotland. Our study follows the strategy of a concurrent triangulation design which means that the qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously (Creswell, 2009). This research approach enables to offset the weaknesses within one method by using quantitative and qualitative methods side-by-side (Creswell, 2009).

Firstly, two web-based questionnaires were used as a quantitative approach to collect data from the Baltic region. The first web-based questionnaire targeted the local communities in different cities of the Baltic region. The second web-based questionnaire aimed at the tourism-related organisations in the chosen cities of the Baltic region. The web-based questionnaires were separated to ensure that the design of the web-based questionnaires suit each target group, the local communities and the tourism-related organisations. A detailed illustration of the quantitative research design can be found in Section 3.2.

Secondly, six in-depth interviews were executed in Visby, Gotland, to get a detailed understanding of the real-life situation in this destination. The procedure and set-up of this qualitative approach will be found in the Section 3.3.

To ensure the comparison of both research approaches, the two web-based questionnaires and the in-depth interviews covered the main three topics of the theoretical framework. The three main categories are as follows:

1. Sustainable Tourism: This category covers the definition of sustainable tourism, as well as the main drivers and barriers for sustainable tourism.

2. Destination Marketing and Branding: The second category explores the importance of marketing and branding for a destination and which role local communities play as well as if the destination is branded in terms of sustainability.
3. Collaboration: The last category investigates if, why and how a collaborative approach between the tourism-related organisation and the local community works, and questions possible drivers and barriers to collaborate. Furthermore, this category explores if collaborations exist and how successful the collaboration is, and if there is a personal interest to collaborate.

Indeed, this research model has a number of limitations. Collecting data with two different methods requires a great effort and entails a time-consuming analysis phase (Creswell, 2009). Nevertheless, the strategy of collecting the data at the same time decreases the timeframe of the data collection period which enables the collection of rich data within the timeframe of this study. An extensive analysis phase will merge the data in an interpretation section in which the results of both text and numerical data will determine if similarities or differences will be found between the different perspectives in the Baltic region and in Visby, Gotland. The following explanations of both methods, quantitative and qualitative, will provide a detailed demonstration of how the data will be analysed separately and how the data will be merged.

3.2 Web-Based Questionnaires as a Qualitative Research Approach

The following paragraphs provide an overview of the two different web-based questionnaires including sample, survey design, and data analysis.

3.2.1 Web-Based Questionnaire Local Communities in the Baltic Region

In the context of this study, the first web-based questionnaire aimed at the local communities in the destinations of the Baltic region. In total 174 participates (52 male, 116 female, 6 n/a) responded to the web-based questionnaire. Most respondents chose the age category 25-34 years. In total 476 participants started the web-based questionnaire, consequently, the response rate is 36.55 per cent.

The local communities have been reached over Facebook groups which were selected based on the region and the topic. For instance, Facebook groups, which promote neighbourhood initiatives or city specific topics such as trading groups, were used to target the local communities within the destination. A detailed overview of the directed cities in the Baltic region can be found in Table 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>City/Town</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Aalborg, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Elsinore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Kuressaare, Tallinn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Helsinki, Kotka, Mariehamn, Turku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Greifswald, Hamburg, Kiel, Lübeck-Travemünde, Rostock, Sassnitz, Stralsund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Riga, Ventspils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Klaipėda, Vilnius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Arendal, Kristiansand, Oslo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Gdansk, Szczecin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Kaliningrad, Saint Petersburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Gothenburg, Helsingborg, Kalmar, Malmö, Stockholm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: Destinations in the Baltic Region.* The ten respective countries with the 33 destination which are investigated through the web-based questionnaires are presented. Own Illustration.

The web-based questionnaire was designed as a self-administered questionnaire with the programme QuestionPro (2018b). The programme QuestionPro is an online survey tool for market and academic research which gives the opportunity to distribute surveys and collect the responses in real-time (QuestionPro, 2018a). The web-based questionnaire consisted of 16 questions. The first part of the web-based questionnaire covered demographical data such as gender, age, country of origin, and current occupation. The following questions were designed in forms of list, category, and rating questions (see Appendix A).

The list questions were used to ensure that the respondent considers all possible responses (Saunders et al., 2009). In addition to the list of responses, a category of “others” were included to ensure that the respondent can add a missing response option.

The question design of category questions aimed only for one fitting response (Saunders et al., 2009). For instance, this web-based questionnaire made use of category questions to gather information on which definition a respondent would choose for sustainable tourism and to gain information on the work experience of the respondent in a tourism-related collaboration.

The last question design, the rating question, was used to understand how strongly a respondent would agree or disagree with a given statement. The possible responses followed a five-point Likert-style rating scale (Saunders et al., 2009). To avoid confusion, the response categories always followed the same order from strongly disagree to strongly agree or very unsuccessful and very successful.
The last question of the web-based questionnaire was an unrequired comment and suggestion box. This box was provided to ensure that the respondent has an opportunity to add personal statements.

The web-based questionnaire covered the above-mentioned three main topics – sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding, and collaboration – to enable the comparison between the qualitative and quantitative data.

After the data collection, the responses were analysed with the programme SurveyAnalytics (2018b). SurveyAnalytics is an online software provided by QuestionPro (2018b) which analyses various forms of data (SurveyAnalytics, 2018a). The data was analysed regarding percentage distributions and arithmetic means. Response options such as ‘others’ or the comments and suggestion option were analysed and interpreted regarding the content.

3.2.2 Web-Based Questionnaire Tourism-Related Organisations in the Baltic Region

The second web-based questionnaire targeted the tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region. The organisations were chosen according to the destinations in the Baltic region similar to the regions and cities chosen for the local communities (see Table 4). The web-based questionnaire was filled out by 14 organisational members. The organisations which responded on the web-based questionnaire are located in Sweden, Norway, Germany, Finland, Latvia, Denmark, and Estonia. The forms of the organisations covered DMOs, municipalities, city marketing organisations, tourism information centres, and regional development organisations. Additionally, the positions of the respondents in the organisation covered the following areas: destination development manager, marketing director, counsellor and sales manager cruise, project manager of nature tourism development, information specialist, strategists, and project manager public relations. In total 25 organisational members started the web-based questionnaire and 14 respondents completed the web-based questionnaire. Consequently, the response rate is 56 per cent.

The study focuses on DMOs, however, not every destination has a DMO in place and thereby, we targeted different forms of tourism-related organisation within the destinations. A detailed overview of the contacted tourism-related organisations sorted by the country and city, can be found in the Appendix (see Appendix C). The organisations have been contacted via email.

The web-based questionnaire was designed with the programme QuestionPro (2018b) as well and followed the same structure as the web-based questionnaire designed for the local communities. The web-based questionnaire consisted of 15 questions in total (see Appendix B).

The web-based questionnaire was designed as a self-administered questionnaire starting with general question about the country or region of the organisation, the form of organisation, and
the position of the respondent within the organisation. The subsequent questions followed the principles of list, category, and rating questions similar to the web-based questionnaire for the local communities. For list questions the option ‘others’ were available as the respondents should have the opportunity to add a missing response option. The last question of the web-based questionnaire was an open question for comments or suggestions from the respondents.

Generally, the structure of the web-based questionnaire covered the same three categories – sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding, and collaboration – to ensure that the comparability between the collected data from the local communities and the tourism-related organisations.

Afterwards, the data was analysed with the programme SurveyAnalytics (2018b) regarding percentage distributions and arithmetic means. The text data, collected by the options ‘others’ or by the question for comments and suggestions, will be analysed and interpreted with regard to their content.

3.3 In-Depth Interviews as a Qualitative Research Approach

For this study, six in-depth interviews with seven interviewees were conducted regarding the topic of sustainable tourism in Visby, Gotland.

The interviewees were chosen based on their field of work in Visby. We requested interviews with locals, small and large business owners and representatives of tourism-related organisations via email and in person. The sample was based on the convenience and availability of the respondents. It was important to get insights from different perspectives such as the perspectives from the local organisations and local business owners who are financially dependent on the tourism sector.

The first interviewee was a local who is the co-owner of a local café. Thereby, he covered two interesting aspects for us. As he grew up on Gotland, he has the personal background fitting our research. Furthermore, as a local café co-owner, his business activities are also dependent on the tourist season.

The second interviewee was a member of the municipality in Gotland. His position as a sub-project leader in the field of ‘Visit and Meet’ for Gotland provided information about the municipality’s decisions for the tourism industry on Gotland and the projects targeting the development of sustainability.

The third in-depth interview was conducted with a member of the green party in Gotland. He is actively working for the conversion of Gotland into an eco-region and an active member of
the European Eco-Movement (Frank, 2017). His expertise on sustainability and on Gotland provided great insights on the history and structure of Gotland’s tourism development.

The fourth in-depth interview was conducted with two owners of a local business in Visby, Gotland. Their business has an environmental friendly background as their production uses recycled materials to create new products. The business was found in in the 1970s and thereby, the components of local business owner and long-term resident on Gotland made their insights and perspectives on the tourism development in Gotland highly valuable for this research.

The fifth in-depth interview was held with a member of the large tourism company in Visby, Gotland. His high position in the tourism company gave us great insights on how large actors on Gotland target and perceive the necessity of sustainability. Furthermore, the interviewee is board member of two different tourism-related organisations on Gotland and thereby, he provided information about the organisational tasks and how and if these organisations work with the local community on Gotland.

The sixth interviewee was the member of a local tourism network. Her intentions are to integrate at best all tourism-related actors in Gotland to create a strong destination which will sustain in the future and is able to provide the demands for locals and tourists.

For the in-depth interviews, open questions were created as a guideline to ensure that the three categories – sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding, and collaboration – were covered (see Appendix D). The questions provided the opportunity for exploration and the flexibility in questioning to gain deeper insights into meanings and motives. It is important to mention that the questions varied in each in-depth interview depending on the work field context (Saunders et al., 2016). Five in-depth interviews were held in person and one in-depth interview has been conducted via video-call. The recording of all in-depth interviews was requested and agreed with the interviewees. The in-depth interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.

For the analysis, all in-depth interviews were fully transcribed. Before comparing the in-depth interviews to the statistical data set from the web-based questionnaires, the in-depth interviews were analysed regarding the content to obtain the key findings.

As mentioned before, both research methods covered the three main categories: sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding, and collaboration. This enabled us to compare the findings from the two web-based questionnaires and in-depth interviews respectively. The collected data provided information about the real-life situation. The differences between the ideal collaboration and the practice were analysed based on the theoretical framework of this paper which provides the exploration of the ideal collaboration for sustainable tourism.
4. Empirics

In this chapter, the empirical findings from the web-based questionnaires covering the Baltic region and the in-depth interviews in Visby are presented. Firstly, the information gathered on sustainable tourism and how the term is used in practice will be highlighted. Secondly, the usage and importance of marketing for a destination will be presented. Lastly, the findings on the main drivers and main barriers for a collaboration between local communities and tourism-related organisations will be evaluated.

4.1 Findings on the Local Community Perspective in the Baltic Region

In this section, the findings of the web-based questionnaire aiming at the local communities in the Baltic region will be given. An overview in form of a graph will be given for all question. Detailed graphs on percentage distributions are given in the Appendix E.

4.1.1 Local Community Perspective on Sustainable Tourism

In the first question (Question 5) regarding sustainable tourism, the respondents were asked to choose between two different definitions of sustainable tourism as the definition changed during the last years. 89.08 per cent of the participants who filled in the web-based questionnaire chose the answer that sustainable tourism is the balance of social, economic, and environmental aspects of a destination. 10.92 per cent chose the answer that sustainable tourism is maintaining the economy of a destination (see Figure 3).

![Figure 3: Sustainable Tourism Definition – Local Perspective. The percentage distribution of the responses to the definition of sustainable tourism is presented. Own Illustration.](image)

In question 6, the respondents were asked to rate different statements about sustainable tourism on a five-point Likert-style rating scale. The results were that with a mean (hereafter: \( M \)) of 3.67 local communities tend to be undecided if the tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the destination. In addition, the local communities in the Baltic region...
are undecided if sustainability is a major topic in the tourism industry ($M = 3.09$) (see Figure 4). A further percentage distribution can be found in Appendix E.

In the next part of the web-based questionnaire, the respondents were asked to evaluate the main drivers and main barriers for sustainable tourism (Questions 7 and 8). Multiple response options to choose from and an ‘others’ response option were given. Regarding the percentage distribution, the three following response options were mostly chosen as the main drivers for sustainable tourism (see Figure 5):

1. Protection and conserving local resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems (13.30 per cent)
2. Fostering local economic development, job creation and income (9.78 per cent)
3. Protecting and conserving indigenous communities, livelihoods culture, heritage and identity (9.45 per cent)
Respondents added to the categories that a main driver should be “demanding every actor to add more than they take from the destination brand” and “to create an ecological sustainable attitude and behaviour in society and each and everyone’s life”.

As the three main barriers for sustainable tourism, the following three options were mostly chosen by the local communities (see Figure 6):

1. Lack of understanding the importance of sustainability (14.18 per cent)
2. Insufficient support by public authorities and tourism-related companies (8.89 per cent)
3. Lack of information about sustainability (8.17 per cent)

![Figure 6: Main Barriers for Sustainable Tourism – Local Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses between the response options. Own Illustration.](image)

In addition to that, the respondents added that barriers for sustainable tourism are “[a] lack of understanding what sustainable tourism actually means, and what it is in actual life (one has to understand the environmental impacts as well, not just eat local foods and accommodate in local inns)”, and “[the] laziness of tourists, putting your own wishes as a tourist above the wishes and needs of the local community”.

### 4.1.2 Local Community Perspective on Destination Marketing and Branding

The second category about marketing and branding of a destination was covered by question 9. Therefore, the local communities in the Baltic region were asked to rate five different statements regarding the marketing and branding of a destination. The statements have been evaluated on a five-point Likert-style rating scale.
The local communities tend to agree that marketing and a strong brand are important for a destination \((M = 3.87)\). Additionally, the respondents agreed that sustainability is important for the development of a destination \((M = 3.99)\). The respondents were also asked to rate if sustainability should be considered for the marketing of a destination. The results were measured with an average score of \(M = 4.12\) which means that local communities in the Baltic region agree that marketing and sustainability should be combined. Further, they agreed that locals should be involved in the marketing process of a destination \((M = 4.01)\) and that locals have a high impact on how tourists experience a destination \((M = 4.24)\) (see Figure 7). The detailed percentage distributions of all statements can be found in Appendix E.

![Figure 7: Marketing and Branding – Local Perspective. The figure demonstrates the different statements regarding destination marketing and branding and the mean of the responses. Own Illustration.](image_url)

4.1.3 Local Community Perspective on Collaboration

The last category of the web-based questionnaire, starting with question 10, covered the perspective of local communities on collaborations with tourism-related organisations. The local communities evaluated with an average score of \(M = 3.48\) that they would like to be integrated into decisions made for the destinations. Furthermore, the local communities in the Baltic region rated the statement that it is important to collaborate with tourism-related organisations with an average score of \(M = 3.85\). The statement if the respondents feel well informed about decisions made for the destination was evaluated averagely between disagree and undecided \((M = 2.43)\). The locals are also undecided about the fact whether locals opinions are overlooked \((M = 3.26)\) (see Figure 8). The percentage distributions of all statements can be found in Appendix E.
The following two questions (Questions 11 and 12) covered the evaluation of the main drivers and barriers for a personal collaboration with a tourism-related organisation. The three most chosen options for the main drivers for a tourism-related collaboration with local communities where (see Figure 9):

1. Protection of culture and local life (18.48 per cent)
2. Sustainable development as a main goal (12.58 per cent)
3. Fair distribution of economic environmental resources and power (12.42 per cent)
In addition, respondents added the following statements as main drivers for collaborating with tourism-related organisations: “[the] motivation from realizing that we are cutting the branch we are sitting on”, “clear economic benefits for inhabitants”, “alignment of goals and interests”, “getting paid to do so”, and “[the] protection of local nature and wild animal life”.

As the main barriers for collaboration with a tourism-related organisation for the respondents were (see Figure 10):

1. Lack of time (14.79 per cent)
2. Lack of communication between locals and tourism-related organisations (14.12 per cent)
3. Lack of support from authorities and tourism-related organisations (10.92 per cent)

The response options were complemented by an additional answer. A respondent answered that a main barrier for sustainable tourism is “the lack of possibilities initiated by experts”.

The last part of the web-based questionnaire, starting at question 13, covered the experience of the respondents working in a tourism-related organisation. 63.79 per cent of the respondents did not work in a tourism-related collaboration before. 18.39 per cent of the respondents worked in a tourism-related collaboration before and 13.22 per cent of the respondents are currently working in a tourism-related collaboration. 4.6 per cent of the respondents answered that they are actively planning to work in a tourism-related collaboration (see Figure 11).
If the respondents chose in question 13 that they never worked in a collaboration before, question 14 was logically connected and asked if the respondents would have interest in working in a tourism-related collaboration. 54.05 per cent would not be interested to work in a tourism-related collaboration. 45.95 per cent would be interested to work in a tourism-related organisation (see Appendix E).

If the respondents in question 13 answered that they work currently or worked in a collaboration in the past, question 15 was logically connected. In question 15 the respondents had to evaluate how successful the collaborations are or were. The question could be rated on a five-point Likert-style rating scale. The respondents rated the question with an average score of $M = 3.27$, which means that the respondents are undecided about the success of a collaboration (see Appendix E).

The web-based questionnaire was finalized with a comment field for further comments or suggestions (Question 16). The local community respondents in the Baltic region added the following comments:

“[Sustainability] is one of the most essential aspect of globalized world to take into consideration to promote tourism worldwide.”

“Local governments should think more about impacts on locals with 4-5 new hotel openings p.a., which means a million more tourists p.a. Also using the public transport and visiting public events. There is an extreme example how this can develop to the wrong side (Barcelona), so authorities should invite more to open discussions not only with initiatives but single persons.”
4.2 Findings on the Tourism-Related Organisations Perspective in the Baltic Region

The following paragraph presents the findings of the web-based questionnaire of the tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region covering the three categories of the study. An overview in form of a graph will be given for all question. Detailed graphs on percentage distributions are given in the Appendix F.

4.2.1 Organisational Perspective on Sustainable Tourism

The first category of the web-based questionnaire, starting at question 4, covered the topic of sustainable tourism. Therefore, the tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region were asked to choose between two different definitions of sustainable tourism. Most of the respondents chose the definition that sustainable tourism is the balance of social, economic and environmental aspects of a destination (85.71 per cent) and 14.29 per cent chose the definition that sustainable tourism is maintaining the economy of a destination (see Figure 12).

Afterwards, the respondents were asked to rate two statements on a five-point Likert-style rating scale (Question 5). The respondents agreed that the tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the destination (\( M = 4.14 \)). Furthermore, the respondents tend to agree that sustainability is a major topic in the tourism industry (\( M = 3.93 \)) (see Figure 13). The detailed percentage distributions of the two statements can be found in Appendix F.
The organisational members of the Baltic region were asked to choose between different response options as the main drivers and main barriers for sustainable tourism (Questions 6 and 7). Furthermore, the respondents had the opportunity to add under ‘others’ missing response options. The mostly chosen options for the main drivers for sustainable tourism were (see Figure 14):

1. Fostering local economic development, job creation and income (11.94 per cent)
2. Creating awareness for local costumes, culture and values (11.94 per cent)
3. Decreasing and balancing environmental impacts (e.g. CO₂-emissions, water and land usage, pollution) (11.94 per cent)

No additional response options were added from the respondents’ side.
The three mostly chosen options for the main barriers for sustainable tourism were (see Figure 15):

1. Insufficient cooperation among local businesses and communities and the tourism industry (21.57 per cent)
2. Lack of understanding the importance of sustainability (17.64 per cent)
3. Insufficient support by public authorities and tourism-related stakeholders (11.76 per cent)

![Figure 15: Main Barriers for Sustainable Tourism – Organisational Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses among the response options. Own Illustration.]

The respondents did not add any response options on this question.

### 4.2.2 Organisational Perspective on Destination Marketing and Branding

The organisational members in the Baltic region were asked to rate five statements regarding the marketing and branding of a destination, starting at question 8. The respondents rated with an average score of $M = 4.57$ that *marketing and a strong brand are important for a destination*. They agreed that *sustainability is important for the development of a destination* and that *sustainability should be considered for the marketing of a destination* ($M = 4.21$). Moreover, the organisational members agreed that *the locals should be involved in the marketing process of a destination* ($M = 4.14$) and that *locals have a high impact in how tourists experience a destination* ($M = 4.43$) (see Figure 16). The percentage distributions of the responses of the above-mentioned statements can be found in Appendix F.
4.2.3 Organisational Perspective on Collaboration

The last part of the web-based questionnaire, starting at question 9, covered the reasoning for or against a tourism-related collaboration and if the organisations of the respondents have experience in working with local communities. In question 9, the respondents were asked to evaluate three different statements regarding local communities. With an average score of $M = 4.36$, the respondents agreed that it is important that tourism organisations work with local communities. The organisational members rated the statement that they experience that local communities wish to be integrated into the decision-making process for a destination with an average score of $M = 3.57$, which means that the respondents are undecided about the importance. The respondents are undecided ($M = 3$) rather local communities are overlooked in the decision-making process for a destination (see Figure 17). The detailed percentage distribution can be found in the Appendix F.

![Figure 16: Marketing and Branding – Organisational Perspective](image)

Figure 16: Marketing and Branding – Organisational Perspective. The figure demonstrates the different statements regarding destination marketing and branding and the mean of the responses. Own Illustration.

![Figure 17: Local Communities within a Destination – Organisational Perspective](image)

Figure 17: Local Communities within a Destination – Organisational Perspective. The figure presents the means of the responses regarding each statement on a five-point Likert-style rating scale. Own Illustration.
In the following two questions (Questions 10 and 11), the respondents chose the main drivers and main barriers for a collaboration with local communities. The three main drivers were (see Figure 18):

1. Using local knowledge and experience to create authenticity of the destination (23.08 per cent)
2. Creating an image for a positive experience of tourists (19.23 per cent)
3. Protection of culture and local life (11.54 per cent)

The three main barriers the respondents chose were (see Figure 19):

1. Lack of communications between locals and tourism-related organisations (17.65 per cent)
2. Lack of economic resources (14.71 per cent)
3. Lack of common goals for the destination (14.71 per cent)
The last part of the category covered the experience of the organisations in working with local communities. In question 12, 71.43 per cent of the respondents chose the answer: My organisation is currently working with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration. 7.14 per cent of the respondents worked with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration before. No respondent answered the question with: My organisation did not work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration before. 21.43 per cent of the respondents answered that their organisation is actively planning to work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: Work Experience – Organisational Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of all responses regarding the work experience in collaborations. Own Illustration.
Question 13 was logically connected to the response option my organisation did not work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration before and covered the interest in working in a tourism-related organisation. As no respondent chose this answer in question 12, question 13 received 0 responses.

Question 14 was also logically connected to question 13. If respondents chose that their organisation worked before or is currently working with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration, the respondents were asked in question 14 how successful the collaboration was or is. The 78.57 per cent of respondents in total who worked before or currently work with local communities evaluated, with an average score of \( M = 3.73 \), that the collaborations are rather successful (see Appendix F).

The last question of the web-based questionnaire (Question 15) enabled the respondents to add comments or suggestions. No respondent added an additional response to this question.

4.3 Findings on the Perspectives on Gotland

The qualitative data will be demonstrated in the subsections. The findings provide insights into the case of Visby, Gotland, and the perspectives related to the three categories of this research: Sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding, and collaboration.

4.3.1 The Perspective on Sustainable Tourism on Gotland

During the in-depth interviews the respondents explained and illustrated the general tourism development on Gotland over the last decades but also emphasised the importance of sustainable tourism development and growth for the future.

One topic of the in-depth interviews covered the current tourism strategy for Gotland in general. The municipality member stated that “all year around tourism needs to be developed in order to use resources in a more efficient way and to relieve the peak season”. Furthermore, a “more theme-based tourism including different packages and tourism products need to be developed to foster the infrastructure and to support the extension of tourism to the north, south and east of Gotland but also to attract more national and international visitors”. Therefore, as the member of the municipality explained further there are currently two different projects running which support the tourism development on Gotland, whereby “one is about developing a strategy for sustainable tourism development […] and the other one is called local attractiveness”, which supports the countryside development. The tourism network member confirmed that there is “a group […] trying to form a strategy how Gotland can change in the future and how it can become an all year around destination” since a few months.

The member of the green party also expressed that “there has been an effort from Gotland since the 90s to try to shift from sun and sand tourism to some other type of tourism that is longer lasting”. As he further explained the aim was “to develop a concept to get 365 days of
tourism [...] and to get more cultural tourism [and] different types of tourism" by “having one primary event every month to shift from six weeks of sun and sand to year around diversified tourism to also keep the restaurants and hotels alive during the winter season". The large tourism company member exemplified that his company is “working really hard to make this a year around destination". Thereby, the main drivers are “to keep the restaurants open and to offer attractive weekend packages to increase weekend travels" but also “to find travel possibilities [...] and new groups of people coming". Especially, in Visby he can see a change and increase: “here in Visby a lot of things are open all the year around”.

All interviewees agreed that sustainability plays a vital role in tourism. However, as the tourism network member stated that “even though Gotland is an eco-commune" and “a lot of people in the region already work with sustainability – the ecological part", when it comes to tourism she “cannot see that it has been taken care of in a proper way in the meaning that there is no clear programme" for sustainable tourism development and “up until no strategy". The green party member confirmed that “there are a lot of people interested in solutions and ideas for sustainable tourism” so that preconditions for sustainable tourism development on Gotland exist, “but it has not been worked in a coordinated way” and “there is no actor representing sustainable tourism on Gotland” so that he questioned “whether [Gotland] actually succeed with developing some sort of true sustainable tourism projects”.

When asking about the drivers and barriers for a sustainable tourism development on Gotland the interviewees mentioned different aspects. Some stated that there is or will be a huge demand in sustainable tourism products: “More and more people are interested in this (sustainable tourism) and have an awareness. Thus, it will become more and more a demand from the customers in the future [...] which means that we have to be able to meet this demand” explained the member of the local tourism network. The green party member argued that “there is a lack of products developed on Gotland. [...] So, there are tourists but there is no product" for sustainable tourism. In addition, he mentioned that the local community can be a driver for sustainable tourism development, because “a lot of people are interested in solutions and ideas for sustainable tourism development” and “a lot of things that are really sustainable or sustainability-oriented are pushed forward by enthusiast and civil society and not by companies”. In that sense he also highlighted the major weakness of Gotland whereby he explained that “the large mainstream tourist actors, which themselves are not specifically good at sustainable tourism" are ask for decisions and development planning, so that those ones stay economically save and further promote the “same type of sun and sand tourism as they have always done" whereas the “enthusiasts and civil society are not in the focus and thus left out".
The member of the municipality agreed and emphasised the importance if including all stakeholders: “You have to get [all stakeholders] on board for sustainable development” and “in order to have a sustainable growth within tourism we need to look at all participants […] – businesses, the population and the tourists”. Also, the member of the tourism network as well as the member from the large tourism company illustrated that the emphasis of local businesses has been more on the environmental aspect of sustainability so far. However, according to the tourism network member the “huge importance is to look more into the sustainability aspect of how this is going to change this destination” in the future with a closer look on “how to deal with the social aspects of the sustainable package”.

On the question if sustainability or rather sustainable tourism development for Gotland goes hand in hand with the construction and opening of the new cruise ship berth in Visby the answers were quite mixed. Whereas the member of the municipality stated that “we need a little bit more tourists in order to become more sustainable, but we need them all year around”. The member of the large tourism company disagreed and emphasised: "Many destinations start to talk about [that] they have to limit the number of tourists to become sustainable and [this] is for the cruise tourism industry, also in the Baltic, something they have to consider in the future”. Thus, the shop owners expressed doubts as well, because there have been cruises before with which they have not made positive experiences: "It is not easy to get them into the shops”. They also mentioned concerns for “a risk for common tourists if they have to wait […] for a cup of coffee”. The café owner added to the concerns that "more tourists [mean] more waste etc.". Within the in-depth interview with the green party member he stated that "the main beneficiaries will be in Visby itself" and that it is “difficult to understand how [the cruise tourism] is actually going to benefit small tourist actors outside Visby". Furthermore, he said that already in Visby a "real place of noxious type of tourism" exists in the summer, whereby "people actually flee Visby". However, the tourism network member instead claimed that "[cruise tourism] cannot only work in Visby alone" and "it is definitely a kind of tourism that gives a big impact and that is why it is very often a driving force when it comes to development”. Thus, she confessed that there is a lack of knowledge and communication on the island that results in "some negative attitudes towards the cruise development”.

4.3.2 The Perspective on Destination Marketing and Branding on Gotland

The second category of the research covered the marketing and branding of a destination. In the in-depth interviews, the interviewees were asked to comment if marketing for a destination is important and if sustainability plays a role in the marketing strategy.

Generally, the member of the large tourism company explained that “Gotland is a very strong brand in Sweden and is very well-known” and that “Visby itself as a city – an old Hanseatic city – is a very strong brand”. The café owner agreed and emphasised that “you have to have
this big name" to stand out because “Sweden is a popular country to travel to”. But as mentioned before, the idea is to “strengthen Gotland on the national and international market” (The member of the large tourism company).

The member of the municipality stated that the marketing communication is currently lacking a common voice because they “do not have a kind of smooth system and [...] [they] do not have an information packaging system” because the different stakeholders on Gotland have their own platforms for communicating and promoting. The member of the green party confirmed and explained that “there are only information available about certain things in Gotland” which are communicated through “the bigger actors, the bigger chains, and everything is in different marketing chains”.

When the interviewees where asked for the importance of communicating sustainability through marketing, the member of the large tourism company stated that marketing sustainability will be important because “in the future this will be a competition between the destinations, that you can provide a destination that everybody can see that this is a sustainable destination”. He saw sustainable tourism “as a future, [and] a very strong competition issue”. On the other hand, he emphasised that Gotland does “not have marketing today that is saying ‘come here and buy a sustainable trip to Gotland’ [...] But it can very well be in the future”.

The member of the tourism network explained that communication is a very important factor. She said, “what we need for the visitors to know is that this is a really fragile place – it is a world heritage and we would love you (the tourists) to help us taking care of this island”. Furthermore, she thought that to “show the visitors that [Gotland] is truthfully being sustainable [sustainability] should also be included in the programme and the marketing of the destination. It should definitely be part of the brand”. The member of the municipality confirmed the statement by saying “we should promote more of the sustainability that we can offer” and that sustainability could be developed “as an add-on for the tourist” and thereby, as “[travel] reasons for the island”.

Nevertheless, the café owner and the two shop owners stated that there is a lack of communication about sustainability as the café owner just “recently heard” from the terminology. The two shop owners agreed that the knowledge about sustainability comes from a “personal interest” but not from the authority side. In addition to that, the member of the municipality stated that sustainability needs to be better communicated because “you have to have some basic knowledge but also [need] […] some assistance for your way of life [...] how you can be more sustainable”. To close the knowledge gap, he explained that it is important “to transfer knowledge in the right way at the right time” and therefore, to create “new kinds of
meetings between visitors and locals" because tourists do not want to be tourists anymore they want to be "part-time local". The member of the green party confirmed that it is important to create and promote this localness and this unique experience by getting "people out and [getting them] [...] in contact with some sort of real culture, real things going on, on the island". He commented that "the best experience is going to be the one that is really connected to the population. [...] [And] really going to have this unique experience [...] that is connected to a higher quality tourism where you brought out to local companies and local communities and get involved in a local community and you see what is going on there".

The member of the large tourism company presented a way to combine the local communities and the marketing for a destination. He stated that the best way is when the locals "become [the company’s] ambassadors. [As] [...] this is a very strong way of getting and attracting people to come here to the island, when all the inhabitants are your ambassadors". The goal of that company, as he explained, is to "make them (the inhabitants on Gotland) feel proud of here, and people who live here normally are very proud of the island".

4.3.3 The Perspective on Collaboration on Gotland
During the in-depth interviews, the interviewees gave different insights on why a collaboration is important and what are the main drivers and barriers for a tourism-related collaboration.

As the member of the tourism network stated, "the aim [of her network] is to put forward all the tourism issues and to be a link between the private businesses and the local authorities". She explained that the task of a network is "to make people come together within the tourism sector and to make sure that the company helps them to become informed and inspired and to secure the knowledge about how to work in the tourism sector". The member of the municipality confirmed that the role of a network is "to collect information and to provide information and ideas".

The member of the tourism network explained that "there are quite a lot of associations on the island" and that "the population on Gotland in general is very active" which she sees as a main driver for a collaboration on the island. The café owner explained that he would like to join a collaboration with the aim "to make Gotland a better destination to visit".

However, the member of the green party stated that a barrier for a collaboration on Gotland is that "there is something missing as there is no organisation and [no one] is taking responsibility for [...] sustainable development in the tourism sector and that the voices of "the small actors that would actually be developing something new (sustainable products) [...]" are not heard. The member of the tourism network agreed that the main problem is that no one will take full responsibility to create an overarching collaboration. She pointed out that "everything is just
functioning very individually”. The member of the green party supported this statement by saying that there is no “overarching cooperation for sustainable tourism on Gotland”.

The café owner and the two small shop owners mentioned as a main barrier for an active participation that they have no time to participate as running the business takes a lot of effort. This statement was also confirmed by the member of the green party, the member of the large tourist company, and the member of the tourism network. The member of the green party explained the situation for smaller businesses that they “cannot really be active, they do not have the time [because] these are like one-person companies” and “that they are fully occupied with that” (The member of the large tourism company).

The member of the green party added that the small businesses and the “people who have good ideas are not recognised, because they are not these successful tourist companies” and thus, “not given any support”. He mentioned that to create sustainable tourism a good way is to “work with local communities in the south, east or north of Gotland and work with them [because] how we could develop sustainable tourism is closely integrated into their community”. The member of the tourism network commented that it is important to “strengthen the collaboration between the private companies and the region” because currently Gotland “is a dysfunctional destination”.

One way of working together with the local community in Gotland was presented by the member of the large tourism company. He explained that “all the advertisement [the company does] [...] this year is done together with locals”. The company tries “to tell an interesting story about someone that lives here on the island and they (the locals) tell their story about different days in Gotland”. This cooperation between the company and the smaller business in Gotland should “try to stimulate their business as well as [their own business] [...]”.

The member of the tourism network concluded that “a DMO together with understanding the importance of creating a masterplan for the destination which takes the whole of the tourism aspect into consideration, together with the local businesses' perspectives as well” is needed. However, she explained that for a creation of a DMO a financial foundation is necessary, and that the municipality should see “the responsibility they have in order to form [a DMO]”. Without the support from the authority side she explained that it is “not economically sustainable”.

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5. Analysis

Our investigation on how local communities collaborate with tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region and specifically in Visby, Gotland, to foster sustainable tourism development will be analysed based on the ideal collaborative approach presented in the theoretical framework. The analysis will compare the findings of the web-based questionnaires with the findings from the in-depth interviews in Visby, Gotland, in the three respective categories – sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding and collaborations. The comparison of the findings will answer the research question: How do DMOs and local communities collaborate to foster sustainable tourism development in the Baltic region while focusing on Gotland? Thus, the analysis will highlight the sustainable tourism development in the destinations, the use of marketing, and compares the collaborations exercised in practice with the ideal collaborative approach.

5.1 Sustainable Tourism in the Baltic Region and Visby, Gotland

As the findings show sustainability is a major topic in society nowadays and plays an increasing role in peoples’ lives in general but also in respect to the tourism industry. The majority of tourism-related organisations as well as the locals around the Baltic region evaluated sustainable tourism by choosing the definition that includes all three aspects of the TBL rather than highlighting only the economic maintenance of a destination. Nevertheless, whereas the tourism-related organisations more agreed on the fact that sustainability is a major topic in tourism, the local communities are less decided. The reason why locals see sustainability not so much as a major topic in tourism might be due to an existing knowledge gap either around the concept of sustainability or the tourism industry in general.

This knowledge gap is also reflected in the case of Gotland. As we experienced during our in-depth interviews a lot of effort regarding sustainable development is done concerning environmental impacts but not so much regarding the social aspects. It also became clear that many people relate sustainability only to environmental impacts and concerns and that often the economic profit is more important than supporting the local community. Thus, two interviewees emphasised the importance to look more into the social aspects of sustainability to further strengthen it on Gotland and to find the balance between social, environmental and economic impacts to foster sustainable development. According to Koens (2017) public authorities and tourism-related organisations need to have a "sustainable and participatory people-centred approach with inclusive economic growth, social and cultural development" to foster and strengthen sustainable development, equality and long-term benefits for all stakeholders. Furthermore, as Hunter (1997) suggests policy makers and destination managers need to understand the principles of sustainable development and contribute
Accordingly to develop sustainable tourism. Hunter especially emphasises to reach sustainability the destination firstly needs to "meet the needs and wants of the local host community in terms of improved living standards and quality of life" (as cited in Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p. 34). All this reflects the need for a bottom-up approach whereby local communities are heard, and their needs are taken into account.

Although some interviewees stated that there are already a lot of initiatives working on projects for sustainable (tourism) development, especially the smaller innovative businesses are not recognised or financially supported. A lot of interviewees mentioned a lack of knowledge and communication, but that knowledge needs to be transferred and communicated in order to become a more sustainable destination. Therefore, one interviewee suggested that “in order to have a sustainable growth within tourism we need to look at all participants” and “take care of businesses, the population and the tourists” (The member of the municipality). In fact, that shows that there is already an approach of sustainable thinking as it is emphasised in the SDGs and by Koen's (2017) to develop sustainable tourism that strengthens local communities by integrating all stakeholders.

The tourism-related organisations as well as the local communities across the Baltic region think that tourism has a positive impact on the development of a destination. As the UNWTO (n.d.) states the tourism industry is steadily growing. Therefore, people rate economic growth as more important than sustainability or rather the development of sustainable tourism, because they are often economically and financially depending on the tourism industry. Even though the findings show that environmental and social concerns are of high interest the economic well-being and prosperity stay in the foreground.

According to our interviewees Gotland, as many destinations, is financially depending on the tourism industry. Therefore, as one interviewee commented they want to have more tourists coming all year around or at least most of the months instead of having an extreme peak season. The member of the municipality further added “in that way more tourists mean more month of economic activity”. In fact, Gotland will have an increase of cruise tourists due to the newly constructed cruise ship berth. Additionally, other interviewees expressed that the cruise tourism industry will have a big impact and is very often a driving force for development and that therefore Gotland's tourism will continue to grow because of the cruise tourism and will become a very interesting destination. Nonetheless, there are many concerns if cruise tourism can contribute positively to the development of sustainable tourism and actually will bring economic growth to parts outside of Visby as well as relieve the peak season, because the cruise tourists will mainly stay in Visby and are coming over a period from May until October. However, one interviewee clearly stated that Gotland needs “a little bit more tourists in order to become more sustainable” (The member of the municipality). Therefore, the investment into
the cruise ship berth has been the right decision to further develop tourism on Gotland according to people who work in the tourism industry.

In turn, fostering the economic development, job creation and income plays a key role in the perception of tourism not only for tourism-related organisations but also for local communities. When looking at drivers for sustainable tourism development both, the tourism-related organisations and the local communities in the Baltic region, named economic growth as one of the main drivers. However, whereas the local communities see as a main driver the protection and conservation of local resources, biodiversity and ecosystems as well as the protection and conservation of indigenous communities, livelihoods, culture, heritage and identity the tourism-related organisations put environmental sustainability in the foreground. According to the tourism-related organisations decreasing and balancing environmental impacts is a main driver as well as offering tourists a greater authenticity.

As the findings express locals think in regard of drivers for sustainable tourism beside economic development also of social and environmental aspects in terms of protecting and conserving their host destination. However, the tourism-related organisations have beside economic and environmental interests also the awareness for local costumes, culture and value in mind but not the protection and conservation of those. As already mentioned above also the findings from the case study on Gotland show similar results. Whereby the local tourism-related organisations also emphasised their economic interest as well as their efforts solving environmental concerns, however, they state clearly that the social aspects become more and more important and therefore need to be considered in the future.

According to Campelo et al. (2014) local communities' expertise for the destination are valuable for creating and shaping the culture, image and attractiveness of the destination. Therefore, it is argued that locals can enhance the quality of tourist's experiences and that tourism activities should be initiated by local communities (Campelo et al., 2014; Theerapappisit, 2012; Zamfir and Corbos, 2015). The importance of local communities was also a huge topic within the in-depth interviews. In fact, the interviewees mentioned the importance to build a connection between visitors and local communities to offer them a unique experience and give them the feeling to be a ‘part-time local’. Hereby, a relation to the current trend in tourism can be seen, whereby many destinations build on the feeling of localness and authenticity to create a unique experience and image for the tourists. An example on how localness can be promoted was given by the member of the large tourism company. His company works jointly with smaller businesses for marketing projects to stimulate the growth of the large as well as the smaller businesses. Additionally, the marketing campaigns focus on the localness and to share local stories. Again, the aspects of promoting
local culture and products are clearly stated in the SDGs as well. Therefore, it can be assumed that the social aspects play a very important role in developing a sustainable destination.

Even though there are many important drivers mentioned by the respondents and interviewees, the barriers for sustainability predominate the development of sustainable tourism. As the findings show both, the tourism-related organisations and local communities in the Baltic region, claim that a lack of understanding the importance of sustainability exists. This goes in line with the previously mentioned knowledge gap regarding sustainability and the tourism industry. Furthermore, the local communities expressed that they do not feel well informed about sustainability and insufficiently supported by public authorities and tourism-related organisations. In turn, also the tourism-related organisations see as a main barrier the insufficient support by public authorities and tourism-related stakeholders. Nevertheless, according to the tourism-related organisations the main barrier for sustainable tourism is insufficient cooperation among local businesses, communities and the tourism industry.

All in all, the findings suggest that there is a huge interest and an awareness for the importance of sustainable tourism but that there is also a lack of knowledge and especially of communication among the different actors exists which hinder any development. In the case of Gotland, the same concerns were expressed during the in-depth interviews. This leads to the need for marketing as a communication tool as highlighted in the next section.

5.2 The Role of Marketing and Branding in the Baltic Region and Visby, Gotland

As highlighted in Section 5.1, a lack of knowledge and communication has been found in the destinations around the Baltic region. Therefore, the marketing of a destination could be used as a tool to fill the knowledge gap and the lack of communication between all stakeholders within the destination.

According to Buhalis (2000) to manage and promote a tourism destination is challenging because of the complex relationship between local stakeholders consisting of professional and personal interest of all people who live and work in the destination area. However, as the findings show locals have a high impact on how tourists experience a destination and the tourism-related organisations as well as the locals strongly agreed that locals should be involved into the marketing process of a destination. This argument is also supported in theory, where researchers state that locals can enhance the quality of tourist’s experiences and provide valuable local knowledge as well as insights into community’s needs and expectations (Campelo et al., 2014; Bramwell and Sharman, 1999; Theerapappisit, 2012).
However, as already mentioned in the case of Gotland, the destination is not marketed through one communication channel due to a lack of sufficient communication between the local tourism actors, the local community as well as the tourists. In general, the interviewees expressed the importance of a proper communication and knowledge transfer also to avoid mistrust among the actors and the local community, as it has developed in the case of the new cruise ship berth. According to Trueman et al. (2004) the destination marketing should include the wishes and needs of all stakeholders of the destination to avoid negative consequences. In the case of Gotland, the lack of communication and a common voice within the marketing, lead to mistrust regarding the cruise berth. Thus, the importance of marketing as a tool for communication to balance all stakeholder needs and wishes (Middleton and Hawkins, 1998) and to avoid negative consequences (Trueman et al., 2004) is highlighted in real life.

Moreover, some interviewees also accentuate the importance to better communicate the topic of sustainability and sustainable tourism among all stakeholders to make people aware of Gotland as a fragile place. As one respondent answered: “What we need for the visitors to know is that this is a really fragile place – it is a world heritage and we would love you to help us taking care of this island” (The member of the tourism network). Therefore, she suggested that sustainability should be included in the marketing of the destination. Thus, marketing would function as a tool to increase the awareness of all stakeholders for the sustainable use and consumption of products and resources (Emery, 2012), and as a driving force for sustainable agendas (Jones et al., 2008). This is supported by the findings of the web-based questionnaires, where the local communities and tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region strongly agreed that sustainability should be considered in the marketing of a destination.

All in all, the findings of the web-based questionnaires and the in-depth interviews showed that marketing as a tool for communication is needed to overcome the lack of knowledge and to communicate all stakeholders and to bring everyone on the same knowledge level about the decisions for the destination as well as foster sustainable tourism development.

5.3 A Collaborative Approach in the Baltic Region and Visby, Gotland

According to Himmelmann (1996) a collaboration is the exchange of information for mutual benefits and the achievement of a common goal. As it can be seen in the findings of the web-based questionnaires, tourism-related organisations and local communities in the Baltic region tend to agree that working together is important as it is shown in the ideal collaboration framework by Bornhorst et al. (2010).

Our study investigates how the ideal collaboration framework (see Figure 2) is exercised in practice. The findings of the web-based questionnaire showed that the tourism-related
organisations are undecided if locals are non-integrated in the decision-making processes for a destination and whether their opinions are overlooked. This would mean that the tourism-related organisations have the feeling that the local communities are already included in the decision-making process of the destination and thereby, that a collaborative approach is partly exercised in the destinations among the Baltic region.

On the other hand, local community members in the Baltic region do not feel well informed about the decisions made for the destinations they live in which would also refute the existence of an ideal collaboration. Hence, it could be questioned how the tourism-related organisations define the term ‘local community’. It could be argued that the organisations work with local businesses but not with the local community. That would explain why tourism-related organisations and local communities have different perceptions about the involvement of these actors.

The findings of the in-depth interviews underline the imbalance of knowledge and information throughout the different stakeholders as well. The tourism-related organisations and the municipality work together with the large actors of the tourism industry but do not include local individuals or small businesses as the member of the green party explained. During the in-depth interviews with the café owner and the two shop owners, the interviewees mentioned that the flow of information about the decisions made for the destination and about sustainability is lacking which confirms the findings of the local communities in the Baltic region. According to the reasons for collaborative failure by MGC (1998, as cited by Fyall, 2008), the lack of communication is a main factor which has to be overcome to increase the chances for a successful collaboration. As the lack of communication was found before in the marketing of the destinations among the Baltic region, it can be said that the ideal collaborative approach as presented by Bornhorst et al. (2010) is important. As presented, the different actors of the destinations are not on the same level of knowledge and information, it is necessary to have an ideal collaboration including all the different actors using marketing as a communication tool to increase the communication throughout the destination.

To improve the collaborations between the tourism-related organisations and the local communities, the main drivers for a collaborative approach have been researched. The local communities in the Baltic region pointed out that a driving force for them would be that sustainability would be a main goal of such a collaboration. Furthermore, an ideal collaboration should improve the fair distribution of economic and environmental resources and power between all stakeholders within the destination. This unfair distribution of resources was also highlighted by the member of the green party by explaining that the small and innovative actors in Gotland are “not given any support”. Regarding Himmelmann (1996) a collaboration is the share of resources which is explicitly pointed out from local communities in the Baltic region
and from the local side in Gotland. This underlines the necessity for an ideal collaboration in the Baltic region to balance the resources and power between all actors in the destinations, as it is questionable how a fair distribution is possible if not all actors are similarly involved in decision made for the destination.

Another driver for a collaboration for the local communities and for the tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region, is the protection of culture and local life. As this driver is mentioned commonly, a collaborative approach should support the achievement of the protection. In addition, the tourism-related organisations in the Baltic region stated that two main drivers for a collaboration with local communities would be the usage of local knowledge and experience to create authenticity and an image for a positive visitor experience. A collaborative approach between tourism-related organisations and the local communities would thereby overcome a main challenge for a destination brand stated by Trueman et al. (2004). Trueman et al. state that the individual needs, priorities and expectations of the different stakeholders is challenging for a brand creation. If all local actors would collaborate in a local network together, the communication about needs, priorities and expectations would be given and would increase the chance to create a common voice throughout the destination. Furthermore, a collaboration where all stakeholders’ needs, priorities and expectations come together would enable a creation of an image which prevents negative consequences such as economic damages for the destination (Trueman et al., 2004). The argument of the tourism-related organisations to use the knowledge of the local communities to create a positive image for the experience of the tourists underlines the need for an ideal collaboration. The ideal collaboration framework of Bornhorst et al. (2010) covers the tourism-related organisations in form of a DMO, the visitor experience, and the support of the local community, and thereby, combine all the actors that are needed for the creation of a positive image.

During the research of this study, many barriers for a collaboration between all stakeholders of a destination have been found which could be the reasoning for the underdevelopment of an ideal collaboration.

An often-mentioned barrier for local communities in the Baltic region and also in Gotland is the lack of time. This has been confirmed by the two shop owners and the café owner in Visby but also from the organisational and political side. The smaller businesses do not have the time besides running their business to actively participate in a collaboration. This barrier was also found by MGC (1998, as cited by Fyall, 2008) as a reason for a collaborative failure (see Table 3). Thus, it would be important that local communities receive support to overcome the lack of time and staff to be able to maintain their business and participate actively in destination-related decision processes.
The local communities in the Baltic region evaluated the lack of support from authorities and tourism-related organisations as one of the main barriers. This can be aligned to one of the main barriers from the organisational side, as the tourism-related organisations evaluated the lack of economic resources as a reason not to participate in a collaboration. These barriers can also be found in Visby. One of the main challenges was mentioned by the member of the local tourism network. She explained that to create a tourism-related organisation or a DMO, the municipality should support this aim financially which they do not so far. According to MGC (1998, as cited by Fyall 2008), lack of capital is another reason for a collaborative failure. In the Baltic region and specifically in Gotland, the support of the authority side is a main necessity to create a collaboration for all stakeholders within the destinations. This aligns to the statement of Elbe et al. (2018) as they underline that a DMO is dependent on the financial support by public authorities.

In the case of Gotland, the main problem we found is that no one feels responsible or is willing to take the full responsibility for the creation of a DMO. This finding supports the collaborative failures found by MGC (1998, as cited by Fyall, 2008) (see Table 3). The insufficient establishment of responsibilities at the outset is increasing the chances for an unsuccessful collaboration. This situation can currently be found in Gotland which leads to the slow development of a DMO and thereby, to the slow development of sustainable tourism. The necessity of a DMO in place as the linkage between all actors is highlighted in the ideal collaboration framework by Bornhorst et al. (2010) and Buhalis (2000). The necessity of a DMO was also emphasised by many interviewees as they agreed that in the future the existence of a DMO is leading to the maintenance of the destination and the development towards a sustainable destination. The interviewees highlighted that the non-existence of a DMO makes the destination remain as a dysfunctional destination where many actors work individually next to each other.

The tourism-related organisations evaluated the lack of common goals for the destination as a main barrier for them to collaborate. This could also be a reason why the organisations in Gotland often work separately as there are no common goals for the island between all stakeholders. However, during the in-depth interviews we found that one common goal shared by all stakeholder is to make Gotland a better destination and to create an all year-round destination, to stretch the tourism season, and thereby, enable the locals all over the island to run their business all year round. This goal could provide a common ground for a collaboration and could be seen as a basis to create a common voice among the destination.

To get more insights on the current situation in the Baltic region, the web-based questionnaires covered the experiences of the local communities and the tourism-related organisations with collaborations between these two parties. The respondents of the local communities mainly
did not have any experience and never worked in a tourism-related collaboration. Indeed, the personal interest was also split in the communities. A slight majority replied that they are not interested in working in a collaboration. These findings made us question what the reasons for that could be. One possibility for could be that we investigated larger destinations such as Copenhagen, Stockholm, Helsinki, and Oslo. Maybe the integration of local communities and the relation to the destination are stronger in smaller destinations such as Visby, Sweden or Kotka, Finland.

From the tourism-related organisations the respondents answered that most of the organisations worked already with local communities together. We questioned how these findings can differentiate so strongly. If local community members mainly did not work with tourism-related organisations but the organisations do work with local communities, it is again questionable how organisations define local communities. Do they work with large local businesses or do they also integrate members of the local community and smaller businesses? Nevertheless, the local communities and tourism-related organisations that worked already in a collaboration were asked to evaluate the success of the collaboration. The findings show that the success is mainly neutrally rated which could be due to the above-mentioned barriers.

All in all, the findings provided insights on how the destinations in the Baltic region and specifically Gotland exercise sustainability and collaborations. In the Baltic region, an outstanding finding was the different perceptions about the integration of the local communities as the tourism-related organisations felt that the local communities are integrated and informed. On the other hand, the local communities felt overlooked and uninformed about the decisions made for the destination. In the case of Gotland, we found that there are many actors on the island which work individually and aim at individual goals. As the member of the local tourism network describes it, the destination is currently working dysfunctional and, in the future, an overarching collaboration which is led by a DMO is needed to create a sustainable destination where all interests are brought together. Therefore, it can be said that the need for the ideal collaboration is seen by the different actors to balance all the wishes and needs of the different actors but that in practice the found barriers are hindering the development of the ideal collaboration.
6. Conclusion
The following sections present the concluding discussion of the present research and its limitations. Further, the last section provides suggestions for future exploration.

6.1 Concluding Discussion
This study investigated how DMOs and local communities collaborate to foster sustainable tourism development in the Baltic region while focusing on Gotland. The gathered information through the web-based questionnaires and the in-depth interviews provided valuable insights for answering the research question and thereby, creating an understanding on how sustainable tourism, destination marketing and branding, and the ideal collaboration framework are exercised in practice.

During our research, we explored that already more attention is drawn on the topic of sustainability within the tourism industry and in the development of a destination. However, while tourism-related organisations and local communities in the Baltic region as well as in Visby, Gotland, work on the development of sustainability, the focus in not always clearly and equally set on environmental, social and economic aspects. Whereas, economic and environmental aspects are strongly emphasised, the social aspects are left aside leading to an imbalance of sustainable tourism development. Nevertheless, our research also showed that an awareness for the lack of social aspects exists among the respondents and interviewees.

Furthermore, we found first and foremost that there is a lack of overarching collaborations between different tourism actors and local communities in Visby, Gotland, but also in the rest of the Baltic region. Thereby, four severe lacks could be identified which are the reasons why collaborations are not existing according to the ideal collaboration framework. The four lacks are as follows:

1. Lack of communication
2. Lack of knowledge
3. Lack of responsibility
4. Lack of support from public authorities but also among tourism businesses

To overcome the lacks, destinations need to have a local DMO in place which acts as the connection link between all stakeholders and forms the basis for an ideal collaboration among these stakeholders.

We found proof for the thinking of an ideal collaboration as respondents and interviewees agree that a collaboration is of high importance for the development of a destination. Nonetheless, we can also confirm, that currently in the destinations we studied, overarching
collaborations do not really exist. As the interviewees in the case of Visby, Gotland, emphasised the absence of a DMO and therefore also of an overarching collaboration leads to a dysfunctional destination.

Further, we found proof that destination marketing is of high relevance for strengthening the competitive advantage. The respondents and interviewees confirmed that marketing should include sustainability, and all wishes and needs of stakeholders. Therefore, marketing is of high importance in acting as a channel for a common voice and to integrate all stakeholders' expectations found in theory. However, as we found the importance for destination marketing among the respondents and interviewees, the ideal realisation of marketing as a tool is not exercised.

6.2 Limitations of the Research and Implications for Future Exploration

Nevertheless, during our research a number of limitations has been found. The study relies on a sample of different tourism-related organisations and businesses across the Baltic region. As English is not the native language in these countries, we are aware of the language barriers in the web-based questionnaires and the in-depth interviews. The research field of sustainable tourism entails topic related terminology which could lead to difficulties in understanding for respondents and interviewees who are not familiar with the industry-related terminology. Thereby, the language barrier could have led to an increase in the drop-out rate for the web-based questionnaires. Within the in-depth interviews, the language barrier was easier to overcome as an explanation of the terminology and counter questions were possible. Furthermore, the web-based questionnaire was designed in a way that most of the questions were required to answer which also could have led to an increase of drop-outs.

To overcome the language barrier, it would be interesting to investigate the Baltic region within the native language in a future research project and thereby, creasing the risk of misunderstanding the tourism-related terminology. Therefore, a provision of the web-based questionnaires and interviewers with the language skills of the different countries would add great value to this research field.

Another limitation is the unequal sample sizes of the web-based questionnaires and the numbers of in-depth interviews. Thereby, the sample size of the in-depth interviews could be too small as seven interviewees might not represent the individual actors such as small and large businesses, the municipality, or the organisations on Gotland.

Further, we decided to exclude the data collected by the questions 3 and 4 of the web-based questionnaire targeting the local communities in the Baltic region as the gathered information did not add value to answer the research question. For future exploration, the gathered information on the country of origin and the current occupation could provide insights on how
living as an expat in a destination of the Baltic region affect the participation interests of the respondents and if significant differences can be found on the knowledge about sustainable tourism and the destination, depending on the occupation of the respondents.

Additionally, our research showed that the lack of communication is a fundamental problem in almost all destinations among the Baltic region and thereby, hindering the development of sustainable tourism. Therefore, it would be interesting to investigate the development of a marketing and communication tool which enables the communication between all actors of the destination.
Reference List


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Appendix A – Web-Based Questionnaire - Local Communities

Dear respondent,

You are invited to participate in our survey on the topic of Sustainable Tourism for our master thesis. In this survey, you will be asked to answer questions about a collaboration between local communities and tourism-related organisations. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to hear your opinions. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us under beke.wassmann.1342@student.uu.se or helencatherine.schlueter.5213@student.uu.se.

Your survey responses will be strictly confidential.

Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Next button below.

Best regards,
Helen Schlüter and Beke Waßmann
M.Sc. Sustainable Management
Uppsala University Campus Gotland

Q1. Gender
☐ Female
☐ Male
☐ N/A

Q2. Age
☐ 18-24
☐ 25-34
☐ 35-49
☐ 50-60
☐ 60+
☐ N/A
Q3. Country of origin

Q4. Current occupation

Information: For the following questions: Destination refers to the region/city where you live.

Q5. Please choose one of the following statements.

- Sustainable tourism is maintaining the economy of a destination.
- Sustainable tourism is the balance of social, economic and environmental aspects of a destination.

Q6. Please rate the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the destination.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability is a major topic in the tourism industry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7. What are the main drivers for sustainable tourism? Please select one or more answers.

- Empowering local communities and supporting their priorities and demands
- Offering tourists a greater authenticity in their experiences
- Participation and collaboration of all public and private actors involved in tourism activities
- Empowering local communities in decision-making processes and collaborate with them
- Strengthening well-being, equality and fairness by taking local priorities and demands into account
- Fostering local economic development, job creation and income
- Creating awareness for local costumes, culture and values
- Protecting and conserving local resources, biodiversity and ecosystems
- Protecting and conserving indigenous communities, livelihoods, culture, heritage and identity
- Decreasing and balancing environmental impacts (e.g. CO2-emissions, water and land usage, pollution)
- Strengthening urban renewal and rural development and reducing regional imbalances
- Increasing the destination's competitiveness and presence on international level
- Other __________

Q8. What are the main barriers for sustainable tourism? Please select one or more answers.
- Lack of information about sustainability
- Lack of understanding the importance of sustainability
- Insufficient regulations and policies
- Weak enforcement of regulations and policies
- Insufficient support by public authorities and tourism-related companies
- Lack of transparency in decisions made by authorities and tourism-related companies
- Enforcement of economic competition and growth
- Lack of sustainable tourism offers
- Lack of sustainable tourism demands
- Insufficient and inconsistent marketing of sustainable tourism
- Too many confusing terms (e.g. responsible tourism, cultural tourism, eco-tourism) to understand differences
- Contrarious development of local priorities and the tourism sector
- Insufficient cooperation among local businesses and communities and the tourism industry
- Other __________
Q9. Please rate the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and a strong brand are important for a destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability is important for the development of a destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability should be considered for the marketing of a destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locals should be involved in the marketing process of a destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locals have a high impact on how tourists experience a destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10. Please rate the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would like to be integrated into decisions made for the destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it is important to collaborate with tourism-related organisations.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel well informed about decisions made for the destination.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experience that local opinions are overlooked.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q11. What would motivate you to collaborate with a tourism-related organisation?

Please select one or more answers.

- [ ] Being involved in decision-making processes for the destination
- [ ] Meeting the demands of the local community by the tourism industry
- [ ] Having a voice to make a change for the destination
- [ ] Protection of culture and local life
- [ ] Sustainable development as a main goal
- [ ] Involvement of all key stakeholders
- [ ] Good interpersonal relationships
- [ ] Fair distribution of economic and environmental resources and power
■ Equal power of decision-making processes for the destination
■ Effective and transparent contractual conditions and exit barriers
■ Other __________

Q12. What are barriers for you to collaborate with a tourism-related organisation?
Please select one or more answers.
■ Lack of clear goals
■ Lack of time
■ Lack of personal impact
■ No personal interest to participate
■ Lack of information about responsible contact persons
■ Lack of adequate initiatives
■ Lack of adequate negotiation
■ Lack of communications between locals and tourism-related organisations
■ Lack of support from authorities and tourism-related organisations
■ Lack of economic resources
■ Other __________

Q13. Work experience in a tourism-related collaboration
■ I worked in a tourism-related collaboration before.
■ I am currently working in a tourism-related collaboration.
■ I did not work in a tourism-related collaboration before.
■ I am actively planning to work in a tourism-related collaboration.

Q14. Interest in working in a tourism-related collaboration
■ I am interested to work in a tourism-related collaboration.
■ I am not interested to work in a tourism-related collaboration at all.

Q15. Please rate the following question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you evaluate the collaboration?</th>
<th>Very Successful</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Successful</th>
<th>Very Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>❑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q16. Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

------------------
Dear respondent,

You are invited to participate in our survey on the topic of Sustainable Tourism. In this survey, you will be asked to answer questions about a collaboration between local communities and tourism-related organisations. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to hear your opinions. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us under beke.wassmann.1342@student.uu.se or helencatherine.schlueter.5213@student.uu.se.

Your survey responses will be strictly confidential.

Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Next button below.

Best regards,

Helen Schlüter and Beke Waßmann
M.Sc. Sustainable Management
Uppsala University Campus Gotland

Q1. Country/Region of the organisation

Q2. What form of organisation are you working for?

Q3. In which position do you work in the organisation?
Q4. Please choose one of the following statements.

- Sustainable tourism is maintaining the economy of a destination.
- Sustainable tourism is the balance of social, economic and environmental aspects of a destination.

Q5. Please rate the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the destination.</td>
<td></td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability is a major topic in the tourism industry.</td>
<td></td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6. What are the main drivers for sustainable tourism? Please select one or more answers.

- Empowering local communities and supporting their priorities and demands
- Offering tourists a greater authenticity in their experiences
- Participation and collaboration of all public and private actors involved in tourism activities
- Empowering local communities in decision-making processes and collaborate with them
- Strengthening well-being, equality and fairness by taking local priorities and demands into account
- Fostering local economic development, job creation and income
- Creating awareness for local costumes, culture and values
- Protecting and conserving local resources, biodiversity and ecosystems
- Protecting and conserving indigenous communities, livelihoods, culture, heritage and identity
- Decreasing and balancing environmental impacts (e.g. CO2-emissions, water and land usage, pollution)
- Strengthening urban renewal and rural development and reducing regional imbalances
- Increasing the destination's competitiveness and presence on international level
- Other __________________
Q7. What are the main barriers for sustainable tourism? Please select one or more answers.

- Lack of information about sustainability
- Lack of understanding the importance of sustainability
- Lack of sufficient and transparent regulations and policies
- Weak enforcement of regulations and policies
- Insufficient support by public authorities and tourism-related stakeholders
- Enforcement of economic competition and growth
- Lack of sustainable tourism offers
- Lack of sustainable tourism demands
- Promoting sustainable tourism is ineffective and costly
- Too many confusing terms (e.g. responsible tourism, cultural tourism, eco-tourism) to understand differences
- Contrarious development of local priorities and the tourism sector
- Insufficient cooperation among local businesses and communities and the tourism industry
- Other __________

Q8. Please rate the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and a strong brand are important for a destination.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability is important for the development of a destination.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability should be considered for the marketing of a destination.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locals should be involved in the marketing process of a destination.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locals have a high impact on how tourists experience a destination.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q9. Please rate the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think it is important that tourism organisations work with local communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experience that local communities wish to be integrated into the decision-making process for a destination.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experience that local communities are overlooked in the decision-making process for a destination.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10. What are drivers for your organisation to collaborate with local communities?

Please select one or more answers.

- Actively involving local communities to develop the destination
- Using local knowledge and experience to create authenticity of the destination
- Meeting the demands of the local community by the tourism industry
- Protection of culture and local life
- Sustainable development as a main goal
- Involvement of all key stakeholders
- Good interpersonal relationships
- Enabling fairness and equality throughout the destination
- Equal power of decision-making processes between all key stakeholders of the destination
- Effective and transparent contractual conditions and exit barriers
- Creating an image for a positive experience of tourists
- Other __________

Q11. What are barriers for your organisation to collaborate with local communities?

Please select one or more answers.

- Lack of common goals for the destination
- Lack of time
- Lack of staff
- Lack of economic resources
- No organisational interest to collaborate
☐ Lack of local community interest
☐ Lack of adequate initiatives
☐ Lack of adequate negotiation
☐ Lack of communications between locals and tourism-related organisations
☐ Other __________

Q12. Work experiences with local communities
☐ My organisation worked with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration before.
☐ My organisation is currently working with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration.
☐ My organisation did not work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration before.
☐ My organisation is actively planning to work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration.

Q13. Interest in working in a tourism-related collaboration.
☐ My organisation is interested to work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration.
☐ My organisation is not interested to work with local communities in a tourism-related collaboration.

Q14. Please rate the following question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you evaluate the collaboration?</th>
<th>Very Successful</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Successful</th>
<th>Very Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15. Do you have any further comments or suggestions?
### Appendix C – Overview of Contacted Organisations in the Baltic Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Tourism-Related Organisation/Destination Management Organisation</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>• Wonderful Copenhagen</td>
<td><a href="https://www.visitcopenhagen.dk/da/">https://www.visitcopenhagen.dk/da/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>• VisitAalborg</td>
<td><a href="https://www.visitaalborg.de/de/danmark/kontakt-visitaalborg">https://www.visitaalborg.de/de/danmark/kontakt-visitaalborg</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aarhus</td>
<td>• VisitAarhus</td>
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Table C 1: Overview of the Contacted Tourism-Related Organisations in the Baltic Region. The table provides an overview of all contacted tourism-related organisations regarding the web-based questionnaire. Own illustration.
Appendix D – Question Guideline for the In-Depth Interviews

General

1. Would you like to introduce yourself?
2. In which field do you work regarding the tourism industry?

Sustainable Tourism

1. How would you define the concept of ‘sustainable tourism’?
2. How does your organisation target sustainable development?
3. What are the main challenges for the implementation of ‘sustainable tourism’?
4. What are the main drivers for the implementation of ‘sustainable tourism’?
5. As how important would you evaluate sustainable development for the tourism industry, in general?

Destination Marketing and Branding

1. How important is a strong brand for a destination?
2. How important is sustainability for the marketing strategy of destinations?
3. How important are local perspectives for the destination marketing?
4. How important are the local communities for the visitor experience of the destination?

Collaboration

1. Do you know if there are collaborations with locals in Visby/Gotland?
2. How do you integrate local communities in your organisational processes?
3. What are the main drivers for a collaboration between local communities and your organisation?
4. What are the main barriers for a collaboration between local communities and your organisation?
5. Lastly, do you have any other comments on the collaborative destination marketing approach?
Appendix E – Findings Web-Based Questionnaire – Local Perspective

Figure E 1: Gender – Local Perspective. The figure demonstrates the percentage distribution between female, male, and n/a. Own Illustration.

Figure E 2: Age – Local Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the age categories. Own Illustration.
Q6. S1. The tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the destination.

Figure E 3: Positive Impacts – Local Perspective. The figure illustrates the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the positive impact of the tourism industry. Own Illustration.

Q6. S2. Sustainability is a major topic in the tourism industry.

Figure E 4: Sustainability as a Major Topic. - Local Perspective. This figure illustrates the percentage distribution of all responses regarding sustainability as a major topic. Own Illustration.
Figure E 5: Importance of Marketing and Branding – Local Perspective. This figure presents the percentage distribution of all responses regarding marketing and branding. Own Illustration.

Figure E 6: Importance of Sustainability for the Development of a Destination – Local Perspective. The illustration shows the percentage distribution regarding the importance of sustainability for the development of a destination. Own Illustration.
Q9. S3. Sustainability should be considered for the marketing of a destination.

Figure E 7: Sustainability and Marketing – Local Perspective. The figure shows the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the consideration of sustainability for the marketing of a destination. Own Illustration.

Q9. S4. Locals should be involved in the marketing process of a destination.

Figure E 8: Involvement of Locals in the Marketing Process – Local Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the involvement of locals in the marketing process of a destination. Own Illustration.
Q9. S5. Locals have a high impact on how tourists experience a destination.

Figure E 9: Impact of Locals on the Tourists Experience – Local Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the impact of locals on the experience of tourists. Own Illustration.

Q10. S1. I would like to be integrated into decisions made for the destination.

Figure E 10: Integration in Decision-Making Processes – Local Perspective. The figure shows the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the personal interest to participate in the decision-making processes for a destination. Own Illustration.
Q10. S2. I think it is important to collaborate with tourism-related organisations.

Figure E 11: Importance of Collaboration with Tourism-Related Organisations – Local Perspective. This figure illustrates the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the importance to collaborate with tourism-related organisations. Own Illustration.

Q10. S3. I feel well informed about decisions made for the destination.

Figure E 12: Information Level about Decisions – Local Perspective. This figure demonstrates the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the level of information about decisions made for the destination. Own Illustration.
Q10. S4. I experience that local opinions are overlooked.

![Bar Chart](image)

*Figure E 13: Locals’ Opinions – Local Perspective.* This figure presents the percentage distribution regarding the experience that local opinions are overlooked. Own Illustration.

Q14. Interest in working in a tourism-related collaboration

![Pie Chart](image)

*Figure E 14: Personal Interest in Collaborations – Local Perspective.* This figure demonstrates the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the personal interest to work in a tourism-related collaboration. Own Illustration.
Figure E 15: Success of a Collaboration – Local Perspective. The figure presents the mean of the responses regarding the evaluation of the success of a collaboration. Own Illustration.
Appendix F – Findings Web-Based Questionnaire – Organisational Perspective

Q5. 5.1. The tourism industry has a positive impact on the development of the destination.

![Bar chart showing responses](chart1)

*Figure F 1: Positive Impacts – Organisational Perspective.* The figure illustrates the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the positive impact of the tourism industry. Own Illustration.

Q5. 5.2. Sustainability is a major topic in the tourism industry.

![Bar chart showing responses](chart2)

*Figure F 2: Sustainability as a Major Topic. - Organisational Perspective.* This figure illustrates the percentage distribution of all responses regarding sustainability as a major topic. Own Illustration.
Q8. S1. Marketing and a strong brand are important for a destination.

Figure F 3: Importance of Marketing and Branding – Organisational Perspective. This figure presents the percentage distribution of all responses regarding marketing and branding. Own Illustration.

Q8. S2. Sustainability is important for the development of a destination.

Figure F 4: Importance of Sustainability for the Development of a Destination – Organisational Perspective. The illustration shows the percentage distribution regarding the importance of sustainability for the development of a destination. Own Illustration.
Figure F 5: Sustainability and Marketing – Organisational Perspective. The figure shows the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the consideration of sustainability for the marketing of a destination. Own Illustration.

Figure F 6: Involvement of Locals in the Marketing Process – Organisational Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the involvement of locals in the marketing process of a destination. Own Illustration.
Q8. S5. Locals have a high impact on how tourists experience a destination.

Figure F 7: Impact of Locals on the Tourists Experience – Organisational Perspective. The figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the impact of locals on the experience of tourists. Own Illustration.

Q9. S1. I think it is important that tourism organisations work with local communities.

Figure F 8: Importance of Collaboration with Local Communities – Organisational Perspective. This figure illustrates the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the importance to collaborate with local communities. Own Illustration.
Q9. S2. I experience that local communities wish to be integrated into the decision-making process for a destination.

Figure F 9: Integration of Local Communities in Decision-Making Processes – Organisational Perspective. The figure shows the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the experience on local willingness to participate in the decision-making processes for a destination. Own Illustration.

Q9. S3. I experience that local communities are overlooked in the decision-making process for a destination.

Figure F 10: Locals’ Opinions – Organisational Perspective. This figure presents the percentage distribution of the responses regarding the experience that local opinions are overlooked. Own Illustration.
Q14. Please rate the following question.

Figure F11: Success of a Collaboration – Organisational Perspective. The figure presents the mean of the responses regarding the evaluation of the success of a collaboration. Own Illustration.