

Management Plan for the Curonian Spit World Heritage Property 2025–2031

TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER IN THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST 994

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Cover photo by Renata Kilinskaitė, Archive of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration. The Great Dune Ridge with Grey Dunes, Nagliai Strict Nature Reserve.

Introduction/address

Address from the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, the State Service for Protected Areas (SSPA) (Director or National Coordinator), the Director of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration (CSNPA), mayors of municipalities.

PROJEKTAS

CHAPTER I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 The World Heritage List is drawn up in accordance with the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereinafter – Convention). The World Heritage List shall be composed of cultural and natural heritage properties or mixed properties of Outstanding Universal Value (hereafter – OUV) of heritage significance for humanity. Following the accession of the Republic of Lithuania to the Convention in 1992, five national properties have been inscribed on the World Heritage List¹: Vilnius Historical Centre (1994); the Curonian Spit (a transboundary property with the Russian Federation, 2000), Kernavė Archaeological Site (2004); Struve Geodetic Arc (serial transnational property of 10 countries: Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Sweden, 2005); Modernist Kaunas (2023).

1.2 The Curonian Spit is a transboundary property located on the territories of the Republic of Lithuania and the Russian Federation. During the 24th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Cairns, Australia, in December 2000, the Curonian Spit was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a unique and outstanding **cultural landscape** (unique identification number on the World Heritage List – 994).

1.3 In accordance with paragraph 108 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention (hereinafter – OG), properties inscribed on the World Heritage List must have an approved management plan or management system that specifies how the property's OUV is protected.

1.4 This management plan is prepared for the part of the Curonian Spit located in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania. The decision to prepare two separate management plans for the transboundary Curonian Spit, reflecting the management systems of different countries, was approved by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision No 42 COM 7B.25.²

1.5 The Management Plan for the Curonian Spit in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – Management Plan) is a strategic planning document designed to reach an agreement among different actors on priorities for the management of the Curonian Spit and the conservation of its heritage values. The Management Plan does not replace the existing legislation and planning documents, but the Action Plan includes measures to initiate amendments to legal documents and spatial planning documents in order to improve the protection of the cultural landscape. The Management Plan is a starting point for the activities of the different institutions and a guideline for solving problems in order to achieve the long-term property conservation priorities. The Management Plan includes objectives and measures for a seven-year period, in line with the Cycle of Periodic Reporting on the Curonian Spit.³

1.6 Following public consultation, the vision of the Management Plan was worded as follows: **the Curonian Spit is a sustainably and inclusively managed cultural landscape where the balance between nature and human activity is preserved, its distinct character, and local identity and authenticity for present and future generations.**

1 Lithuania on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/lt>

2 Decision No 42 COM 7B.25 of World Heritage Committee adopted in 2018. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7254>

³ Under the UNESCO World Heritage Periodic Reporting framework, the Curonian Spit World Heritage property is assigned to the Europe and North America Region.

1.7 The purpose of the Management Plan is to ensure the effective and sustainable management of the Curonian Spit World Heritage Property and the conservation of its OUV for present and future generations.⁴

1.8 The objectives of the Management Plan are:

1.8.1. to increase the awareness of all actors associated to the property and its heritage values in a global, national and local context through a participatory planning process;

1.8.2. to ensure smooth cooperation between the different actors in order to increase their involvement, i.e. enable local politicians, municipal staff, representatives of science and business, the professional community and local residents and bodies representing their interests to be involved as actively as possible in different stages of the planning and management process of the property, participate in the processes of conservation and management of the property in a focused way;

1.8.3. to assess the main threats to the property from social, economic, environmental and other factors, natural hazards and possible adverse effects of climate change, and develop a strategy for their management, identifying measures to mitigate negative impacts and measures to achieve resilience to external factors;

1.8.4. to establish an effective cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and response;

1.8.5. to ensure that the solutions set out in the Management Plan are compatible with the requirements of sustainable development, economic viability, social equity, health, environmental quality and climate action needs;

1.8.6. to ensure the development of the competences and skills of specialists whose activities are relevant to the conservation and management of the property;

1.8.7. to provide the necessary financial and human resources for the implementation and updating of the Management Plan.

1.9. The Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with:

1.9.1. the Order No IV-505 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 May 2022 “On the Approval of the Guidelines for the Preparation of Management Plans for the UNESCO World Heritage in Lithuania”⁵ (hereafter referred to as the “Guidelines for the Preparation of the Plans”);

1.9.2. the provisions of the Order No D1-354 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 October 2023 “On the Commencement of the Preparation of the Management Plan for the Curonian Spit World Heritage property in Lithuania and the Objective of the Planning”;

1.9.3. the UNESCO methodological materials and tools, i.e. the *Enhancing our heritage toolkit 2.0. Assessing Management Effectiveness of World Heritage Properties and Other Heritage Places*.⁶ Based on this tool, an analysis of the values of the Curonian Spit and their attributes has been carried out, and the main actors’ groups (managers, stakeholders, rights holders) identified. Taking into account the specification of the afore-mentioned groups, during

4 Order No D1-354 of the Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 October 2023 “On the Commencement of the Preparation of the Management Plan for the Curonian Spit World Heritage Site in Lithuania and the Objective of the Planning”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/b63ae382743711eeadbcc0bf53e6c339?jfwid=-5hqymeukp>

5 Order No IV-1374 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 November 2020 “On the Approval of the Action Plan for the Preservation and Actualisation of Cultural Heritage for 2020-2024”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/475488c4284c11eb8c97e01ffe050e1c?jfwid=32wf8d5n>

6 UNESCO (2023). *Enhancing our heritage toolkit 2.0. Assessing Management Effectiveness of World Heritage Properties and Other Heritage Places*. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eoh20/>

the preparation of the Management Plan, 5 engagement sessions were organised with different actors' groups and a public survey was carried out, the results and suggestions were integrated into the content of the Management Plan⁷. It is recommended that the procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the management be carried out on the basis of the afore-mentioned methodological material;

1.9.4. the decisions and recommendations of the World Heritage Committee (until 2024), the documents of the UNESCO Advisory Missions, the Curonian Spit Periodic Report for 2023;

1.9.5. an analysis of the factors recorded in the Third Cycle of Periodic Report on the Curonian Spit, a summary of the factors affecting the OUV of the Curonian Spit and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities (SWOT) analysis;

1.9.6. the recommendations of the ICOMOS and IUCN Advisory and Responsive Monitoring Mission Reports⁸ on the definition of OUV and their valued characteristics, management of traffic and tourism flows, seasonality issues, improvement of the quality of life of the communities, protection of the landscape and species, monitoring of climate change etc.

1.10. The Management Plan is in line with Action 1.2.4 "Ensure the improvement of the efficiency of the management of UNESCO's tangible and intangible heritage" of the provisions of the Nineteenth Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by Resolution No XV-54 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 12 December 2024 "On the Nineteenth Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania" and the Action Plan for the Policy for the Conservation and Updating of the Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Lithuania for 2020–2024 approved by Order No IV-735 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 November 2020 "On the Approval of the Action Plan for the Policy for the Conservation and Updating of the Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Lithuania for 2020–2024.

1.11. The Management Plan proposes measures to be implemented by national, regional and local institutions and bodies, local communities and non-governmental organisations, with a view to improving the coordination processes between the various institutions in relation to the conservation of the property.

1.12. The preparation and implementation of the Management Plan shall be organised by the Curonian Spit National Park Administration (hereinafter – CSNPA).

1.13. The development, implementation and updating of the Management Plan shall be supervised by the Management Plan Supervisory Group (hereinafter referred to as the "Supervisory Group"), the composition of which was approved by Order No V-139 of the Minister of Environment of 6 October 2023 "On the Preparation of the Setting Up of the Supervisory Group for the Development and Implementation of the Management Plan of the Lithuanian World Heritage property of Curonian Spit". The composition of the Supervisory Group includes representatives of the Ministry of Environment (hereinafter – MoE), the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment (hereinafter – SSPA), the CSNPA, the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture (hereinafter – DCH), Neringa Municipality Administration (hereinafter – NMA) and Klaipėda City Municipality Administration (hereinafter – KCMA), the Lithuanian State Forest Enterprise (hereinafter – SFE), the Lithuanian National Commission for Cultural Heritage, the Secretariat of the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO (hereinafter – LNUC), the association ICOMOS

7 Ibid.

8 Report of the ICOMOS Monitoring Mission to the Curonian Spit (Lithuania and the Russian Federation) 2001; Report of the Joint ICOMOS (Susan Denyer) and IUCN (Pierre Gulland) Advisory Mission to the Curonian Spit (Lithuania) 2009; Report of the Joint UNESCO in Cooperation with IUCN (Dr. Gérard Collin) and ICOMOS (Dr. Eeva Ruoff) Response Monitoring Mission to the Curonian Spit (Lithuania and the Russian Federation) 2010; Report of the ICOMOS (Susan Denyer) Advisory Mission 2013; Report of the ICOMOS (Dr. Tamás Fejérdy) Response Monitoring Mission to the Curonian Spit (Lithuania) 2015.

Lithuania, Klaipėda State Seaport Authority (hereinafter – KSSA), and the community of Juodkrantė.

1.14. The Management Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Legislative Framework, the Guidelines for the Preparation of Draft Legislative Acts, approved by Order No 1R-298 of the Minister of Justice of 23 December 2013, ensuring the involvement of all the participants of the management system in the planning process.

1.15. The process of harmonisation of the Management Plan:

1.15.1. the draft Management Plan shall be agreed with the Supervisory Group (the draft Management Plan shall be submitted to the representatives of the institutions participating in the Supervisory Group for agreement in writing, and the draft shall be approved by consensus of the members of the Supervisory Group);

1.15.2. the draft Management Plan agreed with the Supervisory Group shall be presented to the public;

1.15.3. the draft Management Plan agreed with the Supervisory Group shall be submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre for approval;

1.15.4. the Draft Management Plan, as revised in accordance with the comments of the World Heritage Centre, shall be submitted to the Legal Acts Information System (LASIS) for approval, and all interested institutions and persons shall be given the opportunity to submit their comments and proposals;

1.15.5. the coordination of the Management Plan with the different institutions (which are involved in the implementation of the measures of the Management Plan) shall be documented in the approved Management Plan by means of an alignment note indicating the names, dates and numbers of the letters of the institutions that have agreed on the Management Plan;

1.15.6. the Management Plan shall be approved by an order of the Minister for the Environment.

1.16. The terms used in the Management Plan shall be consistent with those used in the Guidelines for the Preparation of Plans, the Convention and the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention, the Republic of Lithuania Law on the Protection of the Immovable Cultural Heritage, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Protected Territories, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Tourism.

1.17. Abbreviations and other terms used in the Management Plan:

Convention – UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

Management Plan – Management Plan for the World Heritage property Curonian Spit in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania

CSNP – Curonian Spit National Park

CSNPA – Curonian Spit National Park Administration

CTIC Agila – Culture and Tourism Information Centre “Agila”

CVI – Climate Vulnerability Index

DCH – Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

EPD – Environmental Protection Department under the Ministry of Environment

EU – European Union
EU IP – European Union Funds Investment Programme
Government – Government of the Republic of Lithuania
HIA – Heritage Impact Assessment
ICOMOS – International Council on Monuments and Sites
ICTW – International Centre for Translators and Writers of Klaipėda County Public I. Simonaitytė Library
IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature
KCMA – Klaipėda City Municipality Administration
Klaipėda District Municipality – Klaipėda District Municipality Administration
KSS – Klaipėda State Seaport
KSSA – Public Limited Liability Company Klaipėda State Seaport Authority
KTCIC – Klaipėda Tourism and Culture Information Centre
KU – Klaipėda University
KUMRI – Klaipėda University Marine Research Institute
LALA - Lithuanian Association of Landscape Architects
LCA – Lithuanian Chamber of Architects
LConA – Lithuanian Construction Association
LCC – Lithuanian Council for Culture
LGS – Lithuanian Geological Survey under the Ministry of Environment
LHMS – Lithuanian Hydrometeorological Service under the Ministry of Environment
LMM - Lithuanian Maritime Museum
LNCU, UNESCO Commission – Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO
LPA – Republic of Lithuania Law on Protected Areas
LPICH – Law on the Protection of Immovable Cultural Heritage
MoC – Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania
MoE – Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania
MoTC – Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania
NMA - Neringa Municipality Administration
NRC – Nature Research Centre
OP – Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
OUV – Outstanding Universal Value
Property / Curonian Spit – World Heritage property Curonian Spit located in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania (unique identification number in UNESCO World Heritage List 993)
Seimas / Parliament – Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania
SFE – State Forest Enterprise
SFS – State Forest Service under the Ministry of Environment
Šilutė District Municipality – Šilutė District Municipality Administration
SP, ferry terminal – Smiltynės perkėla AB

SSPA – State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment
Supervisory Group – Supervisory Group of the Curonian Spit Management Plan
SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis
TURA – Tourism Marketing Association
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VU – Vilnius University

“**Actors**” refers broadly to all the people, and the institutions and groups they represent, involved directly and indirectly with a World Heritage property or heritage place. Three broad categories of actors are defined in relation to the management of a World Heritage property or heritage place: managers, rights-holders and stakeholders.

“**Analysis of values and attributes**” means an analysis of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (hereinafter – SOUV) of the Curonian Spit, highlighting the main values of the property, linked to the attributes that reflect them. In the Management Plan, the aforementioned analysis has been carried out in accordance with the best practice guide “Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0” (2023) prepared by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN (Table 1).

“**Attributes**” means the significant elements and processes of the Curonian Spit that make up the values of the property and contribute to their perception. They can be physical, tangible (natural elements, buildings, artefacts, etc.) and intangible (social, spiritual, traditional, etc.) attributes. Protection and management measures are applied to the features conveying the OUV and their interactions. The document applies the concept of attributes as used in the OG for the implementation of the Convention.

“**Factor**” means an internal or external element that has a current or potential positive or negative impact on the OUV of the property, including its authenticity or integrity. Possible factors include natural, social, economic, cultural or political processes and human activities that threaten or contribute to conservation and sustainable development.

“**Klaipėda Region**” means Klaipėda City Municipality, Klaipėda District Municipality, Palanga City Municipality, Neringa Municipality, Kretinga District Municipality, Skuodas District Municipality and Šilutė District Municipality.

“**National Focal Point for Natural or Cultural Heritage**” means the person(s) who represents the State in the sessions of the World Heritage Committee, the General Assembly of States Parties and other international events or meetings, participates in the preparation and submission of State positions, and transmits the information received to Site Managers of World Heritage properties; cooperates with the State Parties to the Convention, the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Lithuania to the UNESCO, the World Heritage Centre and related national institutions responsible for the heritage of the Republic of Lithuania included in the World Heritage List, National Coordinators of other countries; coordinates and/or participates in the preparation and submission of State of Conservation reports to the World Heritage Centre.

“**Other important values of the Curonian Spit**” mean elements that are not part of the OUV of the Curonian Spit but are significant and are to be protected under local self-government decisions, other legislation, and the national or international legal framework. (According to paragraph 111 of the OG for the Implementation of the Convention, one of the elements of an effective management system is thorough shared understanding of the property, its universal,

national and local values and its socio-ecological context by all stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous peoples.

“Outstanding Universal Value” means the exceptional cultural and/or natural significance of a cultural heritage and/or natural property, determined in accordance with the criteria defined in the OG for the Implementation of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and recognised by a decision of the World Heritage Committee as being of significance to the whole of humanity, both for the present and for future generations.

“Risk” means a potential negative consequence to the property. Risks can be physical (natural hazards, pandemics, terrorism, armed conflict, climate change, unbalanced development, etc.) and intellectual (lack of awareness, knowledge of the property and its management, etc.).

“Site Manager” means the public authority or municipal administration entity responsible for coordinating the management processes of the World Heritage property in the implementation of the site’s conservation and management strategy. The functions of the Curonian Spit Site Manager are assigned to the CSNPA.⁹

“State Party to the Convention” means a State that has ratified the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereinafter – Convention) and whose definition and responsibilities are understood as set out in the Convention. The duty of a State Party to the Convention is to ensure the identification, protection, conservation, promotion and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage on its territory and to do all that is possible by making the best possible use of available resources and available international assistance and cooperation, particularly in the fields of finance, art, science and technology. The MoE of the Republic of Lithuania has been designated as the party responsible for the protection of the Curonian Spit in Lithuania.¹⁰

“Values” means the set of qualities in the SOUV that make the Curonian Spit unique and are protected for present and future generations. The values are determined by a wide range of social and cultural factors: aesthetic, architectural, biological, ecological, historical, social, spiritual etc. These values are embodied and conveyed through the attributes of a World Heritage property.

9 Order No V-90 of the Director of the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment of 17 September 2024 “On the Approval of the Regulations of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration”. Available online at: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1727418354/1686/KNNPD%20nuostatai%202024-09-17%20V-90%20redakcija.pdf>

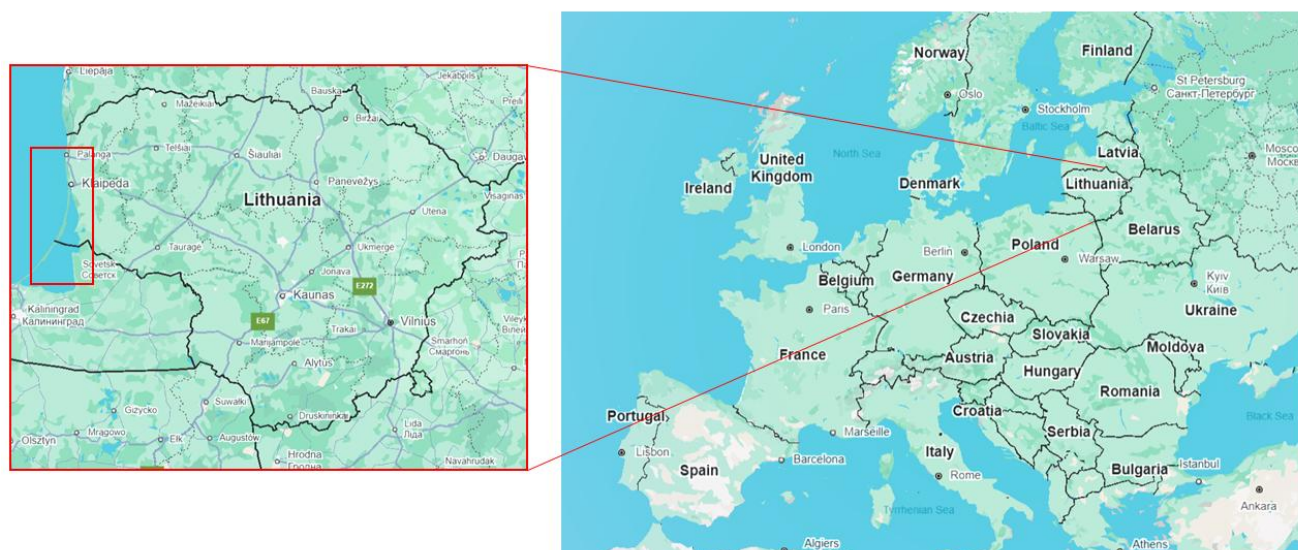
10 Resolution No 544 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 May 2010 “On the Designation of the Institutions Responsible for the Protection of the Sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List in Lithuania”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.372888>

CHAPTER II. THE CURONIAN SPIT AND ITS OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

2.1. Description of the cultural landscape and its evolution

The Curonian Spit is a peninsula with sand dunes separating the Baltic Sea from the Curonian Lagoon, stretching 98 km in a south-west to north direction. The northern part of the Curonian Spit belongs to Lithuania (52 km) and the southern part to the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. In the territory of Lithuania, the Curonian Spit is located within the administrative boundaries of Neringa Municipality (8,98 thousand ha) and a part in Klaipėda City – Smiltynė (0.794 thousand ha). The territory administered by Neringa Municipality includes Nida, Juodkrantė, Pervalka, Preila (historical settlements) and their surroundings.

Figure 1. Geographical location of the Curonian Spit in Lithuania and Europe



Source: Google maps

The Curonian Spit was formed during the Litorina Sea period, around 7000 years ago. Geologically, it is the youngest land area in Lithuania, and the lithodynamic processes in this unique peninsula have not been interrupted even today. The accumulation, leaching and transport of marine sediments, as well as coastal abrasion, reshaping of open dunes, vegetation expansion, swamping, etc., are still ongoing. The Curonian Spit is one of the largest accumulation landforms in the Baltic Sea.

The development of the Curonian Spit landscape has been influenced by the interaction between nature and humans. The period when humans went from being passive observers to active participants in these processes is of particular importance. In the 16th century, intensive deforestation, livestock grazing, resin and charcoal extraction, resin harvesting, and forest fires led to fundamental changes in the landscape.¹¹

¹¹ Preparation of landscape structure diagrams for State Parks. State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment, State Enterprise State Land Fund. Available online at:

The most rapid and intensive phase of renewed human eolian processes and interactions in the Curonian Spit was between 1706 and 1846, when the relief and structure of the spit was fundamentally changed¹². During this period the shifting dunes buried 14 villages¹³. The mass movement of sand was only halted by the massive consolidation and greening of the dunes at the end of the 19th century, which once again fundamentally changed the landscape of the Curonian Spit's and stabilised its structure.

The current landscape of the Curonian Spit was formed less than 200 years ago and shows the effects of human activity, both negative – deforestation in the 16th century – and positive – deliberate consolidation actions – an original programme of exceptional scale launched in the 19th century, creating a protective coastal ridge and planting forest on the Great Dune Ridge.

The present forested dune landscape of the Curonian Spit with its coastal settlements is the result of enormous human effort. The landscape structure of the Curonian Spit has been assessed in the National Landscape Management Plan and has been analysed in detail in the Curonian Spit National Park (hereinafter – CSNP) Landscape Structure Chart¹⁴ and its description.¹⁵

Table 1. Landscape characteristics of the CSNP

Morphological structure of the landscape (according to the National Landscape Management Plan, Landscape Morphological Structure Drawing)	
Western Baltic Lowlands, Coastal Lowlands	Eastern Baltic Shallow Sea stretch, South-Eastern Baltic Sea submarine plateau area
Curonian Spit, i.e. an urbanised forested landscape area of the Baltic Coastal Plain	Baltic Sea water area, i.e. the Curonian-Western Samogitian Baltic Sea coastal landscape area
Curonian Lagoon, i.e. lagoonal Curonian Lagoon Landscape Area	
Natural character of the landscape (according to the CSNP Landscape Structure Chart and its description) and its important highlights:	
The landscape of the lagoon spit from Smiltynė to the Nagliai Nature Reserve	
The landscape of the lagoon from the Nagliai Strict Nature Reserve to the border with the Russian Federation	
The natural landscape of the Curonian Spit covers only 0.08 % of the area of Lithuania and is of particular importance for the country's landscape diversity	
11 landscape districts and 33 landscape areas have been identified in the Curonian Spit; 75 typological natural habitats have been identified in the Curonian Spit landscape districts	

https://vstt.lrv.lt/uploads/vstt/documents/files/VP_kr_str_schemas/Kursiu_nerijos_NP_krastovaizdzio_strukturos_schemas_prasas.pdf

12 Gudelis V. Lithuanian gulfs and coast: Monograph (Lietuvos jūris ir pajūris: Monografija), 1998.

13 Curonian Spit National Park Administration. Available online at: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/lt/apie-nacionalini-parka/krastovaizdis/>

14 Landscape structure of the Curonian Spit National Park. Available online at:

https://vstt.lrv.lt/uploads/vstt/documents/files/VP_kr_str_schemas/Kursiu_nerijos_NP_krastovaizdzio_strukturos_schema.jpg

15 Preparation of Landscape Structure Diagrams for State Parks. State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment, State Enterprise State Land Fund. Available online at:

https://vstt.lrv.lt/uploads/vstt/documents/files/VP_kr_str_schemas/Kursiu_nerijos_NP_krastovaizdzio_strukturos_schemas_prasas.pdf

The panorama of the Curonian Spit is unique in Lithuania and Europe. It is based on the coexistence of traditional settlements next to a coppice of impressive height and varied expression (wooded, grey, open sand). The landscape character of the Curonian Spit in the context of sky and water is created by the dark forests and light sands, which together cover 97% of the land area.

The uniqueness and aesthetic character of the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit is based not only on its special natural complexes, but also on the historical continuity of human adaptation and adjustment to the natural environment. Human action has created a protective foredune ridge that stops the sand from travelling to/through the Curonian Spit and at the same time protects the inhabited areas from desertification. Human interventions have reinforced and greened a significant part of the Great Dune Ridge. The works reflecting traditional activities that have emerged over a couple of centuries have not become striking, distinctive accents in the landscape, but have been sensitively inscribed as cultural accents and symbols, giving meaning to the area and conveying a world view.

2.2. Outstanding Universal Value and Attributes

The Curonian Spit has been inscribed on the World Heritage List as a cultural landscape, meeting criterion (v) of the OG: *“The nominated property must be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change”*.¹⁶ Decision No. 24 COM X.C.1 of the World Heritage Committee of 2000 states that under criterion (v):

*“The Curonian Spit is an outstanding example of a landscape of sand dunes that is under constant threat from natural forces (wind and tide). After disastrous human interventions that menaced its survival, the Spit was reclaimed by massive protection and stabilization works that began in the 19th century and are still continuing to the present day.”*¹⁷

The Retrospective SOUV of the Curonian Spit was approved at the 38th Session of the World Heritage Committee in 2014, by World Heritage Committee Decision No. 38 COM 8E¹⁸. The SOUV highlights the key values and attributes of the Curonian Spit, which have led to the inscription of the cultural landscape on the World Heritage List, and which are the basis for the management of the property and the preservation of the property’s authenticity and integrity.

The attributes of OUV were identified according to the methodology proposed in the “Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0” (2023) and are presented in Table 2.

16 UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, WHC.23/01 (24 September 2023).

17 Decision No. 24 COM X.C.1 of the World Heritage Committee of 2000. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/2470>

18 Decision No 38 COM 8E of World Heritage Committee of 2014. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6149>

The impact of translation inaccuracies on the interpretation of the Retrospective SOUV of the Curonian Spit

During the preparation of the Third Cycle Periodic Reporting on the Curonian Spit in 2023 and the analysis of the OUV of the Curonian Spit in the context of the new management plan development, a significant translation inaccuracy was identified concerning one of the property's key attributes. In the SOUV officially adopted in 2014, this attribute is presented as “panoramas and the silhouette of the Curonian Lagoon” (*Lith.* Kuršių marių panoramos ir siluetai), whereas, based on the original Lithuanian version and the Nomination Dossier, it should read “panoramas and the silhouette from the Curonian Lagoon” (*Lith.* panoramos ir siluetas nuo Kuršių marių). This formulation fundamentally alters the meaning of the OUV by shifting the focus from the Curonian Spit as the object being viewed to the Curonian Lagoon as the subject. Such an interpretation is inconsistent with the reasoning presented in the Nomination Dossier and the conceptualization of the property's OUV.

The Nomination Dossier places particular emphasis on the geomorphology of the Curonian Spit, the uniqueness of its landscape relief, and its formation shaped by the close interaction between human activity and natural processes. Therefore, the visual perception of the Spit from the lagoon side is a critical component of its OUV.

A review of earlier drafts of the SOUV, prior to their translation into English and submission to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, confirmed that this translation error was introduced during the preparation of the official text. Such inaccuracies may affect the assessment of the state of conservation of the OUV, as well as the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment (hereinafter – EIA) and Heritage Impact Assessment (hereinafter – HIA), and may as well, hinder the effective protection of the property in accordance with the Convention.

Until these corrections are officially adopted, this Management Plan refers to the attribute in a shortened and neutral form - “panoramas and silhouettes” - deliberately omitting the viewing perspective in order to avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation.

Table 2. Values and attributes of the Curonian Spit

Attributes	Extracts from the SOUV
Value 1: Unique and vulnerable coastal cultural landscape	
Unique size, shape and general spatial structure of the Curonian Spit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “[...] a unique and vulnerable, sandy and wooded cultural landscape on a coastal spit which features small Curonian lagoon settlements.”
Forested dune landscape with coastal settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Local communities adapted to the changes in the natural environment in order to survive. This interaction between humans and nature shaped the Curonian Spit cultural landscape.”
Characteristic panoramas and silhouettes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The most valuable elements and qualities of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are its unique size and general spatial structure, demonstrating the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature;”
Historical parts of the settlements of Nida, Juodkrantė, Preila, Pervalka, Smiltynė and Alksnynė homestead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The cultural, natural and human-made elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape illustrate the most important features of its formation through their shapes, volumes, materials, and functions.”
An example of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The entire area of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape reflects [1] valuable qualities and underlying processes, [2] retains historical functions and specific sustainable land use methods related to the peculiarities of the natural environment, and [3] reflects the unique spiritual bond between humans and nature.”
Value 2: The result of human efforts to restore suitable living conditions	

Attributes	Extracts from the SOUV
Afforested parts of the Great Dune Ridge and their management methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "The Spit was formed by the sea, wind and human activity, and continues to be shaped by them."
Planted forests, including montane pine forests, and their management and maintenance methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Local communities adapted to the changes in the natural environment in order to survive. This interaction between humans and nature shaped the Curonian Spit cultural landscape."
Human-made protective foredune ridge and its management methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "After intensive logging in the 17th and 18th centuries, the dunes began moving towards the Curonian Lagoon, burying the oldest settlements. At the turn of the 19th century, it became evident that human habitation would no longer be possible in the area without immediate action." ● "After disastrous human interventions that menaced its survival, the Spit was reclaimed by massive protection and stabilization works that began in the 19th century and are still continuing to the present day." ● "[...] Dune stabilisation work began, and has continued ever since. By the end of the 19th century, a protective dune ridge was formed along the seashore to prevent inland sand migration, and the Great Dune Ridge was reinforced using trees and brushwood hedges." ● "[...] natural and human-made elements including the distinctive Great Dune Ridge, [...] a human-made protective coastal dune ridge, [...] seacoast and littoral forests [...], montane pine forests, [...] stand out." ● "The most vulnerable elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are [...] the human-made protective coastal dune ridge, which is influenced by the natural coastal processes under the influence of global climate change." ● "[...] unique methods of protective coast and dune ridge management and forest maintenance" ● "The cultural, natural and human-made elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape illustrate the most important features of its formation through their shapes, volumes, materials, and functions."
Value 3: The variety of natural heritage	
Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with remnants of ancient parabolic dunes and old-growth (ancient) forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "[...] the distinctive Great Dune Ridge and individual dunes, relics of ancient parabolic dunes; [...] seacoast and littoral forests and littoral capes; ancient forests, [...] unique sand flora and fauna including a bird migration path;"
Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with grey and white (shifting) dunes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "[...] 5,000 years ago, a narrow peninsula (98 km in length and 0.4-3.8 km in width), the Great Dune Ridge separating the Baltic Sea from the Curonian Lagoon, was formed on moraine islands from sand transported by currents, and later covered by forest.
The prominent dominant dunes of the Great Dune Ridge (Vecekružas, Urbo, Angiai, Preila, Pervalka, etc.) and the individual dunes (Giedružė, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "The Curonian Spit is an outstanding example of a landscape of sand dunes that is under constant threat from natural forces (wind and tide)."
Lagoon capes and bays	
Exceptional natural habitats, unique sand flora and fauna	
Bird migration path	
Value 4: The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape highlighted by authentic historical cultural heritage	
Heritage of traditional architecture – old wooden fishermen’s houses and their decorative elements	

Attributes	Extracts from the SOUV
Heritage of professional architecture – buildings and their decoration built in the 19 th century and early 20 th century (including lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas, elements of resort infrastructure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The most vulnerable elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are the oldest wooden fishermen’s houses, the wooden décor of professionally designed buildings”
Sand-buried and other archaeological heritage (artefacts and cultural phenomena associated with the post road, 16 th –19 th century buried fishermen villages, ancient settlements of Nida, Alksnynė etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “the spatial-planned structure and architecture of ancient fishermen villages turned into resort settlements (ancient wooden fishermen houses, the professionally designed architectural buildings of the 19th century, including lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas);”
Maritime cultural heritage (also, fishing methods at sea and in the lagoon, Ice-knocking fishery of smelts, flat-bottomed boats, navigation in the waters, waterways, marinas, weathervanes, amber fishing and related navigation) and underwater culutral heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “cultural elements, including the remains of the postal tracks, trade villages from the 10th and 11th centuries, traditional fishermen villages and other archaeological heritage covered by sand” • “The cultural, natural and human-made elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape illustrate the most important features of its formation through their shapes, volumes, materials, and functions.”
Traditional crafts and arts (the tradition of building flat-bottomed boats, the production and decoration of weathervanes, a distinctive sign used since the mid-19 th century, the production of wooden burial markers in authentic shapes, preserved in the old cemetery of Nida, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape and its unique characteristics is further highlighted by authentic forms of local intangible heritage. These include the marine cultural heritage; traditional trades, folklore and artistic traditions; the ethnographic elements of the fishermen’s lifestyles”
Ethnographic elements of the fishermen’s lifestyle and folklore (Curonian language, songs, fishing (catching smelt, vimba), the tradition of catching crows, drying and smoking of fish typical of the coastal region of the 15 th century and 19 th century, net weaving and handling)	
Value 5: Traditions, spirituality and local lifestyle shaped by different historical periods	
Socio-cultural traditions, spirituality and social perception shaped by fishermen, later artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “[...] the social-cultural traditions, spirituality, and the social perception of the area, which reflect the local lifestyle formerly centred on fishermen, artists, scientists, yachtsmen and gliders, travellers and other visitors.”
Harmonious recreational activities and cultural leisure traditions developed since the 19 th century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “the spatial-planned structure and architecture of ancient fishermen villages turned into resort settlements”
Cultural memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape and its unique characteristics is further highlighted by authentic forms of local intangible heritage. These include the marine cultural heritage; traditional trades, folklore and artistic traditions; the ethnographic elements of the fishermen’s lifestyles; unique methods of protective coast and dune ridge management and forest maintenance, as well as sustainable recreational activities and a cultural leisure tradition dating back to the 19th century. • “The cultural, natural and human-made elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape illustrate the most important features of its formation through their shapes, volumes, materials, and functions. The authenticity of the landscape is reflected by the tangible and spiritual values of the different historical periods that shaped its identity.” • “The local community is directly involved in the conservation of the property’s tangible heritage and also carries the region’s intangible heritage.”

These attributes (features and characteristics) are described in more detail in Annex 1. “Elements of the Values and Attributes of the Curonian Spit”.

2.3. Conformity of Curonian Spit with the integrity and authenticity identified in the OUV

Integrity

The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit reflects all the attributes of OUV and the processes that have shaped them, the historically developed potential and specific land uses related to the natural features, continuity and the unique spiritual connection between humans and nature. The integrity of the property is set out in the SOUV adopted in 2014:

“The entire area of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape reflects valuable qualities and underlying processes, retains historical functions and specific sustainable land use methods related to the peculiarities of the natural environment, and reflects the unique spiritual bond between humans and nature. The boundaries of the World Heritage property are sufficient to express all the attributes of its Outstanding Universal Value. Some of these attributes, such as the fishermen houses, need careful maintenance. In general, these attributes are particularly sensitive to pressures such as climate change, severe weather events, fire, excessive development and tourism. Because of the continuous evolution and development of the cultural landscape, it is very important to regulate the number of visitors to the property. New developments and other economic activities must be regulated to avoid any irreversible changes that may threaten the Outstanding Universal Value. The most vulnerable elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are the oldest wooden fishermen’s houses, the wooden decor of professionally designed buildings, and the human-made protective coastal dune ridge, which is influenced by the natural coastal processes under the influence of global climate change.”

The 2024 scientific study "Climate Vulnerability Index assessment for the Curonian Spit"¹⁹ (hereinafter – CVI for Curonian Spit) predicts that temperature increases, frequent and heavy rainfall and coastal erosion will have the greatest impact on the cultural landscape and its features in the future. Increasing fires and increasingly violent storms are threatening the protective coastal and Great Dune Ridge. In order to increase the resilience of the property to climatic events, it is necessary to continue the implementation of integrated protection measures within the framework of the coastal management programme, fire prevention programmes and reforestation. The monitoring system of the property needs to be improved and advanced technologies introduced (see Chapter VI) to enable timely response to the threats posed by climate events.

Particularly vulnerable elements of the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit are the wooden ethnographic fishermen’s houses, the professional architecture of the 19th century and their wooden decoration. These attributes are vulnerable to climatic phenomena (temperature changes, heavy rainfall), development and tourist flows. Their preservation requires constant maintenance, restoration, historical research, the necessary specialist expertise, regulated urban development and economic activities.

Increasing visitor flows challenge the urban and economic development of the area and

¹⁹ Heron SF, Zavišaitė J, Bugenienė S, Day JC, Deringytė R, Kepežinskienė R, Liukaitytė-Kukienė J (2025) Climate Vulnerability Index assessment for the Lithuanian component of the Curonian Spit World Heritage property. *Ministry of Culture, Vilnius; and Climate Vulnerability Index, Townsville*. 75+ix pp. Available online at: https://lrkm.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1742294533/8897/HeronEtAl_2025_CVI-CuronianSpit.pdf

create environmental problems. In order to avoid irreversible changes, it is important to apply regulatory measures: to introduce a system for counting and managing visitor and tourist flows, to clarify the tourism strategy, and to promote the implementation of sustainable mobility solutions.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit is a unique and multi-layered phenomenon, formed by the long-term interaction of natural factors and human activity, which has evolved over the centuries but still has an impact on the property. The authenticity consists of the existence of evidence of interactions between natural and cultural elements, comprising tangible and intangible heritage. They reveal the spiritual atmosphere of the Curonian Spit, the flow of history and the identity of the landscape.

According to the SOUV, the Curonian Spit is an example of a special landform subjected to human intervention and natural phenomena such as climatic variations. The former has been both catastrophic, as with the drastic deforestation in the 16th century, and beneficial, as demonstrated in the 19th century with the creation of artificial barriers against further incursions by the sea. The cultural and natural elements of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape illustrate the most important features of its formation through their shapes, volumes, materials, and functions. The authenticity is also reflected by the tangible and spiritual values of the different historical periods that shaped its identity. The vitality of the cultural landscape is highlighted by the authentic forms of local intangible heritage: maritime cultural heritage, traditional trades, folklore and artistic traditions, fishermen's lifestyles, unique methods of protective coast and dune ridge management and the protective coastal dune ridge, and sustainable recreational activities and a cultural leisure tradition dating back to the 19th century.

The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit, which has retained its authenticity, is constantly affected by various environmental and social changes. One of the most important challenges is the natural processes of ecological succession, which is changing the structure of the habitats of the sand dunes and leading to their greening. The protective coastal ridge, formed in the 19th century, accumulates sand and restricts its infiltration into the semi-arid dunes, inhibiting their natural growth. Appropriate dune and forest management is being carried out to counteract these changes.

Another important dimension is socio-cultural. An increase in the number of registered residents does not always mean a strengthening of the community, as many of them live only during the summer season and do not have a close connection with the local identity and history. The influx of new residents and tourists can change the perception of local cultural memory, fragment the community and change the content of recreation from community traditions to commercial services for short-term users.

In order to avoid loss of authenticity, it is important to raise the awareness of the local population and to promote and develop sustainable tourism based on local identity and historical memory. There is a need for coherent protection of tangible and intangible heritage, involving local communities, and promoting the viability and continuity of traditional crafts, businesses and art forms. This includes fostering intergenerational dialogue, knowledge of cultural heritage and its integration into science, education and cultural life.

The education system is of particular importance. As the number of children declines, so does the competitiveness and attractiveness of local educational institutions, especially for young families. This weakens the local community, and solutions must be found to strengthen

the role of formal and non-formal education, to ensure the quality of education, and to encourage the involvement of newcomers in the promotion of cultural heritage and the heritage values of the cultural landscape.

Despite the changing circumstances and challenges, the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit has retained its authenticity: the sand dunes and the structure of the settlements have been preserved, the composition of the forests and the traditions of their maintenance have remained almost unchanged. The intangible cultural heritage has also endured – local ethnocultural (Curonian) traditions, crafts, and folklore are nurtured, and artistic traditions are steadily taking root. Even the fishing restrictions which have affected traditional commercial fishing have not diminished the local community’s determination to preserve the continuity of the maritime cultural heritage. On the contrary, they have stimulated a deeper public awareness, a broader dialogue and new efforts to interpret and safeguard this heritage. As in the past, the change in traditions is driven by people, whether they live here or come here, whether they are explorers, artists, travellers or newcomers. Each of them contributes to the safeguarding of the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit with their own contributions.

2.4 Other important values of the Curonian Spit

The SOUV is based on an internationally recognised outstanding heritage value, which are important for present and future generations of humanity. In addition to the latter, there are other important international, national and local values of the property. According to paragraph 111 of the OGS, an effective management system for a World Heritage property must take into account both the universal value and the nationally and locally recognised values of the property, as well as the socio-ecological context of the whole heritage place.²⁰ The aforementioned aspects may be relevant and protectable under local government, national legislation or even international law. Inadequate protection and management of other important values of the Curonian Spit may also have an impact on the property’s OUV and on the attributes of the OUV, as well as services and benefits provided by the World Heritage property, including quality of life, socio-cultural and economic sustainable development.

Other important values of the Curonian Spit are presented in Table 3. A list of illustrative features describing them is given in Annex 2. The list was compiled by summarising the results of meetings and discussions with actor groups during the scientific workshop CVI. It is not exhaustive.

Table 3. Other important values of the Curonian Spit

Group of other important values	Other important values of the Curonian Spit
Active and vibrant community	Education
	Residents living year-round in the Curonian Spit
	Institutional cooperation and good governance
	Sustainable businesses supporting the community
	Community-engaging activities
Nature uniqueness	Biological diversity, including terrestrial mammals

²⁰ Paragraph 111 of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, WHC.24/01 31 July 2024, p. 35.

Group of other important values	Other important values of the Curonian Spit
	Locations with sunrise and sunset over different waters on the same day
	Other natural phenomena
	Natural resources, including fresh air
Inspiring space for creativity and science	Traditional and contemporary cultural events and their diversity
	Variety of scientific research fields
	Residency programs
	Academic music events
	Painting and photography plein-air events and exhibitions
Recreation, health, knowledge	Diversity in sustainable tourism
	Participation in the Blue Flag Programme and wild white sandy beaches
	Eco-friendly outdoor sports opportunities and infrastructure
	Calmness and silence
	Stargazing
	Authentic culinary traditions
	Museums and visitor centres
	Dolphin therapy
	Forest bathing
Cultural heritage	Resort architecture of the 20 th century
	Legacies of public figures of the 19 th –20 th century
	Nature protection history, traditional knowledge and documentation
	Museum artefacts, movable properties
	Traditions and memorial of the gliding school
	Military heritage

2.5. Boundaries and buffer protection

The WHC Nomination Documentation for the Curonian Spit indicates that the total area of the property (within the territories of the Republic of Lithuania and the Russian Federation) is 33,021 ha: the land area – 16,321 ha, the Curonian Lagoon – 4,200 ha, the Baltic Sea – 12,500 ha²¹.

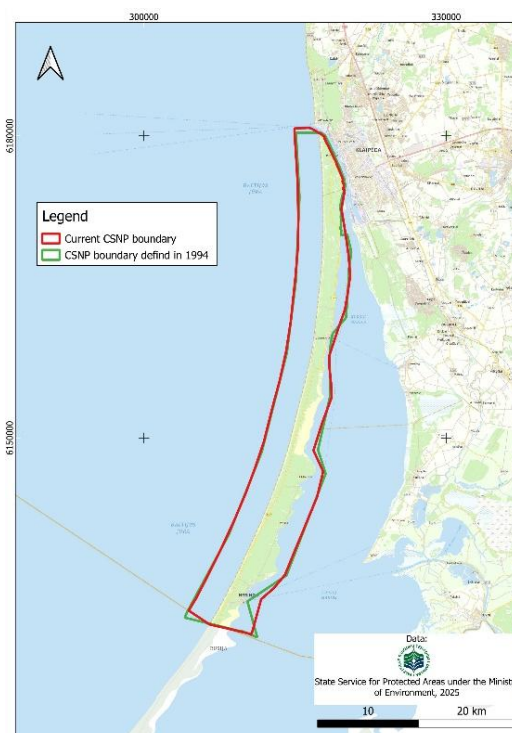
The boundaries of the Curonian Spit (in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania) at the time of the inscription on the World Heritage List coincided with those of the CSNP. The CSNP was established in 1991 by Resolution No I-1244 of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania – the Restoration Seimas – “On the Foundation of the Dzūkija, Curonian Spit, Žemaitija National Parks, the Trakai Historical National Park and the Viešvilė State Reserve”²². At that time, the area of the CSNP was 26,400 ha: 9,700 ha on land, 12,500 ha in the Baltic Sea and 4,200 ha in the Curonian Lagoon.

21 Curonian Spit Nomination File <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>

22 Resolution No I-1244 of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 April 1991 “On the Foundation of the Dzūkija, Curonian Spit, Žemaitija National Parks, the Trakai Historical National Park and the Viešvilė State Reserve”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.1236>

The boundaries of the CSNP and its area have changed slightly, were revised in 2010²³, and currently, according to the State Cadastre of Protected Areas, it covers an area of 27,389 thousand ha. The changes in the boundaries of the CSNP are shown in Figure 2. In 2023, the Site Manager prepared revised cartographic information on the Curonian Spit in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania (Annex 3) and submitted it to the World Heritage Centre. Until such time as it is approved, the boundaries of the Curonian Spit are as indicated in the World Heritage Nomination Documents.

Figure 2. Boundaries of the CSNP in 1994 and 2024.



Source: State Cadastre of Protected Areas

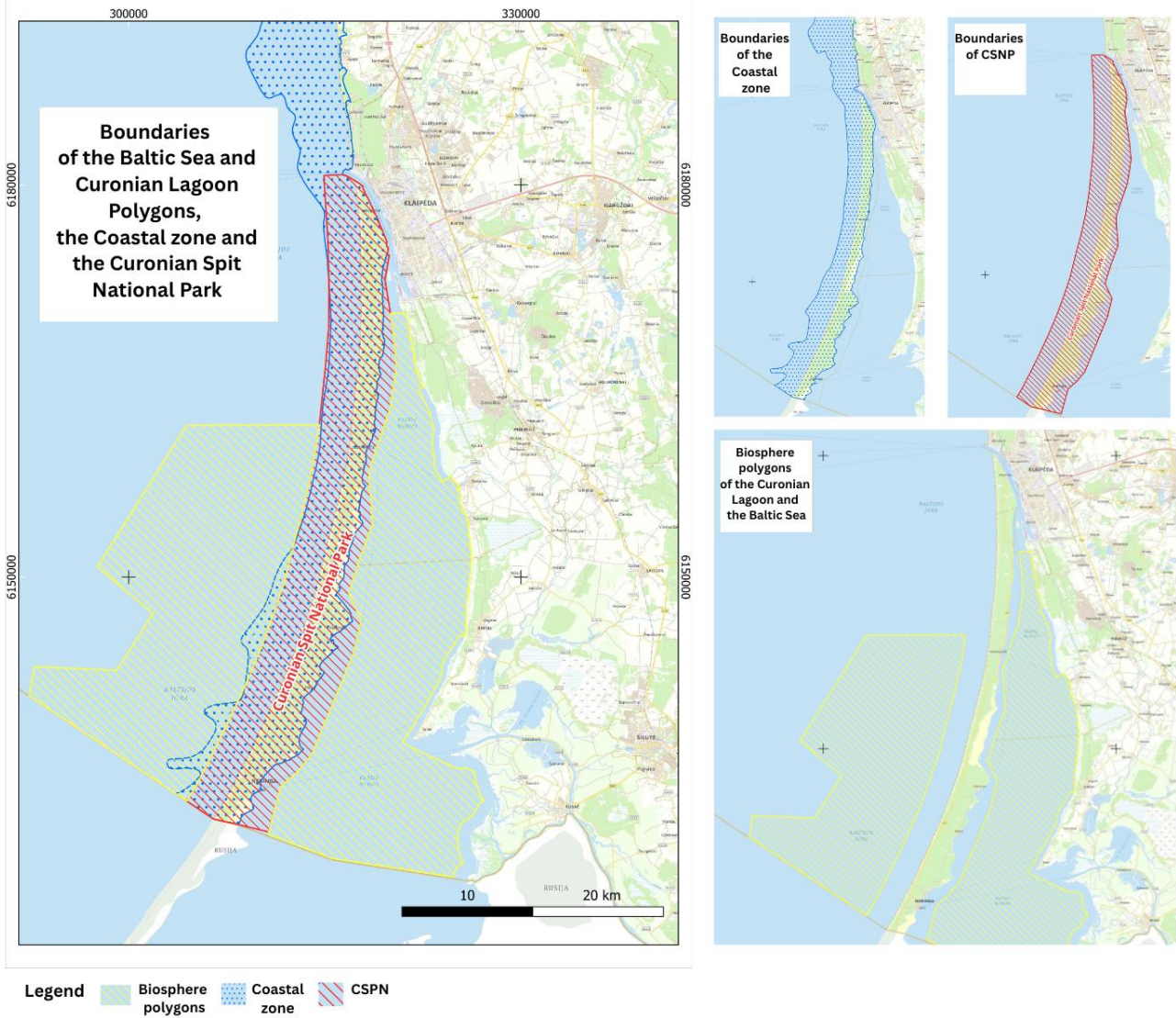
A buffer zone has not been established for the property on the Lithuanian side, as the Curonian Spit is surrounded exclusively by the waters of the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon. The areas adjacent to the Spit consist solely of these maritime water bodies, parts of which are already included within the property's boundaries. The remaining water areas are subject to strict use limitations, with no activities taking place other than regulated fishing. Consequently, these surrounding waters do not generate pressures or potential impacts that would necessitate the designation of a buffer zone. In addition, the national protected areas of the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea biosphere polygons fully fulfil the function of the buffer protection zone. The sea area up to 20 isobaths is protected by law (Figure 3). These areas are subject to stricter regulation than the requirements for buffer protection zones of national parks under Lithuanian legislation. In addition, according to the Law on Protected Areas (hereinafter – LPA)²⁴, buffer zones cannot overlap with biosphere polygons or other complex or conservation priority areas. Therefore, according to the existing national regulation, no buffer

23 Resolution No XI-1248 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 22 December 2010 "On Approval of the Boundary Plan of the Curonian Spit National Park and its Zones".

24 Republic of Lithuania Law on Protected Areas. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.5627/asr>

zone has been established and cannot be established for the property. Only the establishment of a buffer zone in part of the water area covered by Klaipėda State Seaport (hereinafter – KSS) could be discussed (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Map of the Curonian Spit in Lithuania with adjacent protected areas²⁵



Source: State Cadastre of Protected Areas: <https://stvk.lt/map/21.1338/55.4936/10.8/2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.10.11.12.13.24.27>

25 NOTE: Minor corrections to the boundaries of the Coastal Zone in the State Cadastre of Protected Areas are currently being made.








CHAPTER III. STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE CURONIAN SPIT

3.1. Factors affecting the property

The ecological situation in Lithuania has been considered more or less stable since the middle of the 20th century. However, the socio-economic situation in the country has changed considerably since the cultural landscape was inscribed on the World Heritage List. Rapid economic development and the increasing demand for tourism have had, and continue to have, a significant impact on the property. In addition, climate change is one of the fastest growing threats to heritage sites worldwide. The Curonian Spit suffers significant adverse effects due to climate change. This trend is likely to continue and intensify.

The factors affecting the attributes of OUV and their state of conservation have been analysed based on (1) the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting on the Curonian Spit (the part of Lithuania) submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in 2023, and (2) the CVI undertaken in 2024. The factors listed were approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2008²⁶ (Table 4) and can have both positive and negative impacts on the attributes of OUV.

Table 4. Factors affecting the attributes of the OUV of the Curonian Spit and trends in their state of conservation

Explanation of the signs used in the table			
Current status	 Good. The attribute is in good condition and is likely to be conserved if the existing protection measures are maintained.		
	 Good with some concerns. Although there are some concerns, minor additional conservation measures may help to ensure that the attribute is largely conserved in the long term.		
	 Significant concern. The attribute is threatened and/or showing signs of decline. Significant additional conservation measures are required to conserve or restore it in the medium to long term.		
	 Critical. The attribute is highly vulnerable and/or deteriorating rapidly. It may be lost in the short to medium term unless urgent and extensive protection measures are taken.		
Changes in the state of conservation since inscription (2000)	 Improving	 Stable	 Deteriorating

²⁶ List of factors affecting the attributes. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/factors/>.

All the attribute of the OUV are positively or negatively affected by the following factors:

- Management system
- Legal framework
- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Society's valuing of heritage
- Oil and gas extraction
- Fires
- Changes in temperature, shortening of ice or frost periods
- Tourism, visitation and recreational activities and its related infrastructure
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure

An effective management and legal system, sufficient financial and human resources, adequate public attitude towards heritage always have a positive impact on the state of conservation of the property, ensuring communication between institutions and organisations, timely maintenance, etc.

Oil and gas extraction and fires may have a short-term effect, but may cause irreversible changes, i.e. substantially worsen the condition of the major attributes or even destroy them completely, or parts of them. Changes in temperature, shortening of ice or frost periods may have a lasting negative effect on the property.






Climate change, natural hazards, temperature fluctuations, heavy rainfall, storms, fires and other natural phenomena may have a direct negative impact on the immovable cultural heritage. Disregard for the traditions of authentic wooden architecture, the layout of homesteads and landscaping, the use of architectural forms and styles that are not characteristic of the Curonian Spit, and the lack of regular maintenance may change the established building traditions. Insufficient financial resources for restoration and conservation projects can increase the risk to cultural heritage, especially when it is not maintained or restored for a long period of time. Inadequate legal regulation or lack of legal regulation and lack of competences can undermine the condition of immovable cultural heritage sites.

Tourism, transport infrastructure, visitors and recreational activities can have a dual impact on the cultural landscape, or the impact of these factors could reflect in services and benefits for the local communities. If properly regulated, tourism, visitation, and recreational activities can have a positive impact through well-designed and aesthetically appropriate infrastructure that highlights the distinctive character of the cultural landscape and its assets. Similarly, transport infrastructure, if inadequately developed or not designed with the OUV of the cultural landscape in mind, can have a negative impact on the property. Conversely, when planned in accordance with the OUV and conservation requirements, it can have a positive effect.

In addition to the above factors, which affect the property as a whole, specific additional factors are listed for each of the attributes of OUV in Tables 3.1–3.5. Paragraphs 3.1.1–3.1.5 give a brief description of the changes in these attributes since the inscription on the World Heritage List and their current state of conservation.

3.1.1 Unique and vulnerable coastal cultural landscape (Value 1)

Table 3.1. Additional factors and changes that may affect the outstanding and vulnerable cultural landscape of the coastal spit (Value 1)

Attribute	Additional factors likely to have an impact	Observed change ²⁷ since inscription on the List
The unique size, shape and spatial structure of the Curonian Spit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development • Storms • Flooding • Use of transport infrastructure 	
Forested dune landscape with coastal settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Land conversion • Forestry 	
Characteristic panoramas and silhouettes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Marine transport infrastructure • Land conversion • Forestry • Storms • Ecological succession 	
Historical parts of the settlements of Nida, Juodkrantė, Preila, Pervalka, Smiltynė and Alksnynė homestead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development (housing) • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Ground transport infrastructure • Flooding 	
Example of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of transportation infrastructure • Sea and lagoon water pollution 	

The size, form and spatial structure of the Curonian Spit are exceptional. Natural processes constantly affect both shores of the Curonian Spit. During storms, waves wash up on the Baltic Sea coast, taking away a part of the protective foredune ridge. The currents of the Curonian Lagoon are constantly eroding the shores and carrying inlets, resulting in shorter headlands and changes in the shape of the bays. In strong westerly winds, sand can be seen slipping into the lagoon. Increased high winds and storms have led to increased erosion and loss of shorelines and the protective foredune ridge.

The condition of the open dunes of the Great Dune Ridge is related to the slipping of the dunes (sand) into the lagoon in the prevailing westerly winds, i.e. the lowering of the dunes, and the absence of sand migration from the Baltic Sea. The trend shows a decrease in the

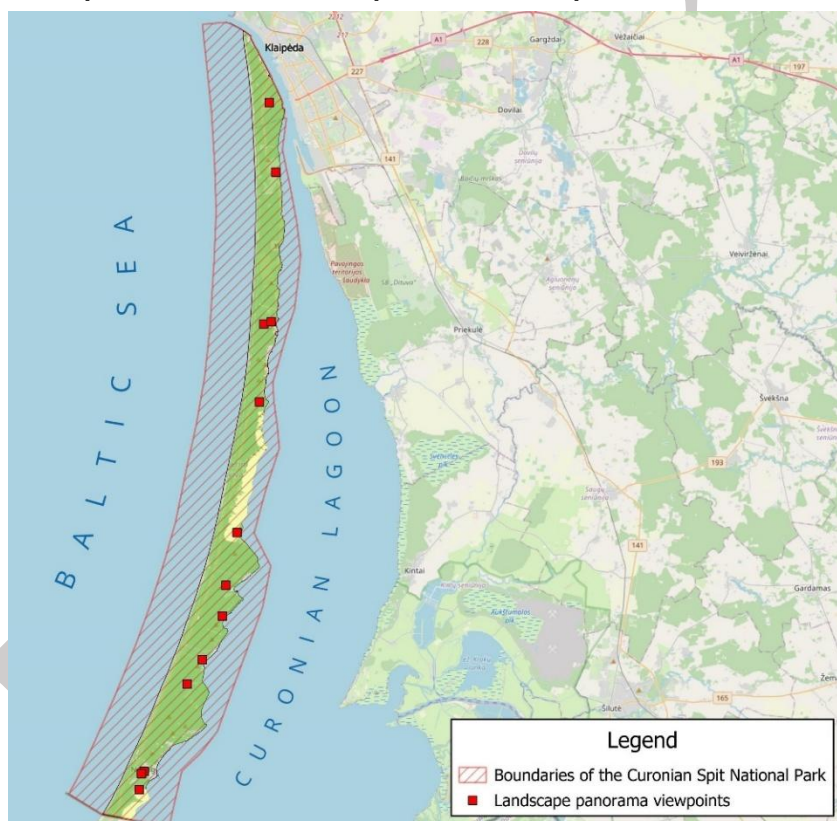
²⁷ Assessment of the change since the inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000 at the scientific workshop “Climate Vulnerability Index Assessment for the Curonian Spit” in 2024. Available online at: https://lrkm.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1742294533/8897/HeronEtAl_2025_CVI-CuronianSpit.pdf

height of the open dunes. The open areas of the spit are naturally covered with vegetation and forests.

Forested dune landscape with coastal settlements, characteristic panoramas and silhouettes. The eastern panorama of the Curonian Spit has remained largely unchanged over time: settlements and forests remain. However, the areas of open sand are gradually changing, decreasing in size through natural vegetation cover, and the development of sailing infrastructure on the shore of the Curonian Lagoon is a cause for concern, due to the potential negative impact on the eastern panorama of the spit.

The prerequisites for the preservation of characteristic panoramas and silhouettes are provided by the solutions set out in the Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania, according to which the Curonian Spit is included in the area of the most highly protected visual aesthetic potential of the country, which is subject to the strictest visual protection requirements, including a ban on the construction of individual wind farms and industrial wind farms. 17 viewpoints in the Curonian Spit have been included in the list of the most valuable panoramic viewpoints in the landscape, approved by the Order of the Minister of Environment²⁸.

Figure 4. Map of the most valuable panoramic viewpoints of the Curonian Spit



Data: State Cadastre of Protected Areas, Order No D1-885 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 31 October 2017 "On the Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the Environmental Impact Assessment of the Proposed Economic Activity". Compiled by the CSNPA.

28 Order No D1-885 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 31 October 2017 "On the Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the Environmental Impact Assessment of the Proposed Economic Activity". The most valuable landscape panorama viewpoints of the Curonian Spit are photofixed and described, and their condition is regularly monitored as part of the landscape monitoring programme. The monitoring results are publicly accessible at the following link: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/lt/apie-nacionalini-parka/krastovaizdis/krastovaizdzio-monitoringas/>.

Historical parts of Nida, Juodkrantė, Preila, Pervalka, Smiltynė settlements and the Alksnynė homestead. No significant negative changes in the condition of the historical parts of the settlements have been recorded and the condition of restored historical buildings has improved.

The analysis of the state of conservation of the historical parts and settings is based on the results of the survey and monitoring of the territory over the last decade, based on the trends that have emerged during the monitoring of the cultural heritage sites. The annual survey of cultural heritage sites carried out by the DCH is not sufficient to assess significant changes or risks to the protection of the OUV, including the integrity and authenticity of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape. The DCH points out that the results of the monitoring of the UNESCO World Heritage properties in Lithuania for the period 2021–2023 did not show any significant changes or risks and therefore did not serve as a basis for decisions on changes in the protection of these properties. The information provided in the report on the monitoring of cultural heritage sites for 2022 published by the DCH does not reveal how the state of conservation of the property has changed or remains the same, does not provide an assessment of the state of conservation of the OUV, including its integrity and authenticity, and does not indicate the main factors that may affect the property. The responsible authorities do not have detailed information on the state of conservation.²⁹

No damage or alterations have been identified in the historic parts of Nida, Preila and Pervalka settlements (site survey data of the DCH in 2023^{30, 31, 32}. One violation, i.e. arbitrary replacement of wooden windows with plastic ones, was detected in Juodkrantė).³³

In Neringa, Municipality of Neringa is responsible for the old cemetery complexes or parts of cemeteries and their heritage values. Nida Old Cemetery Complex (10783) was completed in 2011 in accordance with the design of maintenance operations of 2009. The condition of the baptismal and old wooden tombstones is unsatisfactory. In 2025, a Programme for Research, Conservation and Restoration of Art Heritage will be drawn up for the conservation and restoration of the baptismal, wooden crosses, tombstones and for the maintenance of the graves. The latter will also include the Old Cemetery of Foresters of Nida Dunes (unique number 24611), which is in a satisfactory state. The Old Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery of Preila (unique number 22327) is in good condition and has been landscaped in accordance with the project of maintenance operations prepared in 2009. The condition of the Old Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery of Pervalka (unique number 11424) and a part of the Old Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery of Juodkrantė (unique number 22440) is not satisfactory. For both sites, a design of maintenance operations (restoration, repair) has been prepared in 2020, and permits to carry out maintenance operations until 2027 have been obtained in 2022. The Koggalis Cemetery (unique number 10739), located in the territory of the Municipality of Klaipėda City in Smiltynė, which is of national importance, is in a good condition, and no maintenance or restoration works are planned.

29 18 December 2024 Assessment Report No VRE-5 of the National Audit Office. Management and Protection of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. paragraph 3.

30 Inspection Report of the Cultural Heritage Site of Nida Settlement, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, Klaipėda Territorial Division, Chief Specialist Laisvūnas Kavaliauskas, 30 October 2024, No VSAKI-11.

31 Inspection Report of the Cultural Heritage Site of Preila Settlement, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, Klaipėda Territorial Division, Chief Specialist Gintarė Plauškaitė, 18-04-2024 No. VSAKI-6.




32 Inspection Report of the Cultural Heritage Site of Pervalka Settlement, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, Klaipėda Territorial Division, Senior Specialist Gintarė Plauškaitė, 2024-04-19 No. VSAKI-7.

33 Inspection Report of the Cultural Heritage Site of Juodkrante Settlement, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, Klaipėda Territorial Division, Senior Specialist Laisvūnas Kavaliauskas, 30-10-2024 No. VSAKI-10.

An example of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. Over the centuries, not only generations have changed, but also the local community of the Curonian Spit has changed, but the close relationship between humans and nature remains very strong. The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit is still evolving and undergoing evolutionary processes, but it retains an active social role in modern society, linked to traditional ways of life. The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit reveals signs of development, inextricably linked to natural processes and human activity.

3.1.2 The result of human efforts to restore suitable living conditions (Value 2)

Table 3.2: Additional factors and change that may affect the result of human efforts to restore suitable living conditions (Value 2)

Attribute	Additional factors likely to have an impact	Observed change ³⁴ since inscription on the List
Afforested parts of the Great Dune Ridge and their management methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind • Storms • Invasive terrestrial species 	
Planted forests, including mountain pine forests, and their management and maintenance methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land conversion • Invasive terrestrial species • Forestry 	
Human-made protective foredune ridge and its management methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development (housing) • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Wind • Storms • Erosion 	

Afforested parts of the Great Dune Ridge and their maintenance methods, planted forests, including mountain pine forests, and their management and maintenance methods. The forests of the Curonian Spit are negatively affected by extreme meteorological and hydrological events, which are likely to increase due to climate change. These include severe storms with large amounts of windstorms and wind debris (e.g. a hurricane in 1967 knocked down as many as 20,000 m³ of trees), droughts, heavy snowfall.

The risk of forest fires increases due to low rainfall, high temperatures and high winds. The greatest damage to the forests of the Curonian Spit over the last thirty years has been

³⁴ Assessment of the change since the inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000 at the scientific workshop “Climate Vulnerability Index Assessment for the Curonian Spit” in 2024. Available online at: https://lrkm.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1742294533/8897/HeronEtAl_2025_CVI-CuronianSpit.pdf

caused by crown fires (canopy fires). In 1995, 60.8 ha were burnt, in 2006 – 235.6 ha, i.e. a total of about 300 ha of stands, or an average of 14 ha of dead stands per year.

Forest pests and pathogens are one of the factors contributing to the deterioration of forest health. In 2018, a mass spread of the pine needle-eating pest, the monk spider (*Lymantria monacha* L.) was recorded in the Curonian Spit, in Juodkrante Forest District. It resulted in the removal of pine needles over an area of 190 ha (20-90%) at a higher intensity³⁵. Bark beetle outbreaks are usually periodic and closely linked to extreme weather conditions such as storms, droughts, and are likely to be even more frequent and larger in the future.³⁶

A specific problem of sanitary protection of the forests of the Curonian Spit is root diseases in mountain pine stands. These are caused by Heterobasidion root rot or Armillaria root rot. On average, about 5 ha of stands are killed annually by these pathogens.³⁷ However, many years of research have made it possible to use effective protective measures to stop the spread of the diseases caused by these fungi. It has been found that, under the conditions of the Curonian Spit, Scots pine is significantly more resistant to both fungal root diseases (Heterobasidion root rot or Armillaria root rot) than a mountain pine.

The stands are damaged and subsequently die in cormorant colonies. The largest mixed colony of breeding Great Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and Grey Herons (*Ardea cinerea*) is located in the vicinity of Juodkrantė. Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds prohibits the hunting of cormorants, and EU Member States can only regulate their numbers with a special exemption³⁸. In Lithuania, cormorant populations are regulated in accordance with the Great Cormorant Population Management Plan, with the aim of conserving the population of this bird and minimising the damage it causes³⁹. Since the introduction of the cormorant population control, the area of new die-offs has decreased.

Human-made protective coastal ridge and its maintenance methods. The length of the protective coastal ridge (Lithuania) is 50.76 km. Over the entire period of its formation, the ridge has accumulated about 20 million m³ of sand, with almost 1 million m³ of sand accumulated in the period 2014–2021 alone. This represents 5% of its total volume.⁴⁰ Over the period 2014–2021, the dune ridge has accumulated almost 1 million m³ (970,531 m³) of sand. This represents as much as 5% of the total volume of sand accumulated in the dune ridge. This shows that the dune ridge protection and regeneration works carried out between 2014 and 2020 have been very effective.

To date, the protective coastal ridge has fulfilled its original function of trapping sand and preventing it from penetrating into the peninsula. The ongoing maintenance works illustrate the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature and the development of the cultural

35 Publication of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania. Available online at: https://amvmt.lrv.lt/uploads/amvmt/documents/files/MSAS/Publikacijos/2019_04.pdf

36 Publication of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania. Available online at: https://amvmt.lrv.lt/uploads/amvmt/documents/files/MSAS/Publikacijos/2020_01_Europos_miskus_dziovina_masinis_zieveg_rauziu_isplitimas_V_Vasiliauskas.pdf

37 Order No D1-553 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 July 2013 “On the Approval of the Internal Forest Management Project of the Curonian Spit National Park and the Revised Internal Forest Management Project of the State Enterprise Mažeikiai Forest Enterprise”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.454033?ifwid=rivwzvvpvg>.

38 Implementation of population control measures for the Great Cormorant in Juodkrantė colony and monitoring of three breeding colonies in 2023. Available online at: <https://vstt.lrv.lt/media/viesa/saugykla/2024/6/iQK8vzQtr0.pdf>

39 Order No D1-1001 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 31 December 2013 “On the Approval of the Plan for the Regulation of the Abundance of the Great Cormorant Population”.

40 Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, coastal zone information. Available online at: <https://am.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-1/gamtos-apsauga/saugomos-teritorijos-ir-krastovaizdis-zeldynai/pajurio-juosta/>





landscape. To maintain and preserve it, natural materials, such as branch barriers, dune ridge reinforcement works using branch formwork characteristic of the Curonian Spit, stakes, and herbaceous vegetation to retain sand, have been used to date.

The protective foredune ridge is most affected by the increased frequency of catastrophic weather events such as storms and hurricanes, and the reduced flow of coastal sand debris from the coast of the Sambia peninsula. The deterioration of the protective coastal ridge is mainly due to the impact of hydrometeorological factors (strong and increasing winds, sea waves and sea level rise, sand deficit).⁴¹ Due to climate change, storms have a negative impact on the protective coastal ridge throughout the year without frost or ice cover in the winter months.

Recreational activities and increasing visitor traffic are also contributing to the deterioration of the protective coastal ridge. With the increasing mobility of people and the popularity of cycling tourism, the pressure on the spit is increasing not only in the recreational functional priority zones, but also in the nature reserves. The number of areas affected by recreational degradation is increasing. In spite of the protective measures (crossings over the dune ridge, fences), visitors are creating new paths, which worsens the condition of the dune ridge, increases the amount of work on the bank management measures, and increases the need for more funding.




3.1.3. The variety of natural heritage (Value 3)

Table 3.3: Additional factors and changes that may affect natural heritage (Value 3)

Attribute	Additional factors likely to have an impact	Observed change ⁴² since inscription on the List
Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with remnants of ancient parabolic dunes and ancient forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansive (extremely fast spreading) species • Invasive terrestrial species 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry 	
Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with grey and white (shifting) dunes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Wind • Storms • Erosion • Invasive terrestrial species • Ecological succession 	
Prominent dunes of the Great Dune Ridge: dominant dunes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Storms 	

41 Summary Report on the State of the Environment of Lithuania and its Changes in 2022. Available online at: vanduo | Aplinkos apsaugos agentūros ataskaita už 2022 m. (arcgis.com)

42 Assessment of the change since the inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000 at the scientific workshop “Climate Vulnerability Index Assessment for the Curonian Spit” in 2024.

(Vecekrugas, Urbo, Angiai, Preila, Pervalka, etc.) and individual dunes (Giedružė, etc.).		
Lagoon capes and bays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Sea and lagoon water pollution • Wind • Flooding • Erosion and siltation 	
Exceptional natural habitats, unique sand flora and fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea and lagoon water pollution • Invasive terrestrial species • Ecological succession • Air transport infrastructure 	
Bird migration path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air transport infrastructure • Urban development (housing) 	

Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with remnants of ancient parabolic dunes and ancient forests. An ancient forest is changing due to various natural factors. The centuries-old stands of pine and spruce forests in the ancient forest are particularly affected by the expansive species of the bark beetle (*Ips typographus* L.), which is particularly favoured by hot and dry weather. Trees damaged by this pest become weak, dry and dangerous, leading in some areas to sanitary felling and the removal of damaged timber. Changing climate and rising temperatures may increase the damage caused by pests.

A colony of cormorants is located in Juodkrantė ancient forest. The expansion of the cormorant and heron populations is leading to damage and loss of stands. Currently, according to the data available to the State Forest Service (hereinafter – SFS), 10.7 ha of stands have been identified as lost due to the activities of these birds, 8.8 ha are considered damaged, including the area of 2.8 ha which is severely damaged, i.e. more than 60% of the trees are dead. Thus, almost one fifth of the ancient forest is destroyed including only 1.4 ha which has recovered spontaneously. The colony is retreating southwards as the cormorants fail to find suitable trees for nesting.

The composition of the stands of Juodkrantė and Nida ancient forests is changing – as pine trees reach natural maturity, they die over time, other tree species prevail in the second stand, and due to shading the undergrowth, deciduous tree species begin to dominate, forming dense undergrowth, and the conditions are unfavourable for the spontaneous recovery of pine. The old-growth pine-dominated forest is maintained through management work, removing deciduous trees and shrubs and creating more light permeability in the forest. In order to maintain the ancient forest, it is advisable to restore the pine stands, mineralise the soil and allow the pine to regenerate on its own.

Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with grey and white (shifting) dunes. The halted aeolian processes and the significant increase in forest cover have led to ecological succession. In white dune habitats, when they are not eroded by wind, the grey dune habitats begin to develop, even if only a small layer of humus is present, followed by the growth of woody vegetation. During the period between 2005 and 2020, the natural decrease of white dune habitats in Grobštas Nature Reserve and Parnidis Landscape Reserve was 14%, i.e.

from 67.7 ha to 58.3 ha. Ecological succession is a natural and inevitable process, but the loss of white dunes has a direct negative impact on extremely rare sand plant species and landscape diversity. The spread of invasive plants also has a negative impact.

White dune habitats are mainly found on the Great Dune Ridge. The dunes here are rapidly changing due to wind and anthropogenic activities^{43, 44}. Climate change (non-freezing and permanent snow cover) is accelerating this change.

In order to preserve valuable habitats, protect the dunes from negative natural (ecological succession) and anthropogenic impacts, various measures are taken: removal of woody vegetation and invasive plants, installation of information boards and barriers, sand traps, regulation of visitor flows, prevention activities⁴⁵.

Prominent dunes of the Great Dune Ridge are dominant dunes (Vecekrugas, Urbo, Angiai, Preila, Pervalka, etc.) and isolated individual dunes (Giedružė, etc.). The condition of Angiai Hill, Karvaičiai Dune, Hill of Witches is good, while the condition of Agila, Vingis, Urbos, Vecekrugas, Skirpstas dunes is average (long-term landscape monitoring data). The condition of the dunes is affected by natural (aeolian) and anthropogenic (visitation) factors. The main anthropogenic factor – visitor traffic – has the most negative impact on the condition of Agila dune. The educational trail here is one of the most visited in the Curonian Spit. It receives around 60,000 visitors every year. The trail crosses the Curonian Spit and perfectly reflects all the major landscape types and the corresponding attributes of OUV of the Curonian Spit. In order to minimise the anthropogenic impact on this extremely sensitive site, from 1 April to 31 October⁴⁶ visitor flow is regulated through economic measures, established by a ticketing system.

Lagoon capes and bays. The length of the shoreline of the Curonian Lagoon (on the territory of Lithuania) is about 60 km, but it is changing due to erosion. Waves and currents from south-westerly winds are changing the shoreline of the Curonian Lagoon, eroding the capes of the Curonian Spit and filling in the sandy bays between them. The Curonian Spit is affected by erosion by 0.5-2.0 m per year.

In the 20th century, settlements planted reeds and constructed shoreline reinforcements to protect buildings along the coast, and later concrete quays were built to protect the shores. This stopped the erosion of a part of the banks. The most erodible banks are located in natural areas (Figure 2). Here, natural bank-building processes prevail, which are a natural value to be protected⁴⁷.

43 Baurėnas A., Bevainis L., Česnulevičius A., Mačiulevičiūtė-Turlienė N., Ovodas D., Sviliene R., Šutinienė L. Monitoring of the anthropogenic changes in Nagliai Dune in 2023. Available online at:

<https://nerija.lrv.lt/media/viesa/saugykla/2024/5/PCVxsM9m7ts.pdf>

44 Dikšaitė L., Grigaitis Ž., Juškevičienė D., Piekienė N., Žemaitienė G. 2021. Landscape change and protection of the landscape of the Great Dune Ridge in Grobštas Nature Reserve and Parnidis Landscape Reserve. Available online at:

[https://nerija.lrv.lt/uploads/nerija/documents/files/Gamtos_vertybes_saugomose_teritorijose_2021\(1\).pdf](https://nerija.lrv.lt/uploads/nerija/documents/files/Gamtos_vertybes_saugomose_teritorijose_2021(1).pdf)

45 Povilanskas R., Baurėnas A., Urbis A., Mačiulevičiūtė-Turlienė N., Morkūnaitė R., Jurkus E. 2017. Recommendations for conservation and restoration of grey and white dune landscapes in Nagliai and Grobšto Nature Reserves, Parnidis Landscape Reserve. Available online at:

<https://nerija.lrv.lt/uploads/nerija/documents/files/KNNP%20Kopotvarkos%20rekomendacijos%202017-12.pdf>

46 Resolution No 308 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 March 1999 “On the Approval of the Regulations of the Curonian Spit National Park” <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.215CA75ACC72/asr>

47 Resolution No 702 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 6 June 2012 “On Approval of the Management Plan of the Curonian Spit National Park”

In recent years, there has been an increase in coastal erosion in Klaipėda Strait of the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon⁴⁸. Dredging has increased the inflow of water from the sea. These changes, together with climate change, which has led to more frequent flooding during the winter period when a stable ice cover does not form, have led to an increase in coastal erosion in the Lagoon.

Research on the condition of the shores of the Curonian Lagoon has received less attention than that of the Baltic Sea coast. There is no programme for their protection and management, with measures appropriate to the different stretches of coastline, planned funding and sources of funding. It was only in 2023 that the Environmental Protection Agency (hereinafter – EPA) started monitoring the shores of the Curonian Lagoon. The State Environmental Monitoring Programme for 2024–2029 foresees the monitoring of coastal changes in the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon⁴⁹. The surveys are planned to be carried out once a year and repeatedly after severe storms.

The Curonian Spit has a higher incidence of litter associated with shipping, fishing and offshore infrastructure. According to the monitoring of beaches for litter pollution carried out by the Marine Research Institute and the EPA in the period 2020–2023, the lowest number of litter items was found on the beaches of Nida (on average, 49 items/100 m) and Alksnynė (on average, 59 items/100 m). The threshold value of 20 litter items per 100 m of beach set by the European Commission is the threshold that indicates that the sea is in a good state in terms of the coastal litter indicator.

Data from the last decade show that the water status of the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea is not good. The water bodies are eutrophicated, with frequent exceedances of levels of hazardous substances in the water, bottom sediments and living organisms, and biodiversity is being disrupted by human activities and climate change. The latest 6-year (2012–2017) assessment of the state of the Baltic Sea environment in 2022 showed that the Baltic Sea area belonging to Lithuania does not achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) in 9 (fish and bird diversity, eutrophication, non-indigenous species, food webs, commercial fish, physical disturbance of the seabed, marine litter, pollutants in the environment, contaminants in fish, contaminants in edible fish) of 11 qualitative aspects of environmental assessment. No analysis was available in 2 aspects – hydrographic conditions and underwater anthropogenic noise – due to lack of data and information⁵⁰.

Overall, the Baltic Sea ranks among the top five most polluted seas in the world. Increased marine litter pollution is evident. Litter pollution reduces coastal values and has ecological consequences, such as damage or death to animals from entanglement in debris from nets or plastic debris, and ingestion of debris causing direct physical or long-term chemical damage to marine animals.

Exceptional natural habitats, unique sand flora and fauna. Successional processes, such as the increase of grasses on dunes and floodplain meadows, lead to a reduction in the area of open sand, the overgrowth of shrubs and trees in the outstanding natural habitats, changes in the composition of plant communities, and the disappearance of rare plant species.

48 In the period 1910–1958, the average annual water level was -3.5 cm below the perennial Baltic zero, with an upward trend (+0.8 mm/m), while in the period 1958–2005, the average annual water level was already +3.0 cm, with an upward trend (+0.8 mm/m). (based on presentation “The state of the coats of the Curonian Lagoon” by Dr. G. Žilinskas, 2016)

49 Resolution No. 527 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 June 2024 –On the Approval of the State Environmental Monitoring Programme for 2024–2029”.

50 Report of the Environmental Protection Agency on the State of the Lithuanian Environment and its Changes in 2022. Part 8 “Status of the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea, Main Impacts”

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/08b18f0d2704442cbd47c902f71f9a87/page/vanduo/>

In order to protect the habitats of rare plant species, in particular from woody overgrowth, the CSNPA carries out yearly nature management works: trees and shrubs are felled on the coastal floodplain and dunes.

Due to the encroachment of reedbeds on the shores of the Curonian Lagoon, two types of habitats are being lost: sandy shoreline and open shallow bay – habitats for rare and protected plant species (e.g. the aquatic platypus) and for animal species (e.g. the cave duck). Reedbeds are mown to restore open coastal habitats.

Invasive plant species such as the wrinkled-leaved thistle, white-flowered robinia, broom bush, soap goby, etc., and animal species such as the common raccoon, raccoon dog, etc., pose a significant threat to protected and rare species and habitats. The exact area occupied by invasive species and their distribution in the natural and protected habitats of the Curonian Spit has not yet been determined, which makes it difficult to assess the spread of invasive species and the effectiveness of the management measures.

In order to improve the status of protected and rare species, measures to control the population abundance of invasive species, as well as preventive and educational activities are implemented.






Bird migration path. The main threats to bird migration are noise from human activities and low-flying aircraft, especially during the resting and breeding periods of migratory birds. As one of the most important migration routes through the Curonian Spit, where different bird species migrate at different times of the year and fly both at very low altitudes and at night, there is a need for targeted regulation of the use of airspace below an altitude of 1 km. It is essential to regulate aircraft movements or the organisation of noisy mass events during the most intense periods of migration, i.e. mid-April (spring) and late September/early October (autumn) in a responsible manner.

3.1.4 The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape highlighted by authentic historical culutral heritage (Value 4)


Table 3.4: Additional factors and change that may affect the authentic cultural heritage (Value 4) that brings out the liveliness, spirituality and special atmosphere of the cultural landscape

Attribute	Additional factors likely to have an impact	Observed change ⁵¹ since inscription on the List
Heritage of traditional architecture – old wooden fishermen’s houses and their decorative elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development (housing) • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Ground transport infrastructure • Renewable energy installations • Ritual, spiritual, religious and associative links with heritage • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge 	▶

⁵¹ Assessment of the change since the inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000 Climate Vulnerability Index for the Curonian Spit 2024 Workshop.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographics • Incidents of intense rainfall and changes in temperature 	
Heritage of professional architecture – buildings and their decoration built in the 19 th century and early 20 th century (including lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas, resort infrastructure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Ground transport infrastructure • Renewable energy installations • Ritual, spiritual, religious and associative links with heritage • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographics • Incidents of intense rainfall and changes in temperature 	
Sand-buried and other archaeological heritage (artefacts and cultural phenomena associated with the post road, 16 th - 19 th century buried fishing villages, ancient settlements of Nida, Alksnynė etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development (housing) • High impact research or monitoring 	
Maritime cultural heritage (fishing techniques at sea and in the lagoon, ice-knocking fishery of smelts, flat-bottomed boats, navigation in the waters, waterways, marinas, weathervanes, amber fishing and related navigation) and underwater cultural heritage ⁵²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing and exploitation of aquatic resources • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographics • Invasive freshwater and marine species 	 
Traditional crafts and arts (tradition of building flat-bottomed boats, production and decoration of distinctive weathervanes used since the middle of the 19 th century, production of wooden burial markers in authentic shapes, preserved in Nida Old Cemetery, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Ritual, spiritual, religious and associative links with heritage • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographics 	

52 The assessment of the state of change of the attribute “Marine cultural heritage” was carried out in two aspects. The first arrow indicates the state of the heritage of the waterways, quays and piers, lighthouses, and the second arrow indicates the state of conservation of fishing techniques, flat-bottomed boats, ice-bottomed sturgeon fishing, weathervanes and other cultural heritage.

<p>Ethnographic elements of the fishermen's lifestyle and folklore (the Curonian language, songs, fishing (catching smelts, vimba), the tradition of catching crows, drying and smoking of fish, net weaving and handling, typical of the 15th and 19th centuries in the coastal area)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing and exploitation of aquatic resources • Ritual, spiritual, religious and associative links with heritage • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographics 	
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TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Heritage of traditional architecture – old wooden fishermen's houses and their decoration. Most of the remaining culturally valuable buildings on the Curonian Spit are fishermen's houses built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Originally wooden, they were constructed from carved pine planks and covered with thatch or reeds. In the 1920s–1930s, many were thoroughly repaired, enlarged, or rebuilt to meet changing living conditions⁵³. The houses were always built near the lagoon, therefore natural processes, such as ice drifts, caused additional damage, especially in Nida, severely affecting some houses. Consequently, many ethnographic homesteads seen today have been restored or reconstructed based on historical sources, ensuring authenticity. Houses built after 1944 are considered traditional architecture (replicas) if their materials, style, colors, volumes, and decorative elements replicate earlier ethno-architectural examples.

Of the 1,058 buildings, 118 are fully in the style characteristic of the Curonian Spit, and 531 incorporate elements typical of that style⁵⁴. This represents about 40% of the total number of buildings, so it can be said that the characteristic architectural identity of the property has been preserved, but there is still a risk of losing it through inappropriate reconstruction. There is a tendency to break with traditional construction techniques and materials when reconstructing buildings. Often new buildings are classified as ethno-architecture if they express the architectural forms and materials characteristic of the region or locality and if they use traditional building techniques, but it is very important to avoid that not every new building is classified as preserving or continuing the ethno-architectural tradition.

The heritage of the traditional architecture (the value of cultural heritage sites, the values of cultural reserves) shall be protected taking into account the attributes of the OUV of the Curonian Spit and the values of cultural heritage site, in accordance with the requirements of the architectural and homestead planning traditions of the ethnographic region as laid down in the regulations of the CSNP, in accordance with the decisions of the general and special territorial planning documents, and the regulations laid down. It should be noted that this provision was adopted as early as 2002, with the adoption of the Regulations of the CSNP, and has been transposed into the regulations of the CSNP, adopted on 9 September 2024. Prior to 2002, the requirements for the traditional homestead and the management of its

⁵³ Curonian Spit Nomination File <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>;

⁵⁴ An inventory of buildings in the Curonian Spit, carried out by researchers from the University of Tübingen. Available online at: <https://kurische-nehmung.net/en/kulturerbe/1/>. International Scientific Conference "Shared Heritage – Shared Knowledge: the Cultural Landscape of the Curonian Spit Past and Present", 2020. The conference is dedicated to the World Heritage Year in Lithuania and the 20th anniversary of the inscription of the Curonian Spit in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

surroundings were laid down in the planning scheme (master plan) approved in 1994, which placed considerable emphasis on the maintenance of the traditional features of fishermen's villages.

Heritage of professional architecture – buildings and their decoration (including lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas, resort infrastructure) built in the 19th century and early 20th century. It is difficult to make a general assessment of the state of the professional architecture heritage, as some objects are in an improving state, some need renovation and others need restoration.

In Curonian Spit, about 85% of historic villas have been renovated by public and private efforts, about 10% are being renovated and up to 5% are still awaiting renovation. In 2024, the Municipality of Neringa adopted a description of the procedure for the partial financing of works for the management of cultural heritage structures and the valuable elements of their surroundings and started partial financing since 2019⁵⁵.

The condition of the historic schools is considered good, as the former building of Preila school (unique number 15924), which is the site of Preila branch of Neringa Municipality Viktoras Miliūnas Public Library, and the old building of Juodkrantė school (unique number 29873), which is the site of Liudvikas Rėza Cultural Centre, have both been restored.

Archaeological surveys of Nida Lighthouse Building Complex (unique number 41559) (hereinafter – Complex) have been carried out in 2024 and preliminary architectural proposals have been drawn up for the foundation of Nida Old Lighthouse. On the basis of the above, in 2026 it is planned to commence the design works for the Complex, architectural, historical and additional archaeological exploratory studies of the structures, and to refine the attributes of the Complex. The refinement of the attributes is necessary for the design and management of the Complex and its adaptation to public use. The condition of Pervalka Lighthouse (unique number 21974) is poor: the lighthouse tower needs conservation and restoration of the metal structures, strengthening of the island on which the lighthouse stands and technical access solutions. The technical condition of Neringa lighthouses must be monitored on a continuous basis.

The condition of the historic churches varies: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Nida (unique number 16011) is in good condition, but the church in Juodkrante (unique number 16009) needs detailed studies of the building, as there are suspicions of cracks in the foundations or other possible defects.

In Juodkrantė, the planning of the marina for the passenger ship harbour aims at the restoration of the old passenger ship harbour building on the former site identified by the studies. Nida harbour building was built in 1976, designed by the architect Alfredas Paulauskas, and was restored and renovated a few years ago, and was included in the Cultural Heritage Register (2013). The situation is worst in Alksnynė, where the historic lagoon marina is completely dilapidated.

In Smiltynė, the condition of the buildings of professional architecture has considerably improved: the Smiltynė Kurhaus has been completely reconstructed, and other historic villas and buildings are being restored and repaired. The old inn (“Smėlio karčema”) and the Smiltynė Beach Hall (Strandhalle) could be restored on the basis of historical data. The condition of the

55 Partial funding of Klaipėda City Municipality for the management of the Protected Cultural Heritage Sites. Available online at: <https://www.klaipeda.lt/lt/administracija/kulturos-paveldas/tvarkybos-darbu-dalinis-finansavimas/3812>

Nerija Fort in Koppalis (in which the Lithuanian Maritime Museum is established) is good, with no significant changes (DCH 2023, the site survey data⁵⁶).

Professional architecture covers not only individual buildings but also the whole of resort architecture, from villas and kurhauses to pavilions, trail networks, ancient greenery and small architectural elements. Not all of these elements have survived. More research is needed to reveal the structural links (e.g. the path networks in Smiltynė and Juodkrantė), to update them, and to implement modern solutions that are compatible with authenticity. Historical research should be carried out on the greenery of public spaces (streets, piers, promenades, harbours, etc.), which create an added architectural and aesthetic value of the area.

Sand-buried and other archaeological heritage (artefacts and cultural phenomena associated with the post road, 16th-19th century buried fishermen villages, ancient settlements of Nida, Alksnynė and others). The history of the deserted villages is scarce. Although it is assumed where the settlements were abandoned, there is a lack of more detailed information on how many and what objects are hidden by the sand layers. Historical and literary sources suggest that the residents partially dismantled their houses when fleeing the abandoned villages, but that the foundations of the buildings and the graves of the people may have remained abandoned. Although the specific archaeological debate on the study of deserted villages and their problems is not widely known, such research could become an important task for future archaeologists. It should be noted that the exact location of the sites of the abandoned villages in the context of destructive research is limited by the geological conditions and the conservation regime of the area. Archaeological investigations can be carried out using the latest technologies that do not damage nature.

Historical archaeology in the Curonian Spit also lacks data as compared to other fields of archaeology. So far, the periphery of settlements, especially along the lagoon, has been the main focus of research, while the central parts have been less studied. Challenges arise from confrontations with site owners, as some archaeological sites lack permission from the owners. The archaeology of the Curonian Spit is also hampered by the regulation of archaeological research in Lithuania. According to the Heritage Management Regulation of the Republic of Lithuania⁵⁷, an archaeological layer is only considered to be a cultural layer formed before 1800. This formally means that finds from the 19th century and later periods can be considered as uninformative or not collected at all.⁵⁸

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Maritime cultural heritage (fishing techniques in the sea and in the lagoon, ice-knocking fishery of smelts, flat-bottomed boats, navigation in the waters, waterways, marinas, weathervanes, amber fishing and related navigation) and underwater cultural heritage. Ice fishing for smelts is one of the most interesting fishing traditions in the Curonian Spit. This identity-enhancing fishing method is creatively presented during the annual festival “Stintapūkis” (The Fish-bone) and included in other events and celebrations. The latter tradition may be threatened with extinction in the future for two reasons. Firstly, climate change projections, depending on the chosen climate change scenario (RCP4.5–RCP8.5), show that average annual temperatures will rise in 2100, with an increase in frequency and

56 Inspection report of the cultural heritage site of Smiltynė settlement, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, Klaipėda Territorial Division, Chief Specialist Laisvūnas Kavaliauskas, 12 March 2024, Chief Specialist Gintarė Plauškaitė.

57 Heritage Management Regulation of the Republic of Lithuania. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.275922/asr>

58 Žigeu, I., “Detectives of Sand and Waters in the Curonian Spit”, Culture Almanac “Dore”, 2024, Druka.

precipitation⁵⁹. The annual decrease in the freezing of the Curonian Lagoon or absence of freezing may have a direct impact on the sturgeon fishery and the associated tradition of ice-breaking. Another factor affecting this tradition is the declining number of fishermen promoting this fishing method and the transfer of the practical knowledge of this craft to the younger generation⁶⁰.

In addition, on 17 January 2023, a decree of the Minister of Environment, according to which the use of certain commercial fishing gears shall no longer be allowed in the Curonian Lagoon, and the number of fishing gears allowed to be used will decrease came into force. These measures are aimed at improving the status of sturgeon, goby, perch, salmon, sea bream and eel stocks in the Curonian Lagoon, but it should be noted that these changes have already affected, and will continue to affect in 2024, the enterprises engaged in commercial fishing (46 enterprises registered in the Curonian Spit). As compensation for new investments and loss of income is foreseen, it is expected that the number of fishing enterprises in the Curonian Spit will significantly decrease or they will close down their business completely. However, it is important to note that since the ban came into force, public interest in the fishing tradition in the Curonian Lagoon has increased and some local fishing businesses have shifted their activities in the direction of maintaining and promoting fishing traditions.

Modern water transport culture is mainly developed by private business, with the Lithuanian Sailors' Union, non-governmental organisations, and the initiatives of the municipalities of Neringa and Klaipėda actively contributing to its promotion. The increase in short-term and long-term moorings in the Port of Nida⁶¹ shows that there is a growing shortage of marina infrastructure. For more information on the state of the waterways, see Chapter 5, Section 2 (5.2.2.).

The underwater cultural heritage of the Curonian Spit includes sites recorded in both the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea. The above date from the Late Palaeolithic period (about 10,000 years BC) to the 20th century. According to the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, only objects older than 100 years are considered to be underwater cultural heritage, and the recording of ships from the early 20th century is complicated by legal constraints. More than 400 Neolithic artefacts found in Juodkrantė in the 19th century, known as the Amber Hoard, and the spectacular remnants of a relict forest in the Baltic Sea at Juodkrantė, the stumps of pine trees (*Pinus sylvestris*), dated to around 10,000 years old, discovered at a depth of about 27 m in water, 3.5 km from the shoreline (outside the property), which are evidence of the changing of the old landscape are among the most significant finds. In the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea, shipwrecks dating from the Middle Ages to the 20th century have also been found. Deliberate sinking of ships with metal ships

59 In 2024, the Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) tool was applied to the Curonian Spit for the first time in Lithuania to systematically assess the vulnerability of the OUV to climate change impacts. After applying the typical scenario RCP8.5 of the Fifth Climate Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP5) of the World Climate Research Programme and using a standard list of climate indicators, it was found that the following indicators will have the greatest impact on the heritage of the Curonian Spit by 2070: temperature trend, coastal erosion and intense precipitation events.

60 Study on the State of Conservation and Updating of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Possibilities for Improving It, Final Report. <https://www.kulturostyrimai.lt/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NKP-tyrimo-galutine-ataskaita-12-08-Final.pdf>. "For some properties, the obstacles to updating activities were very specific. For example, the experiential educational programmes on ice sturgeon fishing have not been implemented due to the unfrozen lagoon, the absence of educators and legal regulatory obstacles (not all fishermen familiar with this tradition are licensed as ice sturgeon fishing is considered to be a commercial fishery).

61 According to the data of the Nida Culture and Tourism Information Centre "Agila", 1873 vessels were moored in Nida Port for short-term stays in 2024 and 1420 in 2023; 125 long-term contracts for the storage of vessels in 2024 and 120 in 2023 were concluded.

being launched here before 1970 in the Bay of the Ice Cape, including wooden structures possibly more than 100 years old, has been documented.

Currently, the locations of underwater heritage sites are listed in the Register of Cultural Heritage Properties and in the Master Plan of KSS. However, the Master Plan only covers sites in the northern part of the Curonian Spit in the Baltic Sea. While the Special Plan of the CSNP does not indicate underwater heritage locations in the southern part of the Curonian Lagoon, these sites are documented in scientific sources. This discrepancy highlights gaps in legal documents and registers and underscores the need for systematic documentation, assessment, and formalisation to ensure protection and integration into heritage planning.

Traditional crafts and arts (the tradition of building flat-bottomed boats, the production and decoration of the distinctive weathervanes used since the middle of the 19th century, the production of wooden burial markers in authentic shapes, preserved in old cemeteries, etc.). At national level, traditional culture is protected by legal, administrative and financial means. The implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Lithuania falls within the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture (hereinafter – MoC).

In order to anchor the status of intangible cultural heritage elements, ensure their protection, dissemination and continuity, following the most important work on the development of the methodology and other preparatory works, the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Lithuania was launched in 2017, and it is updated with new elements every year. The following elements reflecting the lifestyle and folklore of fishermen of the Curonian Spit have been added to the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage⁶²: production of Curonian Lagoon boat's weathervanes (2019), Delmonai of Lithuania Minor (2019.), the Lithuanian singing tradition (2020), Ice-knocking fishing for smelts (2020), Amber fishing in the Lithuanian seaside (2023), Fishing tradition in the Curonian Lagoon (2024).

During popular events in the Curonian Spit ("Stintapūkis" (The Fish-Bone), "Žiobrinės", Old Craft Festivals, Folklore Festivals, etc.), fishermen demonstrate gear-making and net-knitting techniques, share their experience with the participants of the festivals, and food companies present fish processing techniques and various dishes. The main custodians of traditional fishing in the Curonian Lagoon are fishermen of the Curonian Lagoon who have quotas for fishing, their families, the communities of the Pomeranian population, and the cultural institutions of the Pomeranian region. Individuals and companies involved in fishing, fish processing and marketing, organised in associations on the western and eastern shores of the lagoon, take care of the preservation of an important source of livelihood for the communities of the coastal area, develop local businesses, and contribute to the development of cultural tourism and recreation.

Ethnographic elements of the fishermen's lifestyle and folklore (the Curonian language, songs, fishing (catching smelt, vimba), the tradition of catching crows, the drying and smoking of fish typical of the 15th century and 19th century in the maritime coastal region, the weaving and handling of nets). Documenting intangible heritage, especially those that are endangered or have already disappeared, is essential in order to pass on to future generations their qualities and their historical and identity-forming significance. The Curonian Spit History Museum has almost 9,000 exhibits, some of which are particularly important for the preservation and documentation of intangible cultural heritage. However, other properties (e.g. the domestic-historical archive) are not stored in appropriate conditions and are kept in warehouse-type and garage-type premises that do not meet the requirements




62 List of properties: <https://savadas.lnkc.lt/lt/vertybes/vertybiu-sarasas/?page=2>

for the protection of museum objects.⁶³ It is appropriate to draw up a disaster and emergency plan for the conservation of movable museum objects. The digitisation of tangible and intangible heritage contributes to preservation, accessibility and dissemination.

3.1.5. Traditions, spirituality and local lifestyle shaped by different historical periods (Value 5)

The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit is inseparable from the various historical periods and the communities that have lived there – curonians, artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers. The exceptional geographical and geopolitical location and the aesthetic significance of the area have not only shaped the fishermen’s lifestyle, but have also given the area a distinctive cultural identity.

Table 3.5: Additional factors and changes that may affect the traditions, spirituality and local way of life (Value 5) shaped by different historical periods

Attribute	Additional factors likely to have an impact	Observed change ⁶⁴ since inscription on the List
Socio-cultural traditions, spirituality and social perception shaped by fishermen, later, artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Visitor information and recreational infrastructure • Fishing and exploitation of aquatic resources • Ritual, spiritual, religious and other associative links with heritage • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographic changes 	
Harmonious recreational activities and cultural leisure traditions developed since 19 th century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development • Visitor accommodation and related infrastructure • Land transport infrastructure • Water transport infrastructure • Fishing and use of water resources • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge 	
Cultural memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban development • Fishing and exploitation of water resources • Ritual, spiritual, religious and other associative links with heritage • Changes in traditional lifestyles and knowledge 	

⁶³ Investment project “Overcoming of the Nida Lighthouse Complex (Taikos g. 10A)”, 2022, promoter Public Institution PRIC, customer Budgetary Institution Neringa Museums.

⁶⁴ Assessment of the change since the inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000 at the scientific workshop “Climate Vulnerability Index Assessment for the Curonian Spit” in 2024, Available online at: https://lrkm.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1742294533/8897/HeronEtAl_2025_CVI-CuronianSpit.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in local community identity, social cohesion and demographic changes 	
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Socio-cultural traditions, spirituality and social perceptions shaped by fishermen, later, artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers. Research, which began in the 19th century, continues to this day. According to the inventory of scientific research conducted by the CSNPA, several hundred different scientific studies have been carried out in the area since establishment of the CSNP in 1991. It should be noted that research is carried out as a part of projects or commissions from various Lithuanian and foreign institutions, but the findings of these researches are only fragmentarily communicated to the specialists working in the property. In addition, the number and range of research disciplines is very large and requires appropriate expertise, and the number and knowledge of specialists on the ground is insufficient. Periodic scientific conferences aimed at the academic community would fill these gaps. They could present the most important issues relevant to the monitoring and conservation of the OUV of the Curonian Spit, and plan targeted research to record the status of the OUV.

Artists are still moving to the Spit to live. Various artists' residences are thriving, and painting, photography and writing plein air workshops are held annually in Neringa and Smiltynė, continuing the tradition. The Curonian Spit is the home to a growing number of wind-powered sports, creating active recreation opportunities in the area, continuing the historical tradition of sailing. The latter is fostered and taught to the younger generation by the Neringa Sports School.

Harmonious recreational activities and cultural leisure traditions developed since 19th century. 70% of respondents believe that the Curonian Spit should become a slow tourism destination (2025 public survey). 60.8% of permanent residents (N = 125), 62.8% of temporary residents (N = 86) and 77.3% of non-residents (N = 242) think so. The latest survey confirms the data from the 2020 Neringa Visitor Survey, which shows that relaxing on the beaches and nature walks are the most popular leisure activities in Neringa, with around 85% of visitors taking part in these activities.⁶⁵ The findings of the feasibility study (2010)⁶⁶ remain relevant. It highlights that Neringa resort factors have a high potential for health promotion, and that the resources of these factors of Neringa are sufficient for the development and enhancement of resort services. The continuity of the tradition of sustainable recreational activities and cultural recreation established in the 19th century is strongly associated with other attributes, such as the preservation of the heritage of ethnographic or professional architecture, the continuity of cultural memory, and the involvement of the community in the protection and promotion of the heritage of the Curonian Spit.

Cultural memory. The 20th century was a particularly transformative and difficult period for the Curonian Spit autochthonous community. The ethno-demographic transformation caused by the Second World War destroyed a large part of the traditions of population, but thanks to the 13% of the residents of the Curonian Spit^{67, 68} who returned to their homeland,

65 Neringa Visitor Survey Report, 2020.

66 Povilanskas R., Armaitienė A. 2010. "Feasibility Study for the Assessment and Use of Neringa Resort Resources for Health Promotion", Klaipėda University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Recreation and Tourism.

67 Ravaityte-Meyer R., 2019, History of the Curonian Spit from a Different Perspective. Raimonda Ravaityte-Meyer talks to Prof. Dr. Vasilijus Safronovas, Culture Almanac Dorė. Printing house Druka, Klaipėda.

68 Safronovas V., 2018, Migrants and Refugees in the Curonian Spit in the Middle of the 20th Century, Klaipėda University, Institute of History and Archaeology of the Baltic Region, Publishing House of Vilnius Academy of Arts

and the settlers who took an interest in their heritage, some of the intangible cultural heritage was saved. Although the process of transmission of traditions was interrupted when Lithuania regained its independence, the opportunities to know, restore and protect the intangible cultural heritage values of the Curonian Spit have been greatly expanded and appreciated at national and international level.

A significant contribution to the preservation of the cultural memory of the property was made by the historical research and scientific works of Dr. Nijolė Strakauskaitė, Associate Professor of Klaipėda University, Dr. Vasilijus Safronovas and other scientists. Since 2010, the cultural almanac “Dorė”, published by the Viktoras Miliūnas Public Library of Neringa Municipality, has been an important contribution to the historiography of the Curonian Spit. Scientific research, historical recording and its publicity significantly contribute to the strengthening of the identity of the area, the involvement of the contemporary community, and lay the foundation for future research.

In the Curonian Spit, the fostering of traditions and community art is an integral part of the area. Folklore ensembles, folk dance groups and musical groups organise performances, celebrations and festivals. Over 100 residents of Neringa regularly take part in the activities of the art groups.⁶⁹ The festivals “Stintapūkis” (The Fish-Bone), “Žiobrinės”, the international folklore festival “Tek saulužė ant maračių”, Juodkrantė Resort Days and other events promoting ethno-culture combine old traditions with modern culture, involving the local community and visitors.

It should be noted that some initiatives by the public or non-governmental organisations can become significant phenomena uniting institutions, communities and cultural heritage. One of the best examples is the preservation of the Nida Lighthouse Complex (unique number 41559) (hereafter referred to as the “complex”) for community use. When the risk of transferring some of the buildings of the complex to the State Enterprise Turto bankas and eventually privatising them arose, the public and community representatives came together and defended their view that the buildings of the complex should serve for awareness raising, education and the preservation of cultural heritage. Today, the Nida Lighthouse (the old structure, demolished during World War II, which existed from 1874 to 1944, and the new⁷⁰ structure built on its site in 1953), the old staircase leading up to it, the lighthouse-keeper’s house and the other buildings in the complex symbolise not only maritime and navigational heritage. It is one of the most iconic examples of professional architecture in the Curonian Spit, reflecting different historical epochs, and a symbol of unification of contemporary communities, visitors, scientists, cultural representatives and institutions.

The community’s perception and awareness of the living environment lead to the preservation of the unique cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit and its historical-cultural memory. Preservation of the values of the Curonian Spit are influenced by population changes due to migration, the emergence of new closed communities, and other socio-demographic changes (ageing, declining birth rate, out-migration of local young people), which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, Section Five (5.5).

69 Agila, <https://www.kulturossala.lt/lt/nidos-kulturos-ir-turizmo-informacijos-centras-agila/>

70 Investment project “Overcoming of the Nida Lighthouse Complex (Taikos g. 10A)”, 2022, promoter Public Institution PRIC, customer Budgetary Institution Neringa Museums.

CHAPTER IV. THE EXISTING PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

4.1 Legal protection and regulation of activities

The protection of the property and its activities are governed by legislation at international and national level.

International level

Lithuania's international obligations contributing to the conservation of the property and its values	
<p>The World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines for the Implementation set out the basic requirements for the conservation of the property. As a State Party to the Convention, Lithuania needs to ensure an appropriate legal and governance structure to guarantee the protection of the OUV of the property inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List, in compliance with the OG for the Implementation.</p> <p>IMPORTANT. Article 172 of the OG for the Implementation obliges that information relating to the preparation of EIA and SIA documents for the planning and construction of major restoration or new construction works shall be submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee through the UNESCO World Heritage Centre at an early stage of the works, for evaluation, advise and support decision-making.</p>	
Lithuania's duty and responsibility to the world community under the World Heritage Convention	
Identification of cultural and natural heritage values, their conservation, promotion and transmission to future generations	to protect the property as stated in the SOUV and ensuring that national law is not in conflict with the OUV of the property.
Developing a common policy	to give cultural and natural heritage a proper role in community life and to integrate heritage protection into overall planning programmes.
Conducting research	to apply methods to enable a State to address threats to its cultural or natural heritage.
Implementation of various measures	this includes legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, conservation, promotion and restoration of heritage.
Establishment of national or regional centres	to teach and promote the conservation of cultural and natural heritage and supporting scientific research in this field.
Reporting on the state of conservation	to report periodically (every 8 years) to the World Heritage Centre.
Information to the World Heritage Centre	to inform about any plans to implement or authorise major restoration or new construction works on the property that could affect the OUV of the property. Information should be

	provided as early as possible (e.g. before preparation of the main project documents) and before any decisions that would be difficult to reverse are taken.
	to assist in finding appropriate solutions to ensure that the OUV of the property is preserved.
Implementation of the decisions of the World Heritage Committee	to carry out procedures related to the implementation of the World Heritage protection (e.g. HIA)
Cooperation	to develop expert exchange, capacity building, financial, technical support with UNESCO for the conservation of the World Heritage properties.
Awareness raising	to educate the public about the World Heritage properties, make the widest possible public awareness of their OUV.

EU Birds and Habitats Directives for the protection of important natural properties	
Lithuania's duties and responsibilities under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives	
Designation of the European ecological network Natura 2000 for the conservation of natural values	The CSNP falls within the Important Bird Area (hereinafter - IBA) CSNP LTKLAB001 and a part of the IBA Curonian Lagoon LTKLAB010 CSNP falls within the Habitat Conservation Important Site (HCS) Curonian Spit LTNER0005, part of the property falls within the HCS Curonian Lagoon LTSIU0012

Other conventions	
The UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage protects underwater cultural heritage in its place of origin (<i>in situ</i>) and prevents its commercial exploitation. It establishes the principles of cooperation between States Parties, rules for research and conservation of the underwater heritage	In the Curonian Spit, 4 underwater heritage sites have been registered in the Register of Immovable Cultural Properties: 3 in Neringa Municipality and 1 in Klaipėda Municipality.
Helsinki Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Basin	obliges Member States to protect the Baltic Sea ecosystem, prevent pollution and preserve biodiversity
	regulates the protection of the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea coastal waters from pollution from land-based sources, shipping, agriculture and other activities
	promotes integrated coastal zone management to conserve natural habitats and biological resources

National level. Legislation and spatial planning documents at national level are also important for the protection of the Curonian Spit. According to the LPA, the CSNP is a complex protected area where the LPA and other laws and regulations implementing them apply.

The laws and regulations directly address the conservation of the property	
Law on Protected Areas	Regulates social relations in protected areas, the legal basis for protection, management and control, the establishment of protected areas of international importance, including the European ecological network Natura 2000, and activities in them; it establishes the objectives for the establishment of national parks, and regulates activities in them, including construction.
Law on Special Conditions of Land Use	Sets out restrictions and prohibitions on economic activities. Ensures the protection of the CSNP, its reserves and sanctuaries, natural and cultural heritage properties (including cultural heritage objects and sites, their protection zones), natural resources.
Law on the Protection of Immovable Cultural Heritage	Establishes the legal framework for the recording, preservation and management of immovable cultural heritage, the supervision of compliance with heritage protection requirements, and the monitoring of the condition of cultural heritage objects.
Regulations of the Curonian Spit National Park	Defines the objectives of the establishment of the CSNP, its outstanding value, the requirements based on the traditions of architectural and homestead planning of the Curonian Spit peninsula of the Lesser Lithuania ethnographic region, and the peculiarities of the organisation of its management, protection and management.
Law on the Principles of the State Safeguarding of Ethnic Culture	Establishes the general framework for the state safeguarding of Lithuanian ethnic culture, measures and conditions for the protection, continuity, development and enrichment of ethnic culture. The Law aims at preserving the heritage of ethnic culture, ensuring the continuity of living traditions, preserving the uniqueness of the traditions of ethnographic regions, preserving the cognition, recording and transmission of traditions of ethnographic regions, promoting the expression of the ethnic culture living in the natural environment, etc.
Laws regulating the use of land, natural resources	
Law on Forests	Regulates the restoration, protection and use of forests and creates legal prerequisites for managing forests in accordance with the principles of sustainable and balanced forestry, ensuring the rational use of forest resources, preserving biodiversity, forest productivity, landscape stability and environmental quality, and the ability to perform ecological, economic and social functions now and in the future, without damaging other ecosystems.
Law on Land	Regulates the ownership, management and use of land, as well as the management and administration of land on the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, its exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf of the Baltic Sea. According to the law, land relations shall be regulated in such a way as to enable the

	satisfaction of the needs of the society, natural persons and legal entities for the rational use of land, the pursuit of economic activities while preserving and improving the natural environment, the natural and cultural heritage, and the protection of the rights of ownership, management and use of land.
IMPORTANT. According to the Law on Land, all the land and the sea area of the CSNP is the exclusive property of the Republic of Lithuania. The land of the Curonian Spit is held in trust by the municipalities of Neringa and Klaipėda City. The formed state forest land plots are managed by the SFE, and some of the unformed plots are managed by the National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture.	
Law on the Coastal Zone	Defines the objectives of the coastal zone, its components, the protection and use of the coastal landscape land and sea area, the need to provide for coastal management measures to preserve or restore important or characteristic features of the coast.
Laws regulating the processes	
Law on Territorial Planning	Regulates the territorial planning process.
IMPORTANT. According to the provisions of the Law on Territorial Planning, the solutions of the special spatial planning documents at the state level are binding for the preparation of the lower-level spatial planning documents. Lower-level territorial planning documents prepared in the Curonian Spit and the measures for the use, management and/or protection of the territory set out therein must be in line with the CSNP Management Plan (the CSNP Management Plan has a higher legal force than municipal or local level territorial planning documents).	
Law on Construction	Regulates the construction of buildings. According to the law, building permits for the construction of new special and non-extraordinary buildings in the coastal zone are issued by the mayor of the municipality or by a civil servant of the municipal administration authorised by him. The law provides for the obligation to verify the legality of building permits issued in the land part of the coastal zone in all cases, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on State Supervision of Spatial Planning and Construction.
Law on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Regulates the process of EIA, defines the types of planned economic activities and the EIA, screening and significance processes for Natura 2000 sites.
IMPORTANT. Lithuania is committed to preserving the values of the Curonian Spit as recorded in the nomination file and to ensuring that national legislation is formulated in such a way that it does not prejudice the OUV of the property. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and EIA processes, which are enshrined in the national legal framework, help to avoid potentially significant adverse effects on the OUV of the property.	
Laws, regulations and other legal acts defining the competences of authorities	
Law on Local Self-Government	Establishes the local self-government municipal institutions and their competences, functions, the status of the mayor of a municipality, the status of a member of a municipal council, and the framework for the economic and financial activities of municipalities.

Regulations of the CSNPA	Regulates the activities of the CSNPA: defines the scope of its activities, types of activities, objectives and functions, rights and obligations, structure and organisation of its activities.
Articles of Association of the SFE	Defines the objectives and types of activities, functions, management, etc. of the enterprise.

A list of the main laws and regulations of the Republic of Lithuania, which are used for the activities in the Curonian Spit, is provided in Annex 4.

History of protection. The Curonian Spit Landscape Reserve was established in 1960 to preserve the unique landscape, and a special regime was established in 1966. In 1976, the Curonian Spit State Forest Park was established. In 1991, the CSNP was established with the aim of preserving Lithuania's most valuable natural and cultural seaside landscape complex, with a unique coppice ridge in Europe, as well as its ethno-cultural heritage. In 1994, the first planning scheme of the CSNP was approved (Government Resolution No. 1269 of 19 December "On the Planning Scheme (Master Plan) of the Curonian Spit National Park").

In 2001, the resort status was granted to Neringa in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Administrative Units of the Territory and Their Boundaries. The granting of this status provides a basis for allocating additional financial resources for the implementation of territorial maintenance and management measures. At the same time, it necessitates ensuring a balanced reconciliation of territorial conservation priorities with visitation and recreational use objectives.

The main territorial planning documents applicable to the preservation and management of the Curonian Spit and its values.

Comprehensive Plan of the Republic of Lithuania (29 September 2021)	The need to ensure the requirements for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of the Lithuanian World Heritage properties, to preserve and maintain the OUV, authenticity and integrity, and to preserve the values for present and future generations. Priority shall be given to the protection of the attributes identified in the SOUV. It points out that it is necessary: to carry out integral heritage management and conservation of the property, with adequate priority state policy, public administration and funding attention to the UNESCO World Heritage properties in Lithuania; to apply advanced technologies and methods for the protection of the World Heritage properties against climate change; to protect the underwater archaeological artefacts found in the Curonian Spit's coastal waters; and to exploit the scientific potential generated by the network of Centres of Competence for Cultural Heritage.
Boundary Plan of the CSNP and its Zones (2010)	Approves the boundaries of the CSNP and its functional priority zones and sets the objectives of the conservation functional priority zones.
Special Management plan for CSNP (2012)	Defines the use, management and protection measures necessary for the conservation, restoration and rational use of the territories, the preservation of natural and cultural values, the

	<p>landscape and biodiversity, and the organisation of recreation, especially cognitive tourism. The conceptual provisions of this plan are in line with sustainable development and aim at ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance with the requirements for the protection of the property, giving priority to the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage; - Continuity of the CSNP planning experience, adoption and development of advanced ideas acceptable in the Curonian Spit.
<p>Master Plans of Neringa (21 September 2012) and Klaipėda City (30 September 2021)</p>	<p>Set the directions for the protection and development of the Curonian Spit at municipal level. Detailed plans may be drawn up for urbanised and urbanising areas identified in the master plans.</p>
<p>Special territorial planning documents (e.g. forest management schemes, engineering infrastructure development plans) are prepared to determine the use, management and/or protection measures for certain areas required for certain activities.</p>	
<p>All planning documents prepared for the Curonian Spit shall ensure the conservation of the attributes identified in the SOUV of the Curonian Spit</p>	

A list of **the main national and municipal strategic planning documents** is provided in Annex 4.

According to the Boundary Plan of the CSNP approved by the Resolution No XI-1248 of the Seimas of 22 December 2010 “On the Approval of the Boundary Plan of the CSNP and its Zones”, the landscape and biodiversity, as well as the natural and cultural heritage values are protected in the Grobštas Nature Reserve (276.87 ha) and Nagliai (1669.01 ha) Nature Reserve, and in the 14 Nature Reserves:

- 5 landscape reserves: Alksnynė, Garniai Hill, Karvaičiai, Parnidis and Hill of Witches;
- 3 geomorphological reserves: Angys, Hagen Ridge and Urbas Hill;
- 1 Neringa thalassological (marine) reserve;
- 1 Gintaras Bay historical reserve;
- 5 urban reserves: Juodkrantė, Nida, Pervalka, Preila and Smiltynė.⁷¹

According to the data of the State Cadastre of Protected Territories, the CSNP contains the following natural monuments (the list of natural monuments was updated by Order No D1-184 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 14 June 2022 “On the Declaring the Protected Objects of Natural Heritage and Approving the Boundary Maps of Protected Objects of Natural Heritage”):

- 10 geomorphological natural monuments: Hill of Witches, Nagliai Cape, Vingis Dune, Lydumas Cape, Agila Dune, Skirpstas Dune, Karvaičiai Dune, Vecekrugas Dune, Angiai Hill, Urbas Hill;
- 1 geological natural monument: Marių mergelis outcrop.

⁷¹ Resolution No XI-1248 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 22 December 2010 “On the Approval of the Boundary Plan of the Curonian Spit National Park and its Zones”.

189 heritage objects in the Curonian Spit (2024) are registered in the Register of Immovable Cultural Properties: 177 objects are located in the territory of Neringa Municipality, 12 objects are located in the territory of Klaipėda City Municipality. They have architectural, urban, archaeological, engineering, sacral, historical, ethno-cultural, underwater, landscape and greenery attributes.

4.2 Competences and responsibilities of the authorities

National level

Policy making authorities	
Seimas	Shapes the policy on protected areas, adopts laws that form the general legal norms regulating the protection and use of the Curonian Spit.
Government	Establishes protected areas, approves schemes for the protected areas system or its parts, other territorial planning documents, and appoints authorities responsible for the protection of UNESCO World Heritage properties in Lithuania.
Ministry of the Environment (MoE)	Formulates the state policy in the field of environmental protection, pollution prevention and EIA, environmental monitoring, biodiversity, landscape, welfare and protection of pets, genetically modified organisms. As responsible for the protection of the Curonian Spit, the MoE prepares and submits to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee periodic reports on the state of conservation of the property, provides information on the implementation of decisions adopted by the Committee and recommendations of the UNESCO advisory bodies, etc.
Ministry of Culture (MoC)	Formulates state policy in the field of protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, organises, coordinates and monitors its implementation, etc.
Ministry of the Economy and Innovation	Formulates, organises, coordinates and monitors the implementation of the national policy on resorts and resort areas.
National advisory bodies	
National Commission for Cultural Heritage	The Commission, which is accountable to the Seimas, is an expert and advisor on issues related to the state policy for the protection of cultural heritage, its implementation, evaluation and improvement.
Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO	Ensures active participation of the Republic of Lithuania in the activities of the UNESCO in the development, evaluation and implementation of programmes in line with the objectives of UNESCO.
ICOMOS Lithuania National Committee	A body of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), advisory body to the World Heritage Committee.

	Assesses whether a World Heritage property is being properly protected and managed.
Authorities implementing the national policy	
State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment (SSPA)	Implements the policy of protected areas, establishes directorates of protected areas, including the CSNP, organises their activities, organises and coordinates the protection and management of protected areas. A representative of the SSPA is assigned the function of National Nature Coordinator.
Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture (DCH)	Implements the national policy for the protection of immovable cultural heritage and movable cultural properties (listed in the Register of Cultural Properties). In the Curonian Spit, these functions are assigned to Klaipėda Territorial Division of the DCH.
Environmental Protection Agency	Coordinates EIA processes, examines EIA documents, adopts screening conclusions on EIA and decisions on the environmental impact of proposed economic activities.
National Cultural Centre	Takes care of the creation and maintenance of the National Inventory.

IMPORTANT. The intangible cultural heritage in Lithuania is taken care of by various institutions and non-governmental organisations: the Lithuanian Folk Artists' Union, the Lithuanian Society of Regional Studies, the Lithuanian Ethnic Culture Society, the Association of Cultural Centres, the Association of Lithuanian Ethnic Culture Educators, local communities, associations of local residents, etc. Local institutions play an important role in preserving and updating intangible cultural heritage properties, especially those of the ethno-region and those manifested in the form of town festivals. They finance cultural institutions, issue permits for events, can provide the necessary assistance to local communities, mobilise them, shape local identity, etc.⁷²

Local level

Institutions implementing the national policy and administering the property	
Curonian Spit National Park Administration (CSNPA)	Is the Local Authority for the Curonian Spit, responsible for the management, monitoring, conservation and promotion of the Curonian Spit and its OUV. ⁷³ It implements measures for the protection, management and restoration of biodiversity and landscape ecosystems. Together with other institutions, it protects, manages, maintains and monitors the state of conservation of the property. ⁷⁴ In performing the functions of the Site Manager, it closely cooperates with other public entities operating at the local or national level, such

72 Study on the state of preservation and updating of intangible cultural heritage and possibilities for its improvement, Final Report. <https://www.kulturostyrimai.lt/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NKP-tyrimo-galutine-ataskaita-12-08-Final.pdf>

73 Director of the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment, Order No V-111 of the Director of the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment of 26 May 2021.

74 Order No. V-90 of the Director of the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment of 17 September 2024 "On the Approval of the Regulations of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration". Available online at: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1727418354/1686/KNNPD%20nuostatai%202024-09-17%20V-90%20redakcija.pdf>

	as municipalities, entities implementing national policies and their territorial units, academic community (the Nature Research Centre, Klaipėda University Marine Research Institute, Vilnius University, etc.).
Neringa Municipality and Klaipėda City Municipality	<p>These are autonomous, not subordinate to the state authorities, and only laws can establish, modify, expand, narrow or abolish the functions of municipalities. They administer their respective parts of the property, cooperate with the CSNPA in order to achieve the objectives of the CSNP and to preserve the OUV of the property: they coordinate planning documents at the municipal level with the planning documents of the CSNP, contribute to the creation and maintenance of the infrastructure necessary for the protection and visitation of the CSNP.</p> <p>Neringa Municipality is a member of the Organisation of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) and the European Network of Cities & Regions for Cyclists (since 2024).</p>
Councils of municipal NGOs	The municipalities of Neringa and Klaipėda have NGO councils ⁷⁵ . Their aim is to strengthen cooperation between municipal institutions, bodies and NGOs.
State Territorial Planning and Construction Inspectorate (STPCI)	State supervision of territorial planning, state supervision of construction and supervision of land use.
Environmental Protection Department under the Ministry of Environment (EPD)	Carries out state control of environmental protection and preventive activities to ensure that natural and legal persons comply with the requirements of the law and other legal acts regulating environmental protection and the use of natural resources.
State forest Enterprise (SFE)	Implements public policy in the field of management of forests, a part of natural resources entrusted to the Minister of Environment ⁷⁶ . In the Curonian Spit, forest management functions are carried out by Kretinga Regional Unit of the SFE.
Klaipėda Regional Architecture Council (KRAT)	In accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Architecture, performs the functions of an assessor of architectural quality in the fields of architecture, territorial planning, immovable architectural and urban heritage, provides conclusions, proposals, recommendations to the state and municipal institutions and other interested persons.

Other actors in the management of the property

Other public entities of the Lithuanian state at different levels are also involved in the management of the property, such as ministries, institutions subordinated to the local

⁷⁵ 30 November 2023 Decision No T1-272 of the Council of Neringa Municipality; 22 June 2023 Decision No T1-189 of the Council of Klaipėda City Municipality.

⁷⁶ Republic of Lithuania Law on Forests. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.6036/asr>

government, state institutions (e.g. the National Public Health Centre, National Land Service, SFS, etc.). Not only the institutions directly responsible for the management of the property, but also local residents (rights holders), visitors, business representatives, cultural, scientific and other organisations and communities that have some kind of relationship with the property play an important role in the conservation of the Curonian Spit.

Due to the specific nature of the Curonian Spit as a small and closed community, some individuals may have several characteristics of the above groups and represent different roles. Therefore, interactions between all these groups and listening to each other's needs is of paramount importance. This is the only way to ensure equitable and participatory governance of the property, in which the different actors are not in conflict with each other but work towards a common goal.

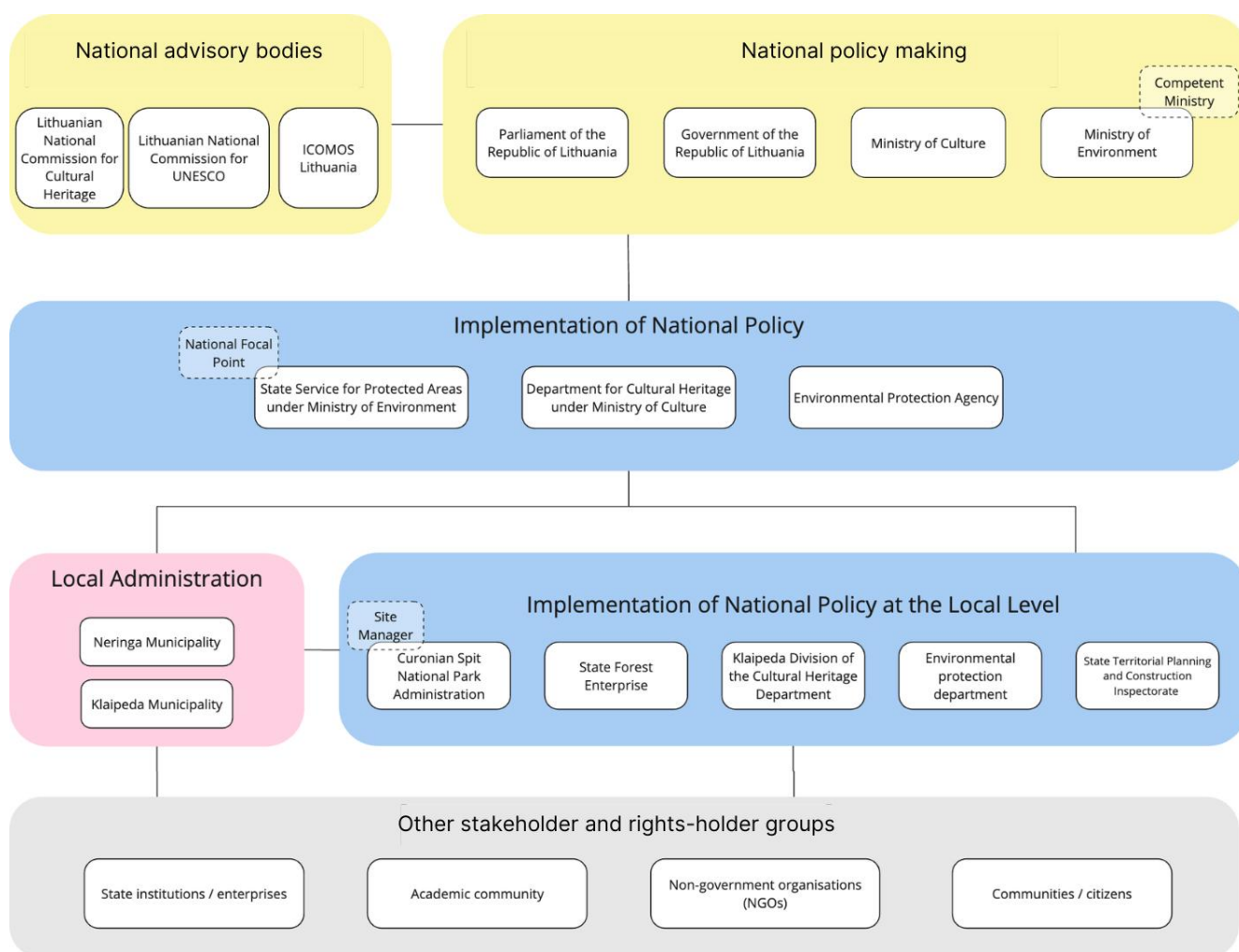
The CSNPA has a collegial body, i.e. the Joint Council of the CSNP⁷⁷, which includes the mayors of Klaipėda and Neringa, a representative of Juodkrantė community, representatives of the arts and culture sector, representatives of the EPD and DCH. The Joint Council discusses and submits proposals on the draft planning scheme (boundaries and management plans); implementation of the planning scheme; implementation of specific conservation and management measures; coordination of actions of managers operating in the protected area; adaptation of the protected area for cognitive tourism and visitor services; nature conservation and heritage education; and other issues related to the protection, management and education of the protected areas to the authority and founder of the protected area.⁷⁸

The existing management system and the main institutions involved in the management of the property are presented in the management scheme (Figure 5). The Management Plan does not change the valid legislation or the management system. The roles of the authorities involved in the management of the Curonian Spit are given in Annex 5.

Figure 5. Management scheme of the Curonian Spit

77 Order No V-79 of the Director of the State Service for Protected Areas of 10 August 2023 "On the Approval of the Composition of the Joint Council of the e Curonian Spit National Park Administration".

78 Order No D1-76/IV-170 of the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 8 February 2021 "On the Approval of the Procedure for the Establishment of the Joint Council of the State Park or the Biosphere Reserve and the Description of its Activities".



— Marks the relationship between different institutions/stakeholders - coordination of actions, communication, cooperation, exchange of information, etc.

4.3. Sources and extent of funding

Given the complex and multi-institutional management system of the Curonian Spit (Figure 5), collecting accurate data on the extent, sources and distribution of funding for the Curonian Spit is a very complex and methodologically challenging task.

Even the level of funding of the CSNPA, which performs the function of a Site Manager, must be considered as indicative, since the CSNPA also performs its functions in the protected areas outside the Curonian Spit. The CSNPA receives partial funding from the State budget of the Republic of Lithuania for the performance of its functions. All other funds of the CSNPA consist of 53.6% from the EU structural funds or other international projects, 30% from the State budget, 12% from paid services and the CSNP visitor's ticket, 2.2% from projects financed at national and local level, and 2.2% from the Neringa Municipality⁷⁹. The function of Site Manager has been formally assigned to the CSNPA following the approval of the new

⁷⁹ Average statistics on the sources of revenue of the CSNPA for the period 2019-2024, data from the Third Cycle of Periodic Report on the Curonian Spit.

Regulations of the CSNPA by 26 May 2021 by Order No V-111 of the Minister of Environment. Until then, the activities related to the UNESCO World Heritage property were carried out to the extent that they were consistent with the functions assigned to the CSNPA. The creation of the post of the Specialist for UNESCO Related Matters in 2022 was introduced as part of a restructuring of the existing staff structure, without changing the overall number of posts. No additional funds were allocated for the post.

The majority of the institutions operating in the Curonian Spit are in one way or another involved in the conservation, management, monitoring and awareness-raising of the property. The municipalities in the property, i.e. Neringa and Klaipėda City, allocate funds from the municipal budget to carry out their autonomous functions in accordance with the Law on Local Government. They are discussed in more detail in Chapter IV, Section 2 (4.2). In 2024, the amount of EUR 15.5 million was allocated to Neringa Municipality for the exercise of its autonomous functions, and the amount of EUR 218 million to Klaipėda City Municipality (only 0.01% of the territory of this municipality is included in the property).

Pursuant to Article 18(1), Article 16(2)(37) of the Republic of Lithuania Law on Local Government, Article 11(1)(5) and Article 12 of the Republic of Lithuania Law on Local Fees and Charges,⁸⁰ the Council of Neringa Municipality establishes the local toll for the permission to enter the state-protected area of Neringa Municipality by motor vehicles (hereinafter – local fee and charge⁸¹). The funds collected contribute on average EUR 2.6 million annually to the budget of Neringa Municipality⁸¹. As the collected funds are included in the general budget of Neringa Municipality, they are used for various municipal functions (e.g. infrastructure maintenance, waste collection, etc.).

The SFE contributes financially to the conservation of the OUV of the Curonian Spit through the implementation of the internal forest management project, as well as other institutions carrying out supervision, management, monitoring or control in the Curonian Spit. However, in the budget planning documents of these institutions, the individual funds contributing to the conservation of the OUV of the Curonian Spit are usually not clearly identified.

4.4 Monitoring system

Monitoring of the state of conservation of the property assesses both its overall condition and the condition of its values and attributes. Environmental monitoring is carried out in accordance with the State Environmental Monitoring Programme. A three-level monitoring system, i.e. state, municipal and economic operators, is applied. This ensures the distribution of tasks between the entities involved in the monitoring process. Different methodologies are used to monitor different attributes, recording the most appropriate indicator of condition.

Environmental monitoring system

State level (under the State Environmental Monitoring Programme (SEMP)). The CSNPA carries out:

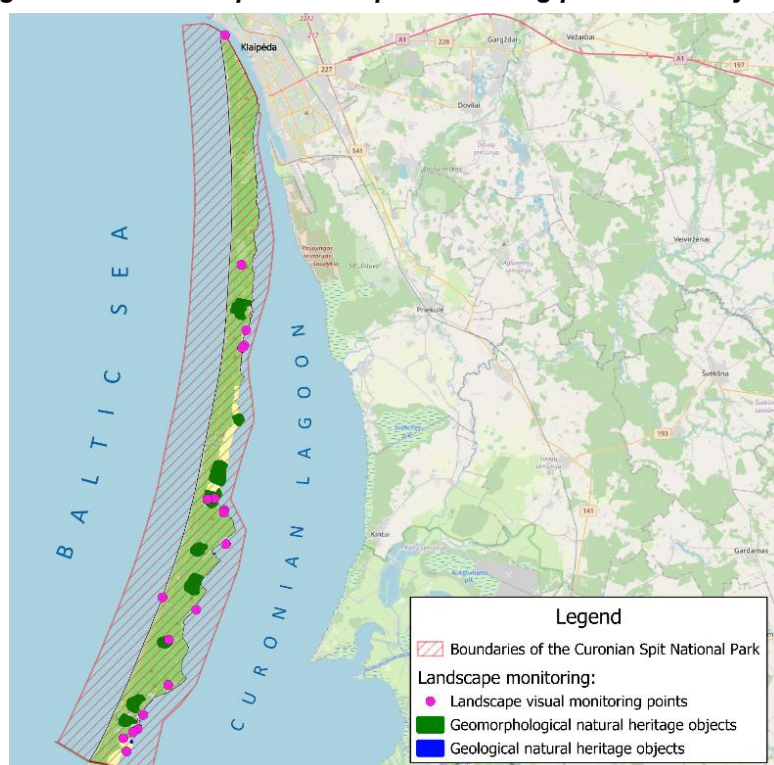
80 Republic of Lithuania Law on Fees and Charges. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.103713?fwid=bkaxm20k>

81 Data from Neringa Municipality Administration, 2019-2023

1. Landscape monitoring. It records the state of the landscape at 19 natural, urban and mixed points (panoramas from viewpoints, management of open spaces important for the protection of landscape and biodiversity, environmentally degrading (abandoned, unused, etc.) structures in the CSNP, natural heritage sites, impact of visitors on ecologically sensitive parts of the CSNP and parts of the CSNP of recreational potential, and parts affected by natural disasters). The monitoring points and objects of the Curonian Spit landscape are shown in Figure 6.

2. Monitoring of wildlife in accordance with the plan for the implementation of the objectives of the SEMP is approved annually. Monitoring of the status, abundance, spatial distribution and other changes in protected animals, plants and habitats. Information on the status of protected species and habitats constitutes the basis for planning and implementing management measures.

Figure 6. Curonian Spit landscape monitoring points and objects



Data: State Cadastre of Protected Areas, Curonian Spit Landscape Monitoring. Compiled by CSNPA

The SEMP involves the EPA, which monitors coastal changes, the Lithuanian Hydrometeorological Service under the MoE, which monitors climate change and hydrological indicators of water bodies.

Municipal level (regulated by the General Regulations on Municipal Environmental Monitoring). Municipalities monitor the ambient air, noise, surface water, groundwater (Neringa Municipality), soil and wildlife (Klaipėda City Municipality).

Economic entity level (in accordance with the environmental monitoring programme of the KSS for 2021-2025, agreed with the EPA and the SSPA). KSSA carries out environmental monitoring of KSS, systematically monitors the indicators of the environment and assesses the state of the environment. The status of the natural environment of KSS shall be periodically

assessed, and the potential impact of the KSS shall be identified, with an assessment of long-term trends. The area of measurement and observation covers not only the water area of KSS, but also its approaches in the Curonian Lagoon and the sea, with 38 sampling points.

Cultural heritage monitoring system

Monitoring is one of the areas of protection of cultural heritage that allows for a timely response to possible negative changes. The physical condition of the wooden heritage and its evolution is continuously recorded, as well as the assessment, summarisation and forecasting of the effects that destroy or damage the attributes⁸². Priority is given to the conservation of the wooden architectural heritage.

The monitoring of immovable cultural heritage objects is carried out in accordance with the Rules for the Monitoring of Immovable Cultural Heritage Objects (30 June 2005 Order No JV-318 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania), and the monitoring of cultural heritage sites is carried out in accordance with the Rules for the Monitoring of Cultural Heritage Areas (6 February 2012 Order No JV-94 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania). The monitoring of immovable cultural heritage objects consists of:

- periodic inspection of cultural heritage sites, observing their condition, its changes and the reasons for the changes;
- periodic recording of the condition of cultural heritage sites and their evolution;
- assessment of the impacts destroying or damaging the valuable elements of cultural heritage objects and their territories and otherwise affecting the condition of the sites;
- summarising and forecasting the condition of cultural heritage sites, their evolution and impact assessment.

DCH	carries out monitoring of cultural heritage sites ⁸³ (annual)
Municipalities	carries out monitoring of individual cultural heritage objects ⁸⁴ (at least once every five years)

In accordance with the Rules for the Monitoring of Cultural Heritage Sites (p. 4): “Monitoring of sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List shall be carried out taking into account the national and international legislation, international obligations of the State of Lithuania, decisions of the World Heritage Committee and recommendations of the World Heritage Centre.” The Curonian Spit is monitored annually.

The condition of the protected immovable (architectural) heritage is also assessed by the CSNPA. It records changes in the facades of the protected object, the condition of the decorative elements, the environment of the object, the type of planting (whether Curonian Spit-specific planting), the amount of hard surfaces in the yard, and the fencing. The

82 Order No JV-30 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 24 January 2008 “On the Approval of the Plan of Measures for the Implementation of the Programme for the Conservation of the Heritage of Wooden Architecture for 2008–2010 and the of the Programme for the Conservation of the Heritage of Wooden Architecture for 2008–2010”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.314110>

83 Order of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 February 2012 “On the Approval of the Rules for the Monitoring of Cultural Heritage Sites”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.418457?jfwid=>

84 Order No JV-318 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 30 June 2005 “On the Approval of the Rules for Monitoring of Objects of Immovable Cultural Heritage”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.259744/IQOnpESiev>

architectural features of fishermen's homesteads, summer houses (villas) characteristic of the Curonian Spit, such as the plan structure, the shapes of buildings and other structures, size (volume), construction products, colours, facade decoration, and decorative elements, are regulated by the Regulations of the CSNP (19 March 1999 Resolution No 308 of the Government (12 July 2023 Resolution No 563 of the Government)).

The CSNPA informs Klaipėda Territorial Division of the DCH about the observed violations of the tangibles of the heritage objects.

CHAPTER V. MANAGEMENT AND USE OF THE CURONIAN SPIT. CURRENT CONDITION

5.1. Protection of the property

In the Lithuanian part of the property, the boundaries coincide with the boundaries of the CSNP and are therefore subject to the **special requirements** laid down in the LPA, the CSNP Regulations, the CSNP Special Management Plan (hereinafter – CSPN Special Plan), which integrate provisions for the preservation of the cultural heritage and the continuity of the cultural landscape and the continuity of architectural traditions in the residential areas. The CSNP Special Plan has a higher legal status than municipal or local territorial planning documents.

According to the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (hereinafter – Hague Convention), the Curonian Spit is included in the list of protected cultural heritage sites. The distinctive symbol of the Hague Convention, namely, the “Blue Shield”, is used to mark sites of outstanding cultural value. The “Blue Shield” ensures that if destroyed or damaged during an armed conflict, the action would amount to a war crime and would be subject to real international criminal responsibility and international prosecution. Three “Blue Shield” marking locations are planned in the Curonian Spit. The marking procedures are organised by the DCH.

The **monitoring** of the **OUV** of the Curonian Spit is generally adequate in its individual parts, but there is a lack of a unified monitoring programme for the OUV of the Curonian Spit, which fully covers the OUV and its attributes in their entirety. There is a lack of individual indicators and methodologies for the assessment of the attributes of the OUV of the property. State landscape monitoring covering panorama and silhouette points of the Curonian Spit is insufficient to monitor potential changes. Additional panorama and silhouette monitoring points from the Curonian Lagoon would be needed to provide full information. Monitoring is carried out by different institutions under different monitoring programmes. Therefore, the processes involved in monitoring the Curonian Spit and submitting periodic reports to the World Heritage Centre on the conservation status of the OUV of the Curonian Spit are complex and time consuming to structure the information.

When considering the factors that may have an impact on the conservation of the OUV of the property, it is appropriate to assess:

- effectiveness of the management system – indicators to measure the effectiveness of the governance of the territory and the adequacy of financial and human resources;

- Nature of governance – indicators to assess the adequacy of the legal framework for heritage conservation, the nature and level of involvement of key managers (transparency of processes), the action plan(s) for heritage promotion, heritage legislation;
- Synergies – indicators showing synergies with other conventions and normative instruments related to culture and biodiversity;
- Contribution to sustainable development – indicators to assess whether the application of the Convention contributes to the promotion of environmental sustainability, inclusive social development and inclusive economic development, peace and security;
- Capacity-building – indicators to assess the effectiveness of, and participation in, capacity-building strategies and programmes.

The assessment of the status of the OUV of the Curonian Spit is a process that needs to be carried out on an ongoing basis with a certain periodicity. Depending on the element and the factor(s) being assessed, this may be done annually or every few years. Due to the multiplicity and specificity of the attributes and the factors affecting them, the monitoring and evaluation of the results must be carried out by specialists in each field. In order to effectively monitor the status of the OUV of the property, it is appropriate to draw up a detailed programme, carried out by different bodies and integrated into a single monitoring system, which integrates indicators and methodologies for assessing the state of conservation of the attributes of OUV.

The CSNPA monitors the state of intangible cultural heritage (monitoring) and records intangible cultural heritage values. However, there is no methodology for monitoring the state of intangible cultural heritage. It would be useful to carry out specific research or studies to assess the state of conservation of some of the attributes (e.g. socio-cultural traditions, spirituality, social perception, cultural memory, etc.).

One of the problems of cultural heritage protection in preserving the OUV of the property is **the lack of financial resources**. Most cultural heritage sites are privately owned, but not all owners of heritage sites have sufficient funds (requiring significant investment) to properly maintain and preserve the protected heritage sites. Financial resources may also be needed due to extreme weather conditions such as strong winds and increasing climatic changes. Financial support for cultural heritage maintenance is available through the DCH, self-government institutions, the EU and various international organisations, but again not all entities can benefit from it due to: 1) various administrative and legal obstacles, complexity of project documentation, 2) complexity of application through the Cultural Heritage e-services information system and project administration, and 3) limited resources to cover the full costs. In general, owners of cultural heritage sites lack knowledge of possible sources of funding and the professionals managing cultural heritage sites do not always have sufficient skills and resources to properly prepare projects and documentation. This makes it difficult for owners to access financial support.

The report of the National Audit Office report⁸⁵ states that: “the problem of overlapping functions between the municipalities involved in the management of UNESCO properties and the DCH has not been resolved. The regulation lacks separation of responsibilities in the processes of construction works in the territory or location of the immovable cultural heritage, management and monitoring of heritage sites. According to the MoC and the DCH, the

⁸⁵ 18 December 2024. Evaluation Report No VRE-5 of the National Audit Office. Management and Safeguarding of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, p. 28.

amendments to the Law on the Protection of Immovable Cultural Heritage should help to solve this problem.”

The Baltic Sea coast is monitored annually because if the protective coastal ridge were destroyed, the area of the sea would increase up to 3 times during heavy storms and up to 5 times during extreme (hurricane) storms. Even a one-year break can lead to significant negative changes. Due to the increased frequency of extreme storms, the coastal damage they cause and the recreational load during the tourist season, the maintenance of the protective coastal ridge requires permanent stable funding.

Measures to preserve or restore the shoreline structure are foreseen in the Coastal Zone Management Programme. Its preparation is organised by the MoE and approved by the Minister of Environment. 21 April 2023 Order No D1-117 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania approves the Coastal Zone Management Programme for the period 2023-2032. The entire coastline of the Curonian Spit is classified as a priority area, taking into account the vulnerability of the Curonian Spit, climate change and the status of the Curonian Spit area. Depending on the state of the protective coastal ridge, each year the MoE allocates state budget or other funds to the maintenance works for the implementation of the coastal management measures set out in the programme.

The maintenance of the coastal defence ridge is based on years of experience and expertise to ensure the continuity of traditions. During the period of its creation and maintenance, the methods and technologies of its management have changed, handwork has been replaced by technology, but the tradition has been continued and only wood from the local Curonian Spit forests, such as Scots pine or mountain pine, has been used for the embankment management works to date. The tradition is in line with recommendations 15/1, 16/3 of the 1992 Helsinki Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Basin (HELCOM), which give preference to the use of embankment management measures based on the principles of imitation of natural analogues and the use of natural materials characteristic of the shoreline to be stabilised. The above principle is also identified in the CSNP Special Plan.

Different entities are involved in the embankment management process: raw material is provided by the SFE where available, the activities are organised and coordinated by the CSNPA, and the embankment management works are carried out by contractors. This fragmentation makes it difficult to take effective decisions, makes embankment management more costly, and can lead to delays and problems. The supplier of the local raw material used for the embankment management measures, i.e. Scots pine and Scots pine, is the SFE, which is not obliged to ensure the supply of this raw material for the embankment management works, and sells it by general auction, where the embankment contractors compete with the biofuel suppliers.

The Curonian Spit may also be affected by a new area of around 100 ha planned for the southern part of the KSS. In this context, on 20 June 2024 the EPA adopted a decision on the impact of the development of the southern part of the KSS, which includes measures to ensure the protection of the Curonian Spit shoreline by anchoring the shoreline from the end of the quay to the Alksniai Cape⁸⁶, and to monitor the condition of the lagoon shoreline on an ongoing basis.

⁸⁶ 20 June 2024 Decision of the Environmental Protection Agency on the impact of the development of the southern part of the Klaipėda State Seaport https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GXoJkk4LD1_hMryazkEWu8IBx7baWtJU/view

No specialist in the municipalities has been assigned to the management, administration or other related functions of the UNESCO World Heritage property. The SSPA and the CSNPA are the only bodies with posts for the management of the property, which makes it difficult to ensure high quality and continuous inter-institutional cooperation. Effective inter-institutional cooperation requires not only agreement on common actions or objectives, but also ongoing communication, information exchange and capacity building. The appointment of specialists in different institutions to coordinate the management of the UNESCO World Heritage property would help to ensure constant communication on the objectives of the managers and on the projects under way. Effective communication and transparency of activities create positive change, build trust, reduce surprises and risks, and contributes to the involvement of the population.

5.2 Sustainable development

The most significant irreversible impact on the landscape can be caused by urban development and the development of the KSS. Urban development in the Curonian Spit is regulated by the CSNP Special Plan. Urban development in the Curonian Spit is determined by:

- 1) tourism and recreation – a constant increase in visitor flows leading to the construction of new temporary accommodation and service facilities (the Curonian Spit is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Lithuania, attracting both local and foreign tourists; the aim is to develop infrastructure and services);
- 2) economic development and investment (the aim is to invest in infrastructure and real estate in Curonian Spit, as the return on investment is high and fast);
- 3) demand for housing (Curonian Spit is a popular location for second homes);
- 4) legal and administrative conditions (legal regulation can enable or even encourage urban development).

During the 2009 advisory mission to the Curonian Spit⁸⁷, international experts stated that new-build housing (mainly apartments) is quite attractive, but it cannot be said that it is of a particularly high quality in comparison to earlier buildings. Moreover, the details and materials used do not create a distinctive sense of place (with the exception of one building in Juodkrantė), and there is no attempt to use eco-friendly or sustainable materials. In some cases, the new buildings do not fit in with the environment of the fishermen's houses (the new resort architecture does not fit in with the original fishermen's houses in the vicinity). In some settlements, the balance between new and old buildings results in the first impression of the area being that of a new resort.

There are still cases of illegal construction in the Curonian Spit. The most frequent illegal constructions are simple structures attached to residential houses, commercial buildings or other structures. This may pose a threat to the OUV of the Curonian Spit. In order to prevent violations, the amendments to the Administrative Offences Code adopted in 2024 increased the penalties for unauthorised (without a building permit) construction of new buildings of all categories and/or unauthorised reconstruction of existing buildings of all categories in the national park, the coastal zone, a cultural heritage site, the territory of a cultural heritage object,

⁸⁷ 2009 Report of the Joint Advisory Mission of ICOMOS (Susan Denyer) and IUCN (Pierre Gulland) to the Curonian Spit (Lithuania)

and their protection zones. Although the responsible authorities are making efforts to prevent these infringements, the problem persists.

Probably the most serious problem that is difficult to solve is the inappropriate use of buildings. There is a growing trend of large holiday complexes and former hotels being converted into private apartments, which reduces the capacity to accommodate and cater for groups of tourists, while the Curonian Spit is gradually becoming a summer home for the residents of big cities. As of 1 January 2024, 276 residential buildings and 830 non-residential buildings (of which 207 are auxiliary farm buildings) were registered in the Real Property Register in the Municipality of Neringa. In terms of use, 270 buildings are registered as recreational buildings. A total of 856 buildings and premises were sold in Neringa Municipality during 2020-2024 (Q1-Q3). In 2023, the highest number of sales was in the recreation and sports group with 77 properties, although this is 21.43% less than in 2022 when 98 properties were sold.

Although the Law on Architecture⁸⁸ provides for clear criteria and assessment tools for architectural quality, their application in Curonian Spit remains fragmented and insufficient. Municipalities do not follow the guidelines, do not approve site-specific criteria, and reconstructions are often transformed into new construction. Decisions are increasingly driven by speed rather than landscape harmony or architectural quality. Assessment processes are becoming shorter, trust in decision-makers is weakening and transparency is decreasing. In order to ensure sustainable development, needs to be guided by the quality criteria and assessment tools set out in the Law on Architecture.

One of the challenges for the property is the intensification of urban development on the eastern shore of the Curonian Lagoon (Klaipėda district). The growing popularity of Dreverna and Svencelė, linked to the increasing offer of recreational and water tourism services, is leading to large-scale real estate development projects. This may increase the number of day visitors to Curonian Spit from the eastern shore of the lagoon and make it more difficult to regulate tourism flows in Curonian Spit, requiring the development of marinas in Curonian Spit.

The acquisition of housing in Neringa by residents of other Lithuanian towns has led to a change in the social structure of Neringa's population, with an increase in the number of residents declaring their place of residence in Curonian Spit. This was caused by the following rights granted to the residents of Neringa: 1) the right to travel free of charge by ferry from Klaipėda to Smiltynė, 2) the exemption from the entrance fee to the territory of the municipality of Neringa when travelling by a private motor vehicle (car). Some of those who have declared their residence in Neringa live here only temporarily during the tourist season, and there is no data on the number of permanent residents of Neringa.

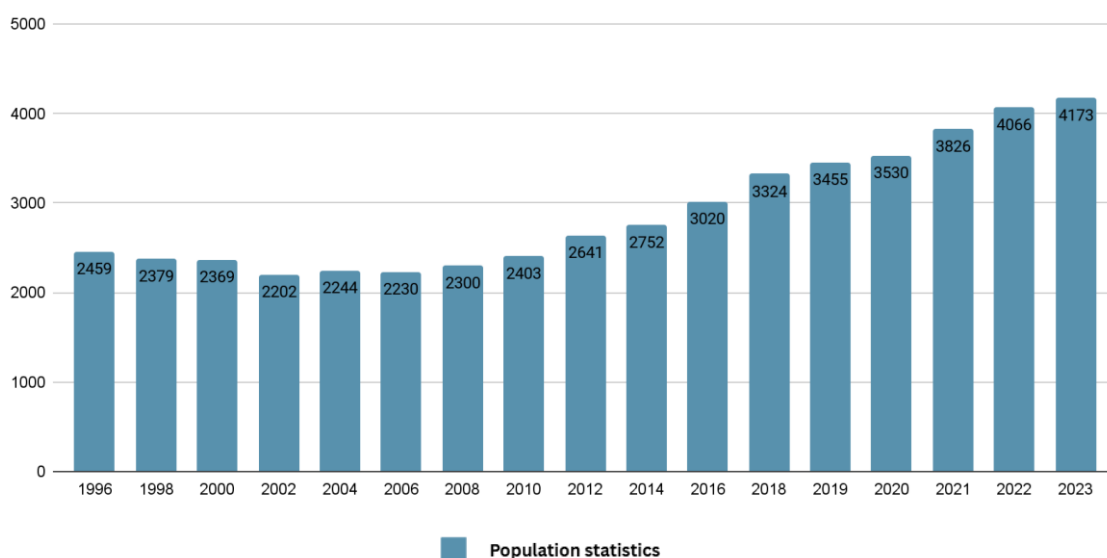
Change in the social structure of the population. The minimum number of residents of Neringa municipality who declared their residence in Neringa was 2160 in 2003 and the maximum number in 2023 – 4173. During this period, the number of permanent residents increased by 69.7%. Neringa is one of the few municipalities in Lithuania where the number of residents who have declared their place of residence has increased.

The increase in the number of residents has been particularly rapid since 2010, when more residents started to declare their permanent residence in Neringa municipality due to the purchase of a (non-first) home. This process started to change the age structure of Neringa's

⁸⁸ Law on Architecture of the Republic of Lithuania. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/3658622050c911e78869ae36ddd5784f/asr>

population: the number of children decreased, the number of people of retirement age increased and the number of people of working age increased slightly. These changes are particularly noticeable between the 2001 and 2011 Census. Between 2001 and 2020, the population grew by 49.8%, with a 60% increase in the number of men in all age groups and a 35.4% increase in the number of women.

Figure 7. Changes in the number of permanent residents in Neringa Source: State Data Agency, 2024.



Note: Only data from Neringa municipality are analysed, as according to the General Population Census of 2021 (and updated in 2023) there are 71 residents living in Smiltynė. There is insufficient data to identify socio-demographic changes. 33 men and 38 women of the 71 residents of Smiltynė are from the local community living at Alksnynė and the Yacht Club.

Life in Neringa through the eyes of youth. According to the Neringa Youth Survey 2024, young people value living in Neringa because of the sense of freedom and peace, and the immediate contact with nature of exceptional beauty. However, it is pointed out that living in Neringa has its disadvantages. Young people mostly emphasised that Neringa has difficult working conditions, housing problem (very high property prices), seasonality impact on different areas of life (work, leisure, family), negative impact of ferries on the rhythm of life, and the lack of recreational activities for local residents. Only 8% (N = 166) of the respondents rated the chances of getting a well-paid job as good or very good, only 17% (N = 165) rated the chances of living in dignity with a decent income as good or very good, and 81% (N = 165) rated the chances of buying a home in Neringa for a young family of Neringa as bad or very bad.

The northern part of the Curonian Spit is adjacent to the KSS, where activities and planned developments may have an impact on the Curonian Lagoon and Curonian Spit ecosystem. The KSS is one of the most important economic entities of Klaipėda region, creating about 58,000 jobs and generating more than 6% of the Lithuanian GDP⁸⁹. At the same time, the economic activities and consequences of the KSSA are often a source of tension and debate between the KSSA, the local government and the communities. An example is the

⁸⁹ Information on the KSS provided by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania. Available online at: <https://sumin.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/vandens-transportas-2/apie-sektoriu-9/>

process of approval of the Comprehensive Plan of the KSS, which has caused considerable controversy in the local communities and the municipality.⁹⁰

However, the changing geopolitical situation and accelerating climate change, the stricter environmental requirements of international organisations and national authorities, and the promotion of a shift towards climate mitigation are leading to a transformation of the development of the KSS towards sustainable development. In 2022, the KSSA developed and started to implement the Green Port concept. In 2024, the KSS was awarded the Environmental Management Certificate (PERS) of the European Seaports Association (ESPO), one of the objectives of which is to ensure compliance with environmental legislation and to minimise the environmental impact. The PERS certificate confirms that KSS can call itself an environmentally friendly port. The PERS certificate is a commitment to long-term sustainable development and to play an active role in reducing environmental impacts. The aim is to ensure that the terminal operates as far as possible in compliance with all environmental legislation^{91,92}. The companies in the KSS operate in accordance with the conditions of their pollution permits, prepare action plans and are subject to monitoring by environmental authorities. The KSSA carries out regular inspections of the port area, eradicates pollution in the port area, and, in the event of pollution, promptly requires the companies of the KSS to stop dust, noise and other negative impacts. The KSSA undertakes sustainability and environmental initiatives with a view to long-term impact reduction and sustainable port development, and coordinates environmental issues with local communities, the public, authorities and other stakeholders, especially when planning new infrastructure projects.

The CSNPA participates in the coordination of the development plans of the KSS, assessing their impact on the Curonian Spit and their compliance with the provisions of the CSNP Special Plan. In any case, the strategic plans and development directions of the KSSA (dredging of the harbour entrance channel, development of the southern part of the harbour, i.e. the construction of a gate at the island Kiaulės nugara, the narrowing of the lagoon and the mechanical fragmentation of the lagoon basin, the formation of new territories, the construction of infrastructure, the production of green hydrogen) have a direct impact on the ecosystem of the Curonian Lagoon and the status of the Curonian Spit. The EIA report indicates that the planned development of the southern part of the KSS will have a direct impact on the shoreline (the shoreline of the Curonian Lagoon mainland – alteration of the shoreline) and an indirect long-term impact (the shoreline of the Curonian Spit, other environmental elements such as the water). Additional mitigation measures are foreseen to reduce/manage the identified impacts. The document identifies the environmental impacts of the development of the KSS:

- Potential erosion of the seabed between the planned southern gate of the port and the Curonian Spit shore;
- Potential debris accumulation processes caused by the turbulent movement of low velocity flow in the water area of the newly planned turning area at the island Kiaulės nugara;
- Potential direct impacts on the Curonian Spit coastline due to changes in flow dynamics (only the construction of the Alksnynė dam will have an impact);
- Possible intensification of the erosion of the shore of the lagoon and the island Kiaulės nugara due to the reduction of water permeability and increased flow velocities

⁹⁰ Available online at: <https://www.atviraklaipeda.lt/2019/12/11/patvirtintas-uosto-bendrasis-planas-papildysime/>

⁹¹ Information on KSS. Available online at: <https://portofklaipeda.lt/bendruomene/aplinkosauga/>

⁹² Port Environmental Management System. Available online at: <https://portofklaipeda.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Klaipedos-uosto-PERS-Aplinkosaugos-ataskaita.pdf>

(especially during high flow periods), increased frequency of waves caused by shipping, increased amplitude of fluctuations in the water level of the lagoon, possible increase in the formation of ice floes, the dredging of the neighbouring area and the construction of hydraulic structures;⁹³

- Potential impacts on the shores of the Curonian Spit and the island Kiaulės nugara due to dredging up to 17 m, the distance of the high depth limit (17 m) from the shoreline, and the construction of hydraulic structures. The intensity of the impact of these works on the shoreline condition will also depend on the terrain of the seabed;
- Possible reduction in water capacity and changes in flow patterns due to the installation of the hydraulic structures and the creation of new land areas in the southern gateway area;⁹⁴
- Possible short-term adverse effects on migratory and wintering birds due to disturbance during dredging, land forming, and quarrying works.⁹⁵

It is therefore very important to make the best decisions for the environment.

5.3. Sustainable tourism

Tourism in the Curonian Spit has a positive impact on the local economy, generating jobs and income for the local population. In 2022, people working in tourism-related activities accounted for 53.6% of all employed people⁹⁶. The economy of the municipality of Neringa is highly dependent on the success of the tourism sector, while at the same time creating potential risks in terms of jobs, incomes and other economic consequences of a decrease in tourist arrivals. Neringa Municipality generates between 11 and 14 million euro annually from tourism (the only decrease was during the pandemic)⁹⁷. Inbound tourism is economically important due to higher spending by foreign tourists.

The predominant **forms of leisure time** in Neringa are relaxing on the beaches and nature walks. This is the activity of about 85% of visitors⁹⁸. The most popular active leisure activities are cycling, jogging and Nordic walking. Other favourite leisure activities include exploring nature, bird watching, fishing, boating, visiting museums and galleries, attending events, rowing/sailing. The Lithuanian Maritime Museum receives more than 660,000 visitors every year⁹⁹. The Curonian Spit offers all the necessary tourism services (sightseeing, accommodation, catering, tourist information) and public tourism infrastructure (sightseeing and cycling trails, information system, public toilets). In the Curonian Spit, tourists and visitors are provided with information (there is the CTIC Agila in Nida, L. Reza Cultural Centre, the CSNP Visitors' Centre with an exposition), and cognitive and special excursions about the Curonian Spit and the OUV.

⁹³ Environmental Impact Assessment Report on the Development of the Southern Part of Klaipėda State Seaport. 2023. Available online at: https://portofklaipeda.lt/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Ataskaita_KVJUD_PAV.pdf, p. 211.

⁹⁴ Ibid, page 212.

⁹⁵ Ibid, page 240.

⁹⁶ State Data Agency. *Number of persons employed in the municipality of Neringa by activity*.

⁹⁷ State Data Agency, *Public Institution Travel Lithuania*, number of tourists (pcs.) x average travel costs (EUR).

⁹⁸ Neringa Visitor Survey Report, 2020.

⁹⁹ Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, 2023.

The progress in the condition of the facilities, environmental order and friendliness for travellers with pets is favourably assessed in Curonian Spit.¹⁰⁰

The CSNPA has set up viewpoints and lookout points (Bear's Head, Great Cormorant and Grey Heron breeding sites, Avikalnis, Agila Dunes, Preila Dune, Vecekrugas Dune, UrbAs Hill, Parnidis Dune) for the visitors of Curonian Spit, for the lovers of cognitive tourism to get acquainted with the localities and the values of CSNP. The CSNP has an outdoor information system: billboards, directional arrows, viewing benches and chairs, resting places, relief benches, etc. Various routes are available.

Every year, the beaches of the Curonian Spit¹⁰¹ are awarded the prestigious Blue Flag (in 2024 the central beaches of Nida, Juodkrantė and Preila). The Blue Flag programme is a voluntary initiative to certify beaches and marinas. It aims to promote sustainable development by focusing on various aspects including environmental education, information dissemination, water quality, environmental management, safety and coastal services. This status has to be re-earned each year.

The scientific literature identifies 5 key **issues in coastal tourism management** that are also relevant to the Curonian Spit: 1) the volatility and seasonality of tourism demand; 2) a fragmented, uncoordinated sector that limits responsiveness; 3) long-term sustainability issues; 4) environmental issues that challenge development potential; and 5) a skills shortage that limits innovation and access to resources.¹⁰²

For the analysis of the tourism flows in the Curonian Spit, the indicator chosen is the number of tourists (e.g. the number of cars, which does not reflect the number of incoming travellers). The analysis of the number of tourists includes people who use the various tourism services, but also accommodation. This analysis does not include visitors who use various tourism services but not accommodation. According to the Republic of Lithuania Law on Tourism, a visitor is a natural person who visits and uses tourism resources and tourism services other than accommodation services. The number of tourists is only known for Neringa municipality accommodation establishments (officially registered)¹⁰³. Only the total number of tourists in accommodation establishments of Klaipėda City Municipality is reported, excluding the number of tourists in Smiltynė. Considering that in 2023 there were 234 accommodation establishments in the Curonian Spit, of which 232 (99.2%) in the municipality of Neringa¹⁰⁴ and 2 (0.8%) in the municipality of Klaipėda (Smiltynė)¹⁰⁵, it has been chosen to assess only the number of tourists in Neringa Municipality.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ In 2024, the Blue Flag was awarded to 3 beaches in Neringa: the central beaches of Nida, Juodkrantė and Preila.

¹⁰² The impact of tourism on coasts: regional aspects of development, 2008.

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/pe_397260_/pe_397260_en.pdf

¹⁰³ "Accommodation establishment" means a unit of a local activity type providing paid short-term accommodation services. Accommodation establishments statistics include (1) legal persons (providing accommodation services according to the following groups in Section I of Revision 2 of the NACE Rev. 2: 55.1 - Hotels and similar temporary accommodation, 55.2 - Holiday and other short-stay accommodation, 55.3 - activities of recreational vehicles, trailer parks and camping sites, (2) natural persons operating on the basis of a business licence (codes 010, 043 according to the "Classification of business licences") and/or a certificate of individual activity and providing tourist accommodation activities (Section I, groups 55.1, 55.2, 55.3 of NACE Rev. 2).

¹⁰⁴ Information from the State Data Agency.

¹⁰⁵ Data from Klaipėda Tourism Information Centre.

Table 4: Tourism capacity.

Year	Number of tourists	Change in number of tourists (%)	Number of tourists per km ²	Population (beginning of the year)	Number of tourists per 1 resident
2013	55847	12.9	621	2.692	21
2014	54719	-2.0	608	2.722	20
2015	57442	5.0	638	2.840	20
2016	59172	3.0	657	2.997	20
2017	61724	4.3	686	3.080	20
2018	76202	23.5	847	3.193	24
2019	90049	18.2	1.001	3.401	26
2020	75069	-16.6	834	3.482	22
2021	74801	-0.4	831	3.609	21
2022	88310	18.8	987	3.903	23
2023	90995	2.4	1.011	4.090	22

Source: State Data Agency

According to the WTTC/McKinsey¹⁰⁶ tourism density and intensity indices and the indicators of the municipality of Neringa, the tourism density indicator shows a relatively low risk of overcrowding (in 2023, 1 km² will have about 1,000 tourists), as the Curonian Spit has a small population but a relatively large area. The tourism intensity indicator shows a high risk of overcrowding (≥ 20). The lowest risk of tourism density is when the value of the indicator is ≤ 75.000 and the highest risk of tourism intensity is when the value of the indicator is ≥ 5.3 . According to the Comprehensive Plan of Neringa Municipality 2012, the recreational capacity of Neringa in terms of coastal potential could reach up to 25,000 visitors at any one time (12 in Nida, 1 in Preila, 3 in Pervalka, 7 in Juodkrante, 2 in Alksnyne).¹⁰⁷ The Curonian Spit experiences high seasonality of tourism.

The number of tourists in accommodation establishments reflects only part of the real situation due to the number of day visitors not recorded in tourism statistics. In Lithuania, according to the Mobile Data Survey, the total number of foreign travellers (tourists and day visitors) in May-August 2023 alone is 119644, which is 14 times higher than the number of tourists in accommodation establishments.¹⁰⁸ It is assumed that in addition to the foreign tourists staying in Neringa Municipality, the Curonian Spit is visited by a large number of overnight visitors from foreign countries, such as cruise ship passengers, tourists staying in the adjacent municipalities (Klaipėda city and district, Šilutė district, Palanga city etc.). It should be noted that the statistics do not include day visitors from Lithuania.

An accurate calculation of the total number of visitors and tourists is difficult. The number of tourists in the table is based on official statistics and reflects a fairly realistic picture, apart from unregistered accommodation establishments which do not provide data to the State Data Agency. The biggest problem is that the exact number of overnight visitors to Curonian Spit is

¹⁰⁶ Kvítková, Z., Petrů, Z., Houška, P., & Macáková, L. (2022). Impact of the inscription of the cultural landscape on the UNESCO list on tourism destination. In 25th International Colloquium on Regional Sciences (pp. 375-381).

¹⁰⁷ Master Plan of the Territory of Neringa Municipality and Its Parts. Available online at:

https://neringa.lt/data/public/uploads/2022/12/galutinis_-bp-1t-2012-07-17.pdf

¹⁰⁸ State Data Agency, Public Enterprise Travel Lithuania.

unknown. For example, according to Smiltynė ferry, in 2023 there will be 2.87 million round-trip passengers (to/from the Curonian Spit), including workers, residents, tourists and visitors, or more than 725,000 vehicles (not including bicycles).

According to NMA, 126.6 thousand vehicles (6 times less than the number of vehicles moved at Smiltynė ferry) will arrive in Neringa in 2023 and will not be granted a local toll exemption. It should be noted that the NMA only records the number of vehicles and not the number of people (tourists and visitors) arriving in Neringa. Some of the visitors and tourists arrive by bicycle or waterway. For example, about 4% of all tourists arrive in the Curonian Spit by water (not via ferries but from other places: Dreverna, Svencelė, Ventainė, Cape Ventė, Šilutė). In addition, the Lithuanian Maritime Museum has received 660 000 visitors in 2023. All these data show that the exact number of Lithuanian and foreign visitors (non-overnight visitors) visiting the Curonian Spit per year is unknown.

The attractiveness of the tourist attractions in Neringa Municipality (attractions, infrastructure and services) is rated as good enough, but there is a lack of parking and charging facilities for electric cars¹⁰⁹. Neringa Municipality is developing a network of electric vehicle charging stations and infrastructure. As regards the attractiveness of tourist attractions, the condition of WCs is considered satisfactory, but it is noted that some facilities are not accessible to persons with disabilities¹¹⁰. There is a lack of infrastructure and services for people with mobility or other disabilities in both natural and urbanised areas.

There is no effective system of planning, implementation and monitoring of tourism activities at the regional level in Klaipėda region, which includes the management of sustainable tourism (environmental, economic, social and cultural issues). A clear tourism strategy is also lacking among the residents who took part in the 2025 survey. 56.5% (N = 474) of all respondents miss a clear tourism strategy for Neringa and Klaipėda municipalities. 62.2% (N = 126) of people living in the Curonian Spit and 52.1% (N = 241) of visitors to¹¹¹ think so. The lack of a holistic approach to tourism management also leads to the challenges and problems of Curonian Spit tourism, i.e. leadership and responsibility for active and continuous cooperation with all stakeholders (tourism, transport, environment, local residents and businesses) in developing and implementing a common vision, actions, activities and monitoring progress in sustainable tourism.

The number of tourists¹¹² in Neringa has increased significantly between 2013 and 2023, with the total number of tourists (overnight arrivals) in 2013 being 55,847 and 90,995 in 2023¹¹³. The number of tourists increased by 63%. Over the last decade, the number of Lithuanian tourists has increased by more than 2.5 times, while inbound tourism has almost doubled. The decline in foreign tourists is due to the pandemic. Inbound tourism is recovering rather slowly.

Comparing the data for 2020 and 2024, there is a decline in the number of accommodation establishments, the number of overnight stays, the number of rooms and the number of beds in accommodation establishments (Table 5). It can be seen that while the number of tourists has slightly increased, the number of overnight stays has decreased quite

¹⁰⁹ Report on the assessment of the attractiveness of tourist destinations of Lithuania (Travel Lithuania, 2022).

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ A non-representative online survey carried out in January 2025, "The Present and Future of Curonian Spit. Management Plan for the UNESCO Site" (N = 474), targeting adult residents and visitors to Curonian Spit. The survey was carried out by the research and design agency The Critical on behalf of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration.

¹¹² According to the Republic of Lithuania Law on Tourism, a tourist is a natural person who uses or seeks to use accommodation and other tourism services, and a visitor is a natural person who visits, uses and enjoys tourism resources and tourism services other than accommodation.

¹¹³ State Data Agency, Public Institution Travel Lithuania, Economic benefits of tourism.

significantly. Several factors could have influenced the above trends, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the changing geopolitical situation, changes in tourist behaviour, the increase in inflation, and changes in purchasing power. Further research is needed to identify the factors that have had the greatest impact.

Table 5. Tourism and accommodation statistics in Neringa Municipality (2020–2024)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Trend comparing 2020 and 2024
Number of accommodation establishments	216	247	232	249	206	- 4.85 %
Number of overnight stays	210,945	236,852	213,440	204,322	133,180	- 58.39 %
Hotel room occupancy	28.1%	32.1%	37.5%	36.6%	40.3%	+ 12.2 percentage points
Number of rooms in accommodation establishments	1,602	1,727	1,563	1,340	1,281	- 25.06 %
Number of places in accommodation establishments	4,353	4,786	4,237	3,475	3,402	- 27.95 %

Analysing the dynamics of turnover by place of establishment, the turnover of accommodation and food service establishments decreased by 2.22% between 2019 and 2023. The number of persons employed in accommodation and food service establishments decreased by 6.3%.

The main potential risk is the increasing number of tourists and visitors during the high season (May–August), especially the flow of visitors arriving without overnight stays. The increase in visitor numbers may be due to the planned expansion of the KSS. The increase in the number of cruise ships and passengers may lead to an increase in the number of one-day visitors in Curonian Spit. In 2024, an increase in the number of passengers (including cruise passengers) was observed with 381,000 arrivals, an increase of 7% or 25,000 passengers compared to 2023. In Q1 2025, an increase of 2% or 0.9 thousand passengers is observed. Passenger numbers in Q1 2025 reached 42,000 and the first cruise ship with 1,300 passengers¹¹⁴. Uncontrolled growth in visitor numbers and the expansion of recreational

¹¹⁴ Information available to the KSSA.

activities may lead to increased use of natural resources and an increase in labour and energy demand.

Unique opportunity. The Curonian Spit has many opportunities to create a valuable and exemplary Conservation Area in the context of its OUV. This requires a clear understanding of the essence of the OUV, its features, methods and opportunities to use these features to create a long-term vision based on the CSNP management and the municipal master plans. If the Curonian Spit is understood not as a typical resort with its usual range of services, but as a unique area with exceptional values, a different approach to its development becomes possible. Instead of pursuing ambitions for larger hotels, more restaurants, marinas, various attractions, and expanded infrastructure aimed at competing with mainland resorts, development could focus on the specific qualities of the Spit. Such an approach would allow activities that not only address investors' interests, but also strengthen the protection of the area, highlight its uniqueness, support a stable permanent community, and reduce seasonality. The culturally and ecologically fragile Curonian Spit needs tourism with less negative impact on the landscape. The Curonian Spit has all the potential to develop as an example of sustainable tourism, but so far these opportunities have not been properly analysed and included in tourism development strategies.

The popularity and interest in water tourism and recreational boating is increasing. Clusters of water tourism services are emerging, and the State is increasingly investing in strengthening inland waterway policy. Water tourist flows and travel by various means of water transport for sightseeing, recreational purposes and recreational fishing are increasing. Passenger shipping on the Nemunas to the Curonian Lagoon, to Nida, from Klaipėda to Juodkrantė and Nida, from Šilutė to Nida, from Dreverna to Juodkrantė, from Vente to Nida, is expanding. Visitation to the eastern shore of the Curonian Lagoon and the coastline is increasing¹¹⁵. However, the water tourism infrastructure and water activities in the Curonian Lagoon are not yet fully exploited. The development of the sector is chaotic, as there is no unified national (and regional) strategy for the implementation of shipping development (the General Plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania contains proposals for this development, but not an implementation strategy). The development of the related infrastructure is left to the responsibility and capacity of local municipalities (this leads to fragmented development, dependent on existing funding sources and programmes, rather than on the implementation of a unified strategic orientation).

The lack of tourism management in Klaipėda region is identified by the region's municipalities and interested partners as a major problem of tourism development in the region. Klaipėda Region Specialisation Strategy 2030 (hereafter - KRSS2030)¹¹⁶ provides for the management of tourism in the region through the creation of a special regional structure, i.e. the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO). The RTO would be a coordinating action involving various public authorities, stakeholders to facilitate and support the existence of the tourism sector, involving all relevant public and private stakeholders, residents and local communities, developing and implementing a broader strategic thinking with the ultimate aim of ensuring the competitiveness and sustainability of the tourist destination in the short, medium and long term. The ability of the RTO to manage tourist destinations is linked to the sustainable and competitive development of tourist destinations, which is particularly relevant for the development and conservation of the sensitive natural and cultural area of the Curonian Spit.

¹¹⁵ Feasibility study on the removal of barriers to navigation in the Curonian Lagoon.

<https://neringa.lt/data/public/uploads/2022/01/laivybos-kliuciu-salinimo-kursiu-mariose-galimybiu-studija.pdf>

¹¹⁶ Klaipėda Region Specialisation Strategy 2030. Available online at: <https://klaipedaregion.lt/specializacija/>

Although the KRSS2030 was adopted in mid-2021, it will be adopted in 2025. In Klaipėda region, there is no decision and steps taken by the main partners in the region to create an RTO. However, it is appropriate to raise the question of the emergence of such a structure (on a smaller scale, e.g. within the scope of the municipalities around the Curonian Lagoon and the managers operating in their territory). The emergence of such a structure would allow to address more efficiently the current challenges and issues in the field of Curonian Spit tourism and to manage the emerging risks.

5.4 Sustainable mobility

The Curonian Spit is unique, with a distinctive **transport system** and different levels of development. This is due to the natural, geographical circumstances (narrow, long, sandy and wooded peninsula). The Curonian Spit is connected to the Lithuanian mainland by waterways Smiltynė–Klaipėda, Nida–Nemunas delta, Juodkrantė–Dreverna. The main traffic flow is along the Smiltynė–Nida national road and in the settlements of Neringa.

All arrivals use one of the two ferries in Smiltynė. In 2023, 2,706,602 persons were transferred to the Curonian Spit via the North Cape Ferry (for pedestrians and cyclists only) and the New Ferry (for pedestrians, cyclists and transport) in both directions. The highest passenger flows occur in July and August (431,014 and 511,560 passengers were transferred in July and August 2023 respectively, representing 15.92% and 18.9% of the total annual number of passengers transferred, or 15,202 passengers per day in both directions). This number of visitors is shared by both Smiltynė and Neringa. The fact that the property is only accessible by ferry from Klaipėda acts as an important control mechanism to limit the number of arrivals.

The Master Plan of Klaipėda City, in the Curonian Spit connection part, foresees the possibility of a third ferry to the Curonian Spit in the southern part of Klaipėda. This would potentially contribute to the reduction of traffic flows in the central streets of Klaipėda and in Smiltynė. There would be direct access to the Alksnynė entrance toll booth on national road 167. The traffic on this road is not expected to increase according to long-term trends and would be close to the existing traffic of 1800 cars per day. Such a project would require an additional EIA and HIA.

The increasing toll for motor vehicles (with internal combustion engines) has partly led to an increased use of electric vehicles for trips to the Curonian Spit. The number of arrivals by electric vehicles is increasing. In 2021 and 2023, 2,127 and 4,905 electric vehicles respectively entered Neringa. The most intensive entry of EVs is recorded in July and August (1 198 and 1 126 in 2023), representing 4.38% of the total passenger car traffic. It is likely that the number of EVs entering the Curonian Spit will increase in the future. In this context, it is planned to expand the network and infrastructure of electric vehicle stations managed by the municipality. The development of the network of electric vehicle stations will contribute partly, although not yet significantly, to the reduction of CO2 emissions.

In the Curonian Spit, there are **long distances** between attractions (T. Manas Museum, Parnidis Dunes, Urbs Hill, central part of Nida, beaches, Vecekrugas Dune, Nagliai Nature Reserve educational trail, etc.), so visitors and local residents usually use private cars and to a lesser extent choose to travel by means of alternative means of mobility (bicycles, electric bicycles, combined travel (e.g. by car and on foot, bicycles and on foot)).

The most intense car traffic is in Nida. The linear shape of the settlement along the Curonian Lagoon coast extends for more than 3 km, and from the Curonian Lagoon coast to the beaches of the Baltic Sea it is about 2 km away. The central part of Nida is built up with cars, creating visual pollution of the cultural landscape. Nida, like other settlements in Neringa, lacks parking facilities. Walking distances are considerable, which often leads to a preference for car travel.

According to the 2025 survey, 47.7% (N = 474) of respondents use a car regularly. Those living in the Curonian Spit are more likely to say they use a car regularly, while a higher proportion of visitors say they use a car occasionally¹¹⁷. The vast majority of those living in Curonian Spit used public transport less than once a month, while the vast majority of those who do not live in Curonian Spit did not use it at all. Almost 50% of the respondents answered that they are forced to use private transport due to the lack of public transport.

Transport issues. During the high season (May-September), around 4 000 cars travel daily on the Curonian Spit roads, while during the low season (October-April) around 1 400 cars per day.¹¹⁸ During the high season, the noise and air pollution from cars is particularly pronounced, but also the visual pollution from the large number of cars parked in front of houses, on the streets and in other places is more acute. Nagliai Nature Reserve Educational Trail, Parnidis Dune and the Hill of Witches are heavily visited in the summer. Regulating visitor flows is an important strategic measure to improve the quality of the environment and to protect these heritage assets¹¹⁹. The application of sustainable mobility principles would help to reduce individual car travel, thereby reducing traffic flows and CO2 emissions.

Between 2019 and 2023, the number of all types of vehicles entering the Curonian Spit has decreased by 16.07%¹²⁰, but there has been an increase in the number of vehicles entering with permits (17%). This change is mainly due to the increase in the tax rate for motor vehicles entering the Municipality of Neringa (from 20 June to 20 August). The application of this tax, especially to private individual vehicles, only partially limits the flow of cars into Neringa, as the number of permit holders is increasing every year. As more and more people are acquiring real estate (other than their first home) in Neringa, they are exempted from the tax on ferry crossings and car access. This tax collection policy does not encourage locals and newcomers to change their behaviour towards sustainable mobility.

The municipality of Neringa lacks local transport routes, public bus stops in natural areas, at attractions and lack of local transport routes. The cycling and walking network is well developed, but the long distances involved discourage local residents and visitors from using alternatives such as bicycles, electric bicycles and walking for their daily needs. Local buses are not adapted to the needs of cyclists. The public transport system is not user-friendly due to the frequency of routes that do not meet the needs, long journey times, inconvenient timetables, indifferent attitudes towards bicycle transport, uncoordinated transfers etc.

¹¹⁷ A non-representative online survey conducted in January 2025 "The present and future of the Curonian Spit. UNESCO Site Management Plan" (N = 474) targeting adult residents and visitors to Curonian Spit. The survey was carried out by The Critical, a research and design agency, on behalf of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration.

¹¹⁸ These figures are averages, taking into account statistics provided by Smiltynė ferry and data from Alksnynė post. Alksnynė post records those entering the municipality of Neringa, while Smiltynė ferry records all cars moving to the Curonian Spit, including those not entering the municipality of Neringa.

¹¹⁹ Expert material prepared by Mr Spiriaev.

¹²⁰ Prepared on the basis of a summary of data from Alksnynė post, taking into account arithmetical errors in the presentation of statistics. According to the revised data, 368 605 vehicles passed through the post in 2019 and 309 366 vehicles in 2023. The total traffic flow decreased by -16.07%.

Freight transport mobility is an important segment of the overall transport system. Logistics and other companies (registered in Neringa Municipality) have to contribute to sustainable mobility by transporting freight and goods using only electric vehicles. An important component of sustainable mobility is the strengthening of public transport infrastructure, either by increasing the frequency of routes in high season or by encouraging local residents to develop a shuttle service. This would increase synergies between the public and private sectors, creating a community-oriented model for everyday sustainable mobility throughout the year

The development of the transport infrastructure in Neringa Municipality, due to the heavy traffic flows, especially during the warm season, requires continuous maintenance and repair, solutions for the development of alternative transport systems based on the principles of sustainable mobility, and significant financial investments.

Waterborne transport, which has great potential, is not integrated into the transport system, there are virtually no regular carrier routes, passengers do not have access to electronic means of payment, etc. Although the peninsula could be more accessible by small boats from the small ports on the mainland of the Curonian Lagoon, so far passenger liner shipping by small boats is erratic and only operates in high season and is run by private businesses. Only 2-4% of all visitors to the Curonian Spit come by small boats.¹²¹

On the initiative of the municipalities around the Curonian Lagoon, a study on removing obstacles to shipping in the Curonian Lagoon has been prepared¹²², which identifies the main obstacles to the promotion of shipping, and develops a recommended action plan. The study concludes that the Curonian Lagoon has a fragmented model of shipping and water tourism development, where shipping-related activities are planned and implemented at the level of individual municipalities, without a common spatial integration with other ports, marinas, waterfronts and the surrounding services. The study points out that the most important condition for the promotion of shipping is the cooperation between the municipalities around the lagoon (and other interested institutions and groups), which is not yet sufficient for the development of water tourism, the elimination of obstacles to shipping, the solution of common problems and the achievement of the common strategic objectives.

Some residents of the Curonian Spit travel daily to other municipalities in western Lithuania (Klaipėda City and District, Palanga, Kretinga) for work purposes. The daily mobility habits of the local population should set an example for tourists and visitors.

The application of **sustainable mobility** principles should include everyone: local residents, tourists and visitors, and those who have declared their second home in the Curonian Spit and come here periodically. Sustainable mobility principles should be promoted through educational activities in local communities.

Although the transport policy of the municipalities of Klaipėda City and Neringa focuses on the promotion of sustainable mobility principles, the implementation of a sustainable mobility plans is still fragmented. Moreover, the Klaipėda City and Neringa Sustainable Mobility Plans have few synchronised actions between them. The sustainable mobility plans of both territories include actions on the movement of passengers and transport by ferry from Klaipėda to Smiltynė. Sustainable mobility and management of tourist flows in the Curonian Spit is to be

¹²¹ The data is based on expert judgement. The number of arrivals also depends on shipping conditions. The average number of water transport passengers to the Curonian Spit is between 14,000 and 28,000 per year (excluding Klaipėda ferries).

¹²² Feasibility study on the removal of obstacles to navigation in the Curonian Lagoon. Available online at: <https://neringa.lt/data/public/uploads/2022/01/laivybos-kliuciu-salinimo-kursiu-mariose-galimybiu-studija.pdf>

addressed through the development of an integrated regional public transport system (including water transport). Its development is included in the Action Plan of the Strategy for the Functional Zone of Klaipėda Region 2023–2029, financed by EU structural funds^{123,124}.

The **construction of a bridge to the Curonian Spit** is periodically debated. However, the CSNP Special Plan (p. 98) clearly states that “the construction of a bridge across the Curonian Lagoon is not envisaged as it represents an ineffective measure in terms of transport development and a dangerous measure for the preservation of the Curonian Spit” (2012). The report of the ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Curonian Spit¹²⁵ noted that “the construction of any bridge anywhere in the Curonian Lagoon would have a significant impact that would irreparably damage the integrity of the property (and therefore the OUV), both visually and physically”. The report also points out that the construction of the bridge would alter the topography, vegetation and landscape of the mainland, the sensitive lagoon ecosystem and the Curonian Spit coastline. Replacing the ferries with a bridge would fundamentally change the transport structure, increase the volume of car traffic, increase air pollution and reduce the recreational value of the area¹²⁶, which is contrary to the objectives of the CSNP and the protection of the cultural landscape. The absence of the bridge currently acts as one of the flow regulation measures and helps to avoid congestion in the Curonian Spit. It is therefore necessary to maintain the status quo and not to stimulate further discussions on the possibility of building a bridge.

The development of infrastructure on **Nida aviation field/airfield** (different documents refer to this site differently) is prohibited by national legislation. The construction of any new structures or facilities that would be required for the functioning of the aerodrome is not allowed under the LPA, the Law on Special Land Use Conditions. The prohibition to lengthen the runway is enshrined in the CSNP Special Plan. According to the plan, the aerodrome with minimal equipment and the airstrip in Nida may be used for the arrival, departure and movement of helicopters, gliders and light aircraft, and the flying procedure should be strictly regulated. The current outdoor landing area, i.e. runway, - meets the requirements for regulated use and should not be extended further. The development of the Nida civil aerodrome is also not foreseen in the General Plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania (p. 270). The environmental management works carried out in the area in 2020, and the upgrading of the aviation infrastructure have allowed the resumption of general aviation flights. It should be noted that these works have not been subject to an EIA and HIA. According to the Agency for Transport Excellence, Nida Aerodrome has an average of only 1.16 flights per day, which does not have an impact on the increase in traffic, noise and/or pollution levels. It should be noted that Nida Aerodrome hosts various aviation festivals, bringing together aviation enthusiasts and like-minded people, as well as maintaining and continuing the traditions of the Neringa Gliding School, in order to promote the attributes of the OUV of the Curonian Spit.

5.5. Cooperation and public involvement (including education and awareness raising)

¹²³ Concept of integrated public transport in Klaipėda region. Available online at: <https://klaipedaregion.lt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/IVTS-1.pdf> <https://klaipedaregion.lt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/IVTS-skaiciavimai-1.xlsx>

¹²⁴ Strategy for the Functional Zone of Klaipėda Region. Available online at: <https://klaipedosregionas.lt/tarybos-veikla/regiono-pletra/teritorines-strategijos/>

¹²⁵ Report of the ICOMOS (Dr. Tamás Fejérdy) 2015 Response Monitoring Mission to the Curonian Spit (Lithuania)

¹²⁶ Ibid.

The image of the Curonian Spit is shaped by its cultural landscape, which gives the area a distinctive character in the context of tourism promotion in Lithuania.

Communication, cooperation. CSNPA, performing the functions of the Site Manager, cooperates closely with other public entities operating in the Curonian Spit, such as municipalities, national policy implementing entities and their territorial units, academia (the NRC, KU Marine Research Institute, VU, etc.). The management of the Curonian Spit involves many institutions with different responsibilities, including public entities whose activities are directly related to the OUV of the property (the EPA, the EPD, the National Land Service, MoE, State Territorial Planning and Building Inspectorate, etc.), but the cooperation between the different institutions is not always effective, and often lacks a sense of ownership of the existing problems and activities, which would encourage a broader interest in the issues and challenges of the property's management.

The tradition of cooperation in Klaipėda region is not very strong. Although different formats are used¹²⁷, the centralised governance system and declarative regional policy do not encourage closer cooperation between actors. Cooperation is often formal, limited by a strict hierarchical governance structure. Local authorities are sceptical about opportunities to involve local people, individuals involved in heritage protection and the public more actively in the management of processes and decision-making.¹²⁸

Often, the way governance actors interact with the public and various stakeholders is focused on control, oversight, advice and information. In contrast, the legal inclusion of citizens, their groups, academia and experts in governance structures is only mentioned in the LPA. The features of the new public governance (involvement of the public and their groups in decision-making) are not sufficiently present in the governance of the Curonian Spit.

Considering the scale and importance of the activities of the KSSA for the region, there is a need to move towards a broader level of cooperation with the region's stakeholders, with emphasis on the planned intensive development of the southern part of the KSS and the risks it entails. It is noted that institutions of different levels and responsibilities (MoTC in the case of the KSS and MoE in the case of the CSNP) are operating in the context of the Management Plan, which calls for close cooperation on Curonian Spit conservation issues at the inter-institutional level.

There is a lack of a coherent educational, cultural and environmental strategy, based on inter-institutional cooperation, which can ensure a strong role of local people in the protection of the values of the property. The active involvement of local communities in conservation, monitoring processes and public debate on the significance of cultural heritage would help to improve understanding of the international value of the property. The creation of conditions for the development of Citizen Science initiatives would allow residents and visitors to feel an integral part of the property's management and to understand the importance of the conservation process not only locally but also globally.

Specific nature of the communities. Due to the seasonality and the specific geographical location of the Curonian Spit, the residents tend to be closed. This isolation, lack

¹²⁷ Klaipėda Region Development Council (coordinates the implementation of the national regional policy, promotes the social and economic development of the county), the association Klaipėda Region (an organisation established by the region's municipalities for the implementation of joint projects and initiatives), and Klaipėda Region Tourism Council until 2018.

¹²⁸ Burkšienė, V., Dvorak J., Performance management in protected areas: localizing governance of the Curonian spit national park, Lithuania. Public Administration Issues, no 5, (Special Issue I, electronic edition), pp. 105-124 (in English); DOI: 10.17323/1999-5431-2020-0-5-105-124

of communication and closeness of the communities is strongly influenced not only by historical, but also by social and economic challenges.

With the arrival of new residents from other regions of Lithuania, mostly from big cities: 1) demographic processes are changing, leading to social segregation of the society, 2) new, often closed communities are being created, 3) temporary residents (those who have acquired real estate but permanently live elsewhere) do not have a strong connection to the cultural landscape, natural and cultural values and historical memory.

The society is also differentiated by different age and social groups, creating different recreational and cultural traditions. These new traditions are often commercialised and adapted to the needs of visitors, tourists and transients. At the same time, different cultural traditions are emerging, a different perception of the natural and cultural values of the Curonian Spit is emerging, and the perception of cultural memory is changing. It does not always coincide with the values of cultural memory cherished by traditional local communities. The difference in terms of community is also evident in the results of the 2025 survey: 72.2% (N = 126) of the permanent residents of Curonian Spit were active in communicating with their neighbours, and they did so once a week. Temporary residents communicated 21.8% (N = 87).¹²⁹

The most significant and yet unresolved challenge is the growing number of second-home acquisitions in Neringa, contrasted with the declining number of locally residing school-age children. Awareness and identity with a place and its values are formed from the first moments of a person's life, and the role of education and culture is very important in this respect, forging consistent and close links with young people and their relatives.

Education. In 2023, Neringa municipality had 4 educational establishments: 1 general education school (gymnasium) with a pre-school education department in Juodkrantė, 1 pre-school education institution, and 2 non-formal education schools complementing formal education: Neringa School of Art and Neringa School of Sports¹³⁰. 72 children participated in the pre-school education programme. Neringa Gymnasium has 136 pupils enrolled in primary, primary and secondary education in the school year 2023–2024¹³¹. The number of pupils in the municipality is decreasing due to low birth rate and external and internal migration (except in 2022–2023 due to the arrival of Ukrainians)¹³². The consistent decrease in the number of pupils has also led to 24 April 2014 decision No T1-69 of the Council of Neringa Municipality to close Juodkrantė Liudvikas Rėza Sea Cadet School (replaced by the Visitors' Centre of the CSNP with an exhibition from 2024) and to the merger of Juodkrantė kindergarten Vyturėlis with the Nida Secondary School.¹³³

The closure of educational establishments is linked to the decreasing number of young families. With the decrease in the number of young people¹³⁴, the local community, which is

¹²⁹ A non-representative online survey carried out in January 2025 "The Present and Future of Curonian Spit. Management Plan of the UNESCO site" (N = 474), targeting adult inhabitants of and visitors to the Curonian Spit. The survey was carried out by The Critical, a research and design agency, on behalf of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration.

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 1.

¹³¹ Neringa Municipality Education Progress Report 2023, p. 2. Available online at: [https://www.svis.smm.lt/file/manual/Savaivaldybiu_pazanga/2023%20m/Neringos%20savaivaldyb%C4%97s%202023%20met%C5%B3%20C5%A1vietimo%20pa%C5%BEangos%20ataskaita%20\(2024-01-30%20Nr.%20V10-33\).pdf](https://www.svis.smm.lt/file/manual/Savaivaldybiu_pazanga/2023%20m/Neringos%20savaivaldyb%C4%97s%202023%20met%C5%B3%20C5%A1vietimo%20pa%C5%BEangos%20ataskaita%20(2024-01-30%20Nr.%20V10-33).pdf)

¹³² Municipality of Neringa Education Progress Report 2023, p. 2. Available online at: [https://www.svis.smm.lt/file/manual/Savaivaldybiu_pazanga/2023%20m/Neringos%20savaivaldyb%C4%97s%202023%20met%C5%B3%20C5%A1vietimo%20pa%C5%BEangos%20ataskaita%20\(2024-01-30%20Nr.%20V10-33\).pdf](https://www.svis.smm.lt/file/manual/Savaivaldybiu_pazanga/2023%20m/Neringos%20savaivaldyb%C4%97s%202023%20met%C5%B3%20C5%A1vietimo%20pa%C5%BEangos%20ataskaita%20(2024-01-30%20Nr.%20V10-33).pdf), p. 6.

¹³³ Report of the Mayor of Neringa Municipality for 2014, p. 6. Available online at: <https://neringa.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/06/ataskaitaitikras2014.pdf?lang=enp>.

¹³⁴ According to the data of expert assessment of demographic and social aspects carried out by E. Spiriajevas in 2024, in the period 2001-2020 in Neringa Municipality the number of children in the age group 10-14 years decreased by -36.1% and

directly responsible for the preservation and promotion of the area and its values, is decreasing. The declining number of school-age children and the lack of classroom formation also reduces the competitiveness of the school as an employer. The educational services provided are directly linked to the attractiveness of the Gymnasium to pupils in the upper grades.

Educational services in the municipality of Neringa are concentrated in Nida (with the exception of the kindergarten Vyturėlis in Juodkrantė). There are four settlements in the municipality, located between 8 and 30 km apart. The only general education institution, Neringa Gymnasium, is located in Nida, so all pupils from other settlements are transported there. This location results in limited accessibility and choice of education, especially for the residents of settlements further away from Nida, such as Juodkrantė. This geographical location results in limited accessibility and choice of education, especially for the residents of settlements further away from Nida, such as Juodkrantė. In order to ensure better quality education, some families are looking for alternatives in Klaipėda.

The main educational challenges also include a shortage of specialists and limited access to non-formal education and extracurricular activities, especially in remote settlements. There is also a lack of a clear educational policy on the importance of the Curonian Spit for the country as a whole.

In order to address these issues, in 2024 the Council of Neringa Municipality endorsed the concept of the Creative Industries, Science and Arts Education Cluster “Neringa Talents 2030” (hereafter referred to as the “Education Cluster”) and the guidelines for its implementation.¹³⁵ The aim is to initiate the necessary changes in the education sector of the municipality, to preserve the only gymnasium in Neringa and to modernise its activities. It is planned to invite representatives of ministries (the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the MoC, the Ministry of the Economy and Innovation) as expert consultants in the activities of the Education Cluster.

The Curonian Spit (Nida and Smiltynė) is home to the CSNPA Nature School, Nida Art Colony of the Vilnius Academy of Arts and Klaipėda Faculty of the Academy of Arts, the practical training base of the King Mindaugas Vocational Training Centre in Pervalka and the Seaside Biology Station of the NRC in Juodkrantė, and a number of NGOs active in the fields of youth, education, culture, sports and science. CSNPA cooperates with pre-school and school education institutions in Neringa and Klaipėda. Special educational programmes are carried out according to the needs of the children. The international teaching guide “World Heritage in the Hands of Youth”, adapted in 2006, is a relevant and valuable educational tool for educational institutions.

Although the topics about attributes and challenges of the Curonian Spit are gradually being integrated into the educational programmes of the Neringa municipality and the institutions located in the area, there is a lack of targeted and systematic attention to strengthening inter-institutional, interdisciplinary and practical experiential learning, and to highlighting the themes of local identity.

Knowledge of the property. According to the Curonian Spit population and public survey (2025), the majority of respondents were familiar with the UNESCO World Heritage designation and its significance for the Curonian Spit. 64.3% (N = 471) of the respondents answered “yes”, while the remaining 35.7% would like more information on the topic. The most

the number of young people aged 15-19 years decreased by 11%, with the most significant increase in the number of 50-54 year olds (+116%) and 60-64 year olds (+115.8%).

¹³⁵ Concept and guidelines for the implementation of the Creative Industries, Science and Arts Education Cluster “Neringa Talents 2030”.

important lack of information for respondents was information on the impact of climate change on the Curonian Spit and the significance of the UNESCO status.

Academic and research institutions actively contribute to highlighting the values of the Curonian Spit at the academic level. They promote debate and engage local communities and the population, raising awareness of the challenges facing the Curonian Spit and the opportunities for preserving the value of the property.

Various institutions provide **information** about the Curonian Spit and its value to tourists and residents alike. Dissemination is carried out through the media, publishing, museums, CTIC Agila, CSNPA educational and volunteering programmes, non-formal education activities in schools, creative and project activities in higher education institutions. However, the information on the Curonian Spit is not consistent (especially the emphasis on attributes and the use of logos). The image of the Curonian Spit and its protected values is not consistently transmitted. Social networks, websites of public institutions and live meetings for local communities¹³⁶ remain the most attractive means of informing the public.

For tourists, information about the Curonian Spit is available on websites, publications, social networks, information boards, and public sector organisations, i.e. CSNPA, CTIC Agila, Klaipėda Tourist Information Centre, and the national agency for tourism promotion Travel Lithuania, are responsible for the dissemination of information.

Information about the property for foreign travellers is available in English on the websites of the CTIC Agila and Klaipėda Tourism Information Centre. Information about the Curonian Spit or routes to/from it can be found in the region's tourism centres, but the information is not attractively presented and is not translated into English on the CSNPA website.

Public involvement. There are various initiatives to encourage community involvement in the conservation of cultural heritage. For example, Neringa Museums invites the local community to work together to create a museum from existing artefacts, bringing to life personal experiences and links to the property. At the suggestion of local residents, the Municipality of Neringa has awarded Neringa Community Lighthouses for 2024. The award was given to members of the community who enrich the life of the community with their presence, ideas and initiatives¹³⁷. The CSNPA runs a programme to label sustainable local community services or goods with the CSNP product label, promoting local artisans or sustainable businesses.

The community perceives its involvement in the management of the property as not very active. According to the 2025 survey, 33.5% (N = 126) of the Curonian Spit population participated in discussions of public issues, clean-ups once a year or less, and 29.7% (N = 126) participated in public meetings several times a year, and about 32.4% (N = 126) of the total population participated in public meetings once or several times a year. Temporary residents usually do not participate at all (32.1%) or participate once a year or less (31%). However, looking at the overall involvement of the local community in the management of the property, there is a positive trend, as the majority of those who participated in the survey felt responsible for the protection of the values of the property (77.7%, N = 469).

Individual initiatives, i.e. ensembles and individuals who pass on traditions to future generations, play an important role in protecting and nurturing the unique intangible cultural

¹³⁶ A non-representative online survey carried out in January 2025 "The Present and Future of the Curonian Spit. Management Plan of the UNESCO Site" (N = 474) targeting adult residents and visitors to Curonian Spit. The survey was carried out by the research and design agency The Critical on behalf of the Curonian Spit National Park Administration.

¹³⁷ About the initiative: <https://www.etaplus.lt/paskelbti-neringos-bendruomenes-svyturiai-apdovanoti-labiausiai-kurortui-nusipelne-bendruomenes-nariai-329842>

heritage of the Curonian Spit. In order to strengthen the preservation and development of the intangible cultural heritage, events organised by artists and cultural organisations (concerts, festivals, artists' workshops, discussions and other intellectual activities) should be more often oriented towards the preservation of the OUV of the Curonian Spit. This requires facilitating the dissemination of information about these values and their accessibility for various cultural initiatives. This requires more attention from the State and municipalities in terms of financial support, publicity for traditional skills and greater involvement of the local community.

5.6 Climate change

Strategic documents. The National Climate Change Management Agenda (2021) (hereafter the Agenda)¹³⁸ is the key document for climate change adaptation at national level. The objective of the policy of Lithuania in this area is to reduce the current and projected vulnerability of the country's natural ecosystems and economic sectors, to strengthen adaptive capacity, to effectively reduce risks and damages, and to increase resilience to climate change. In the cultural sector, the aim is to increase the resilience of cultural heritage sites to natural events, in particular catastrophic meteorological events. The objectives are: 1) to identify the sensitivity and vulnerability of cultural objects to climate change; 2) to enhance the resilience of cultural objects through climate change adaptation measures.

The objectives of the Agenda for the period 2021-2030 are implemented through the National Energy and Climate Action Plan (NECAP)¹³⁹. This is in line with the requirements of the EU Regulation (2018/1999) on the Governance and Climate Policy of the Energy Union and covers all climate and energy measures that Lithuania will apply until 2030. The National Adaptation Plan identifies climate change as a direct and indirect threat to cultural heritage. Sudden direct damage may result from extreme weather events, while the slow deterioration of protected sites may be linked to rising average annual temperatures and increased precipitation. The plan contains measures for adaptation to climate change.

The National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change provides an overall risk projection for cultural heritage and tourism. These risks are assessed as low in 2050 and medium in 2100. The Plan includes an important measure for cultural heritage: to identify the most vulnerable cultural heritage sites in Klaipėda municipality to climate change in the period 2024-2026 and to develop an action plan to increase their resilience.

According to the Lithuanian Municipalities Climate Change Vulnerability and Sensitivity Study¹⁴⁰ (2023), both Klaipėda City Municipality (first place by 2025, second place by 2100) and Neringa Municipality (fourth place by 2025) are among the most vulnerable municipalities in Lithuania. In 2023, Klaipėda City Municipality has a Climate Change Adaptation Plan until

¹³⁸ Resolution No XIV-490 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 30 June 2021 "On the Approval of the National Climate Change Management Agenda". Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/7eb37fc0db3311eb866fe2e083228059?positionInSearchResult>

¹³⁹ National Energy and Climate Action Plan. Ministry of Energy. Available online at: <https://enmin.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-3/neksvp-atnaujijimas/> and Resolution No 1069 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 11 December 2024 "On the Approval of the National Energy and Climate Action Plan 2021-2030".

¹⁴⁰ Preparation of climate change forecasts, a national study on the sensitivity and vulnerability of Lithuanian municipalities to climate change and a climate change adaptation plan for the most vulnerable municipality. Phase II: Study on the sensitivity and vulnerability of Lithuanian municipalities to climate change. Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, 2023. Available online at: <https://klimatokaita.lt/media/17620/lietuvos-savivaldybiu-jautrumo-ir-pazeidziamumo-klimato-kaitai-tyrimas.pdf>

2030¹⁴¹, Neringa Municipality has no such plan and has an underdeveloped network of wind monitoring stations to monitor increasing wind and storms. The obligation for Neringa Municipality to prepare a climate change adaptation plan is foreseen in the draft Law on Adaptation to Climate Change.¹⁴²

The CVI for Curonian Spit Report (2024) has been prepared using the CVI methodology developed (for the first time in Lithuania) by researchers at James Cook University, Australia. Based on the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC (The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), the OUV of the Curonian Spit, scientific data and community insights, the main climate threats to the OUV of the Curonian Spit and the community have been identified.¹⁴³ According to the report, the following factors will have the greatest impact on the Curonian Spit by 2070:

- Increase in average temperature (air and/or water);
- Coastal erosion;
- High rainfall events.

Projections. Lithuania is considered to be one of the countries least affected by climate change, yet the Baltic Sea region is vulnerable to climate change. Among the most important factors are rising water levels, increased winds, reduced sand transport and inadequate shore protection measures.

Climate change can have both positive and negative impacts on tourism. Increasing annual average temperatures, decreasing relative humidity and decreasing average wind speeds are projected to increase the climate index for tourism across Lithuania. However, the negative effects of climate change on green spaces (forests, green areas) and water bodies may lead to the loss or degradation of natural tourism resources.

Climate change projections up to 2070 show that rising temperatures, increased coastal erosion and increased rainfall will further affect the area. The RCP8.5 scenario¹⁴⁴ predicts increasing carbon dioxide emissions, more frequent storms, sea level rise of up to 60 cm and increased coastal erosion. The afore-mentioned changes may in the future challenge not only the natural environment, but also the cultural environment, affecting economic, social and cultural links. The predicted rise in water levels is of particular importance for all the settlements along the lagoon coast, infrastructure, and the safety of the Smiltynė-Nida road¹⁴⁵. In this context,

¹⁴¹ Climate Change Adaptation Plan of Klaipėda City Municipality. Available online at:

<https://www.klaipeda.lt/lt/gyventojams/aplinkos-apsauga/tyrimai-ir-planai/12240>

¹⁴² Article 8 of the draft of the Republic of Lithuania Law on Adaptation to Climate Change. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAP/43e03ab0b18511efa81e811ff75635ec?jfwid=jbdzi0b43>

¹⁴³ Heron SF, Zavišaitė J, Bugenienė S, Day JC, Dėringytė R, Kepežinskienė R, Liukaitytė-Kukienė J (2025) Climate Vulnerability Index assessment for the Lithuanian component of the Curonian Spit World Heritage property. Ministry of Culture, Vilnius; and Climate Vulnerability Index, Townsville. 75+ix pp. Available online at: https://lrkm.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1742294533/8897/HeronEtAl_2025_CVI-CuronianSpit.pdf

¹⁴⁴ Climate change is linked to Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs). The fourth scenario, RCP8.5, is the most pessimistic. In this scenario, if countries do not reduce greenhouse gas emissions, global temperatures would rise by as much as 2.6-4.8 degrees Celsius. This could lead to irreversible climate change on the planet, which is not good for humanity or the Earth's ecosystems. Available online at: <https://klimatokaita.lt/aktualijos/duk/kokie-yra-klimato-kaitos-scenarijai/>

¹⁴⁵ Flood hazard and risk map. ArcGis. Available online at:

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7f2d4ca0c74c4857a0620967e530fa4d#widget_6=layer_visibility:%7B%22widget_6-dataSource_4%22%3A%7B%22widget_6-dataSource_4-18ad5474e57-layer-28%22%3Atrue%2C%22widget_6-dataSource_4-18ad5afb40e-layer-31%22%3Atrue%7D%7D,active_datasource_id:dataSource_4,center:2370321.2031606305%2C7468715.947934247%2C102100,scale:501447.0953156147,rotation:0,viewpoint:%7B%22rotation%22%3A0%2C%22scale%22%3A501447.0953156147%2C%22targetGeometry%22%3A%7B%22spatialReference%22%3A%7B%22latestWkid%22%3A3857%2C%22wkid%22%3A102100%7D%2C%22x%22%3A2370321.2031606305%2C%22y%22%3A7468715.947934247%7D%7D

there is an urgent need to carry out a flood risk assessment of the Curonian Spit under different climate change scenarios, to identify flood risk mitigation measures and to initiate the application of integrated inland flood risk management measures at the national level, taking into account the Curonian Spit as an integral part of the country's inland waterway system.

Storms and other extreme events with significant impacts on coastlines and beaches are not unexpected in the coastal region. They recur to a greater or lesser extent every year, which is why in the Curonian Spit funds must be planned and/or reserved, financial mechanisms must be created for the use of the municipalities, the CSNPA in the implementation of the coastal management measures of the Seaside Programme, in the renewal of the infrastructure, and in the resolution of the other problems that the coastal municipalities face every year due to the storms or the prevailing trends of coastal erosion (caused by the natural processes).

The adapted CVI methodology found that the vulnerability of the community to climate change is low. This reflects the strong adaptive capacity of the local population and institutions to adapt and remain connected to this unique territory. The CVI assessment also addressed the main adaptation measures: forest management, fire protection, dune maintenance, visitor flow management, strengthening knowledge of cultural heritage restoration and raising public awareness. It is important that these measures are coordinated with the actions foreseen in the National Adaptation Plan to Climate Change. The need for further research and improvement of the legal framework to ensure more effective protection of the Curonian Spit and adaptation to the effects of climate change is underlined.

5.7. SWOT analysis

Strengths	
Protection of the property	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong legal protection: the property falls within a protected area, i.e. the CSNP, cultural heritage and other legislation, international conventions (e.g. Hague Convention) are in force 2. Authentic management techniques are used to preserve the attributes (e.g. maintenance of the protective coastal ridge is based on specific knowledge to ensure the continuity of traditions) 3. Measures to protect and maintain the attributes of the property are regularly implemented: regular funding is provided for the implementation of riparian management measures, and other attributes are maintained 4. Regular monitoring of the status of the landscape and attributes 5. Authentic architecture and urban cultural heritage preserved: forms, materials, decoration and other attributes reflecting the identity of the cultural heritage are preserved 6. Inter-institutional cooperation at local and regional level: the CSNPA, i.e. the Site Manager cooperates closely with other public entities at local or regional level
Sustainable development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Local governance is guided by sustainability and the Green Deal: Institutions take into account Green Deal policies (e.g. KSS – Green Port Strategic Development). Strategic planning documents include

	sustainable tourism as one of the region's development objectives, development of a network of electric vehicle charging points
Cooperation and public involvement	8. Informal education about the property and its attributes is being developed: the CSNP Nature School, an informal education programme for children from all over Lithuania to communicate the values of the property at national level
Sustainable tourism	9. Strong tourism sector based on unique natural and cultural resources: hospitality services on offer to promote tourism (natural and cultural resources, tourism services, beaches (especially Blue Flag beaches), cycle paths, hiking routes, water tourism, education, events) 10. Infrastructure of tourist attractions is rated favourably: the attractiveness of tourist attractions (environment, infrastructure and services) in the municipality of Neringa is rated fairly well
Sustainable mobility	11. Expanding the network of electric vehicle stations in response to the increasing use of electric vehicles
Climate change	12. National strategic document in place: National Climate Change Management Agenda adopted 13. Climate change adaptation actions, including the protection of cultural heritage, are integrated into the EU-compliant Lithuanian National Energy and Climate Action Plan (NECAP) 14. The National Adaptation Plan 2024-2026 includes a measure to identify the vulnerability and resilience of Klaipėda heritage 15. The methodology for establishing the Climate Variability Index for a World Heritage property is applied to the Curonian Spit for the first time.
Weaknesses	
Protection of the property	1. Lack of objective data for monitoring visitors, traffic flows and attributes: there is a lack of reliable records of visitors and traffic flows, especially at the most visited sites. The monitoring of the OUV of the Curonian Spit and its results are not systematised in a single programme and data system. Indicators and methodologies for assessing all attributes of the OUV are not established 2. Lack of financial resources for the management of private sites: owners of cultural heritage sites do not have sufficient funds for their management 3. Complex institutional framework for protection: many different institutions are involved in the management of the property, but the forms of cooperation between them are not always effective 4. Different positions of the institutions involved in the management of the property: municipalities, public bodies and other stakeholders have different interests, sometimes not related to the preservation of the local identity 5. Multiplicity of legislation and planning documents: the multiplicity of legislation and planning documents sometimes causes

	<p>communication problems</p> <p>6. Lack of information on the conservation of objects in case of emergency: no description of the conservation of movable museum objects in the event of natural disasters and emergencies</p>
Sustainable development	<p>7. Limited integration of sustainable development into management: lack of specific sustainable development objectives for the property</p> <p>8. Lack of infrastructure needed by communities: reduction of social infrastructure needed to sustain communities (e.g. school closures), purchase of real estate as second homes, reduction of housing supply for local people</p> <p>9. Application of architectural quality criteria and assessment tools is not ensured: fragmented application of guidelines, shortened assessment processes, deteriorating quality of projects, weakening trust in solutions.</p>
Cooperation and public involvement	<p>10. Weak connection of newcomers to the area: the number of local residents (permanent residents) is decreasing, and the connection of newcomers to the Curonian Spit's values, to the identity of the area, and to the involvement in the community processes in the Curonian Spit is weak.</p> <p>11. A marked divide of permanent and seasonal residents</p> <p>12. Limited integration of UNESCO heritage themes into formal education: there is no strategic approach to the conservation of the values of the property in Neringa education and training programmes</p>
Sustainable tourism	<p>13. Overcrowding in the summer season: high seasonality of the tourism sector, leading to a high flow of tourists and a high seasonal load on the property</p> <p>14. Limited promotion of inclusiveness: attractions and public spaces are only partially adapted for people with special needs</p> <p>15. Lack of information on the number of visitors and tourists in the area</p> <p>16. Limited integration of sustainable tourism objectives into tourism management: there is no effective system of planning, implementation and monitoring of tourism activities at the regional level in Klaipėda region, which includes the management of sustainable tourism (environmental, economic, social and cultural issues)</p>
Sustainable mobility	<p>17. Lack of linkages between municipal sustainable mobility plans: sustainable mobility plans of Klaipėda City and Neringa have few synchronised actions between them</p> <p>18. Public transport system is not adequately developed near attractions: lack of public bus stops in natural areas, near attractions, lack of local transport routes</p> <p>19. Water transport is not integrated into the public transport system: no regular carrier routes, no electronic means of payment for passengers, etc.</p>

Climate change	<p>20. Lack of strategic documents to manage climate change risks: Neringa Municipality does not have a climate change adaptation plan</p> <p>21. Insufficiently developed network of monitoring stations for wind and storm monitoring</p> <p>22. Increasing risk of flooding and flooded areas and insufficient preparedness for prevention and/or mitigation.</p>
Threats	
Protection of the property	<p>1. Lack of financial resources for the protection of cultural heritage: there is a particular shortage of funds for the management of private cultural heritage sites</p> <p>2. Climate change, natural hazards pose a direct risk to tangible cultural heritage</p> <p>3. Potential negative impact of the development of the KSS on the shores of the Curonian Spit</p>
Sustainable development	<p>4. Development of the KSS: it may lead to an increase in the number of cruise ships, and consequently to an increase in tourist arrivals in the Curonian Spit</p> <p>5. Pollution from economic activities: pollution from economic activities (e.g. shipping, fishing)</p> <p>6. Loss of authenticity due to the use of real estate: reconstruction works and their abundance threaten to lose the authenticity of the Curonian Spit. The details and materials used in new buildings do not create a sense of distinctive place</p>
Cooperation and public involvement	<p>7. Declining connection of local communities to the values of the heritage place: a changing local community (increasing number of settlers) may encourage the creation of new communities with their own values, without contributing a local identity or to the preservation of local cultural values</p>
Sustainable tourism	<p>8. Tourism development: potential adverse effects of increasing recreational load, tourist flows on the Curonian Spit landscape and ecosystems. Increasing tourist and day visitor traffic may also cause inconvenience to local residents</p>
Sustainable mobility	<p>9. The construction of the proposed bridge would irreversibly damage the integrity of the property, increase traffic and pollution</p> <p>10. Development of Nida airfield would have a potential negative impact on the landscape and heritage</p>
Climate change	<p>11. Adverse effects of climate change: increased frequency of extreme weather events has negative impacts on attributes (e.g. the protective coastal ridge, tangible cultural heritage, coastal processes, the status of the forests of the Curonian Spit, especially the old-growth forests) and tourism</p>
Opportunities	

Protection of the property	12. Strengthening inter-institutional cooperation: development of broader cooperation with regional manager groups (e.g. with the KSSA).
Sustainable development	13. Applying sustainable development principles in planning documents (tourism, mobility, economy)
Cooperation and public involvement	<p>14. Awareness-raising: awareness-raising at national and international level, disseminating information about the property, its uniqueness and the opportunities to contribute to its conservation</p> <p>15. Integration of the knowledge of the values of the property into the education system: conveying the value of the property to the local population in a relevant way through experiential education, pre-school and early childhood education programmes, lifelong learning programmes</p> <p>16. Creating the right conditions for vibrant communities to come together</p> <p>17. Increased involvement of communities in the management of the property: involvement of rights-holders and stakeholders in the preparation of strategic planning documents, in particular programmes for the protection of tangible and intangible heritage, and in decision making</p>
Sustainable tourism	<p>18. Creation and development of new tourism services and products (e.g. sightseeing, eco-tourism, water tourism)</p> <p>19. Regulation of tourist flows to minimise the negative impact on the property: use of technology for automated monitoring and management of visitor flows</p> <p>20. Integrating the objectives and principles of sustainable tourism into tourism management: managing tourism in the region through the creation of a regional structure, the Destination Management Organisation (RTO).</p>
Sustainable mobility	<p>21. Strengthening cooperation in the field of water tourism and navigation between the municipalities around the lagoon, other interested institutions and groups</p> <p>22. Establishment of an integrated public transport system (including water transport)</p>
Climate change	<p>23. Preparation and implementation of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Neringa Municipality coordinated with neighbouring municipalities to enhance regional resilience and ensure integrated climate response measures.</p> <p>24. Development of financial mechanisms for the prevention and response to emergencies</p> <p>25. Promoting sustainable mobility through electric and public transport</p>

CHAPTER VI. ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan sets out the objectives, targets, measures, evaluation indicators, deadlines and responsible authorities. It is divided into five thematic strands in accordance with the guidelines for the preparation of the Management Plan approved by the Minister of Culture¹⁴⁶:

1. Protection of the Curonian Spit. The aim is to strengthen the protection of the property by ensuring the development of the competences and skills of professionals involved in the conservation and management of the Curonian Spit, ensuring smooth cooperation between the different partners and actors, with a view to increasing their involvement, i.e. to facilitate the involvement of municipal politicians, municipal staff, representatives of science and business, professional communities and local residents and associated structures representing their interests in the planning and management of the property, and to enable them to participate in its conservation and management as closely as possible.

2. Sustainable development. The aim is to ensure that activities in the property are compatible with the requirements of sustainable development, economic viability, social equity, health, environmental quality and climate change management needs. It shall also integrate a sustainable mobility component, applying sustainable mobility principles to reduce the negative impact of visitor flows on the property, as well as the sustainable development and/or renewal of tourism infrastructure with measures and programmes addressing the needs of visitors of all ages and abilities, including persons with disabilities.

3. Sustainable tourism. The aim is to ensure the sustainable development of visitation and tourism infrastructure in the Property, contributing to the long-term conservation of its Outstanding Universal Value, benefiting local communities, and providing high-quality experiences for visitors.

4. Education, awareness-raising and inclusion. The aim is to raise awareness among all actors of the property and its values in a global, national and local context through a participatory planning process.

5. Risk management. The assessment of the main threats to the locality—including climate-related hazards and other potential disaster risks—should be followed by the implementation of targeted management approaches. These include mitigation measures aimed at reducing identified risks, as well as actions that strengthen the locality's resilience to external environmental, climatic, and human-induced factors.

¹⁴⁶ Order No [V-505 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 May 2022 “On the Approval of the Guidelines for the Preparation of Management Plans for the UNESCO World Heritage in Lithuania”.

6.1. Axis I: Protection of the Curonian Spit

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
T1.	Aim: To preserve the OUV of the property											
U1.1.	Objective: To ensure systematic monitoring and research on the status of OUV											
P.1.1.1.	To develop an integrated monitoring system that includes all attributes and incorporates the missing indicators required for assessing the condition of the Curonian Spit OUV attributes.	Prepared document (1 document)	0.3	0.3	0.4	-	-	-	20 thousand	State budget funds, other legal funds	CSNPA, MoE, DCH, SSPA, scientific institutions	2023 Periodic report 12.2.1 Summary - Management needs; Evaluation Report of the National Audit Office evaluation report on "Management and Safeguarding of UNESCO World Heritage Sites" (2024)
P.1.1.2.	To carry out a photo-fixation of the entire panorama of the Curonian Spit, to provide for additional panorama monitoring points from the Curonian Spit, to prepare descriptions of the attributes visible from the Curonian Lagoon, to prepare indicators for assessing their condition and to publish the prepared material in a digital collection (album).	Prepared digital document (1 item)	-	-	0.5	0.5	-	-	20 thousand	State budget funds, project funding	MoE, CSNPA, DCH	
P.1.1.3.	To form the Scientific Advisory Board of the CSNP and to organise its work for the discussion of completed, ongoing and planned scientific research in the	Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board (pcs/year)	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	State budget funds	CSNPA, scientific institutions	2023 Periodic Report 12.2.1 Summary - Management needs

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
	Curonian Spit and for the maintenance of scientific research registers.	Research register (1 pc)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-			
P.1.1.4.	To carry out priority studies for the conservation and management of the OUV of the Curonian Spit. Areas of research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> urban landscape change; the state of intangible cultural heritage (socio-cultural traditions, spirituality, social perception and collective memory of the Curonian Spit); professional architecture of 1945–1990. 	Studies carried out (3 units)	-	1	-	1	-	1	30 thousand	State budget funds, project funding	MoC, DCH, NMA, KCMA, SSPA, CSNPA	2023 Periodic Report 12.2.1 Summary - Management needs
P.1.1.5.	To carry out an inventory of the status of the immovable cultural heritage sites of the Curonian Spit, including an expert evaluation	Inventory carried out (1 document)	-	-	-	1	-	-	20 thousand	State budget funds, project funding	DCH, NMA, KCMA	Recommendation of the State Audit Office 18 December 2024 Report of the National Audit Office "Management and Safeguarding of UNESCO World Heritage Sites"
P.1.1.6.	To compile a list of priority immovable cultural heritage sites of the Curonian Spit in need of management and maintenance	Prepared list (1 document)	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	State and municipal budget funds	DCH, NMA, KCMA	
P.1.1.7.	To document and submit to the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage Properties the files of endangered examples of	Files of intangible cultural heritage	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	8 thousand	Municipal budget funds	NMA and subordinate cultural institutions,	

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
	authentic intangible cultural heritage, cultural memory and/or oral history.	submitted to the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2 items)									KCMA and subordinate cultural institutions	
P.1.1.8.	To digitise the elements reflecting the attributes of the OUV of the Curonian Spit for their preservation, accessibility and dissemination.	Digitised elements of attributes (pcs.)	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	24 thousand	State and municipal budget funds	DCH, NMA and subordinate cultural institutions, KCMA and subordinate cultural institutions, CSNPA.	
P.1.1.9.	To carry out a review of the impact of suffusion on the Curonian Lagoon shores of the Curonian Spit and assess the need for continuous monitoring and the possible necessity of developing a methodology.	Prepared a review of the current situation (localization, frequency, scope of impact) (doc.)	-	-	-	1	-	-	15 thousand	State budget funds, project funding	EPA, LGS, MoE, scientific institutions, KSSA	
		Assessed the need to develop a specialized methodology . (doc.)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	State budget funds		
		In case the need is justified, the	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	State budget funds		

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
		process of preparing the methodology is initiated (units).										
P.1.1.10.	Update the SOUV of the Curonian Spit by correcting linguistic inaccuracies and revising information related to changes in protection and management requirements.	Updated document (doc.)	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	State budget funds	MoE, LNUC, CSPNA	2023 Periodic Report
U1.2.	Objective: To ensure that the attributes of the OUV are in good condition											
P.1.2.1.	To implement the decisions of the spatial and strategic planning documents (each institution involved in the management of the property implements according to its competence).	Number of implemented decisions	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As foreseen in the documentation solutions	As foreseen in the documentation solutions	Institutions involved in the management of the property	CSNP Special Plan, Master Plans of Neringa and Klaipėda municipalities and strategic planning documents, etc.
P.1.2.2.	To conserve the old-growth forests of Juodkrantė and Nida by restoring or allowing the natural regeneration of the target tree species (Scots pine) and by creating a diverse stand of trees	Reforestation projects (pcs.)	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	40 thousand	Funds of the SFE, other legal funds	SFE	Internal forest management project of the CSNP
P.1.2.3.	To implement nature management measures to maintain the good condition of the white and grey dune habitats	Maintained ha/year	<300	<300	<300	<300	<300	-	243 thousand	EU IP, state budget funds	CSNPA	Action plan for the protection and management of sandy habitats and landscapes of European Community importance in the coastal floodplain section of the CSNP for the 2025–2035.

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
											Action plan for the management of the abundance of the thorn thistle (<i>Rosa rugosa</i>) in Nagliai Nature Reserve of the CSNP for 2021–2026	
P.1.2.4.	To regularly implement shoreline management measures on the Baltic Sea coast to reduce the adverse effects of storms and recreational activities.	Implemented measures under the Coastal Zone Management Programme	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	1.3 million allocated until 2029	EU IP 2021–2027, state budget funds	MoE, CSNPA, SFE, SSPA	Law on Coastal Zone, Coastal Belt Management Programme 2023–2032 Provisions of the Lithuanian Baltic Sea Coastal Management Strategy Helsinki Convention for the Protection of the Baltic Sea CSPN Special Plan
P.1.2.5.	To ensure continued stable funding for the maintenance of the coastal protective ridge	Funding to be secured annually (pcs.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	200-300 thousand/year	EU IP, Environmental Protection Support Programme	MoE	Law on Coastal Zone, Coastal Belt Management Programme 2023–2032 Provisions of the Lithuanian Baltic Sea Coastal Management Strategy Helsinki Convention for the Protection of the Baltic Sea CSPN Special Plan

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.1.2.6.	To involve the SFE in the implementation of the Coastal Zone Management Programme.	Amendments to legislation (at least 2 items)	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	State budget funds	MoE, SFE	Coastal Belt Law, Coastal Belt Management Programme 2023-2032
P.1.2.7.	To implement preventive measures in natural areas (visitor information, flow management, etc.)	Minimum number of people/year involved in preventive activities in natural areas	4	4	4	4	4	4	240 thousand (40 thousand/year)	State budget and other legal funds	CSNPA, NMA, SFE	
U1.3.	Objective: To create conditions for strengthening the capacity of professionals in the field of conservation of the OUV of the Curonian Spit											
P.1.3.1.	To include topics related to World Heritage conservation in the qualification development programmes of specialists in various fields: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape and biodiversity: conservation of landscape and biodiversity, use of native plants Cultural heritage: preservation of authenticity through restoration of cultural heritage sites, etc. Architecture: use of traditional architecture and its elements, continuation of the architecture of old villas, etc. Planning: application of the principles of sustainable spatial planning, etc, Construction: eco-friendly building materials, energy- 	Number of in-service training programmes integrating topics of the OUV of the property (6 units)	-	-	-	-	-	6	42 thousand	State budget and other legal funds	MoC, MoE, LCA, LConA, DCH, LALA, CSNPA, TURA	

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic planning, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
	<p>efficient technologies, reconstruction of cultural heritage sites, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guides: landscape, history, nature, culture, sustainable tourism of the Curonian Spit 											
P.1.3.2.	Strengthen the competencies and capacities of managers and specialists involved in the conservation and management of the property, to enhance the resilience of the site to challenges and ensure the long-term preservation of its OUV.	Number of managers and specialists who participated in competency and skills enhancement training (units).	20	20	20	20	20	20	30 thousand	State and municipal budgets	MoE, MoC, SSPA, DCH, CSNPA, KCMA, NMA, SFE	
P.1.3.3.	To strengthen institutional cooperation in the field of preserving the Curonian Spit, designate responsible contact persons in each institution involved in the management of the property	Number of person(s) representing the institution (at least 4 persons)	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	State and municipal budgets	NMA, KCMA, SFE, DCH	
P.1.3.4.	To implement the exchange of good practices between the cities participating in the Organisation of World Heritage Cities and the municipalities administering the Curonian Spit, and to apply appropriate examples of good practice in the Curonian Spit.	Number of events/meetings/presentations	-	1	-	1	-	1	30 thousand	State and municipal budget funds	NMA, KCMA, CSNPA	Strategic Development Plan of the Municipality of Neringa (1.3.2.2.), Part V of the Action Plan of the CSNPA 2024.

6.2. Axis II: Sustainable development

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for the implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
T2.	Aim: To integrate the principles of sustainable development into projects and activities in the Curonian Spit											
U2.1.	Objective: To ensure that activities in the Curonian Spit are carried out in accordance with sustainability principles											
P.2.1.1.	To address the shortage of skilled specialists and the problem of declining permanent population, establish an inter-institutional working group to develop an action plan.	Establishment of an inter-institutional working group (units)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	State and municipal budgets	NMA, SSPA, CSNPA, MoE	
P.2.1.2.	To initiate discussions on the improvement of the system of collection and distribution of fees for visiting the Curonian Spit.	Prepared decision (units)	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	State and municipal budgets	SSPA, MoE, SM, NMA, KCMA, SP, CSNPA	
P.2.1.3.	To upgrade the Cultural Heritage e-services information system, improve tools for its use and provide advice to the population in order to increase the participation of private owners of immovable cultural heritage in funding mechanisms.	Upgrade of the system (pcs.)	-	-	-	1	-	-	15 thousand	State budget and other legal funds	DCH, MoC	
		Resident consultations	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	-	State budget funds	DCH	

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for the implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.2.1.4.	To conduct a feasibility study on the advisability of preparing a special law for the Curonian Spit.	Carried out feasibility study (pcs.)	-	-	1	-	-	-	10 thousand	State budget funds	MoE, MoC	
P.2.1.5.	To evaluate the functions of the institutions operating in the Curonian Spit, with a view to eliminating duplication of functions or clearly identifying specific functions and amend the relevant legislation if necessary.	Assessment completed (units)	-	1	-	-	-	-	10 thousand	State and municipal budgets	MoE, MoC, SSPA, DCH, NMA, KCMA, CSNPA, SFE	
T3.	Aim: to implement sustainable mobility solutions taking into account the conservation and social needs of the local landscape											
U3.1.	Objective: To develop a sustainable transport system, promote mobility by environmentally friendly means of transport and expand the necessary infrastructure											
P.3.1.1.	Update, renew, and develop water transport connections and infrastructure, as well as expand related activities, based on cooperation and ensuring sustainability principles, as stipulated in municipal strategic planning documents.	Creation and development of port and pier infrastructure	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	23 million	Municipal budget funds, other legal funds	NMA, KCMA	Neringa Municipality Strategic Development Plan for 2021–2030 (measure 1.1.3.3.);
		Development of water transport connections and related activities (units)	-	-	-	-	-	4	200 thousand			Klaipėda Region Functional Zone Strategy for 2023–2029; Neringa Sustainable Mobility Strategic Plan (2018)
P.3.1.2.	When updating sustainable mobility action plans, create an integrated public transport system for the Klaipėda region (including water transport).	Updated document (unit)	-	-	-	-	-	4	100 thousand	Municipal budget funds	NMA, Association Klaipėda Region, KCMA, Šilutė District Municipality,	

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for the implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
										Klaipėda District Municipality.		
P.3.1.3.	To increase the accessibility of the property for persons with special needs.	To assess how many and which infrastructure facilities in the Curonian Spit are adapted for persons with special needs (1 pc.)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	State budget and other legal funds	NMA, KCMA, CSNPA, SFE	Development Programme for the Development of an Environment Suitable for People with Disabilities in All Spheres of Life, managed by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, 2021-2030
		Meeting with institutions representing persons with special needs (pcs.)	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	State budget and other legal funds		
		Adaptation of infrastructure to at least 20 % of the expressed need (%)	-	-	5	5	5	5	100 thousand	State budget and other legal funds		
P.3.1.4.	To provide short-distance passenger transport within the territory of Neringa municipality during the high season to reduce car traffic in and between settlements.	At least 1 additional trip every 1-2 years (pcs.)	1	-	1	-	1	-	45 thousand	Municipal budget funds	NMA	Public survey in 2025

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for the implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.3.1.5.	To adapt public transport for cyclists	Public transport vehicles equipped with bicycle facilities adapted to the bicycle escort service (%)	10	10	10	10	10	-	10 thousand	Municipal budget funds	NMA	

6.3. Axis III: Sustainable tourism

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
T4.	Aim: To develop sustainable tourism by preserving the OUV of the property and creating unique experiences for visitors											
U4.1.	Objective: To ensure the development of sustainable tourism in the Curonian Spit											

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.4.1.1	To represent the interests of the Curonian Spit in the emerging Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO)	Participation of delegated representatives in meetings (pcs.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	State and municipal budgets	NMA, KCMA, CSNPA	Klaipėda Region Specialisation Strategy until 2030 Neringa Municipality Strategic Development Plan 2030 – Priority 1. Sustainable coastal and water tourism and competitiveness growth.
P.4.1.2.	To publicise the collection and use of funds from tourism (entrance fee to the territory of the CSNP administered by Neringa Municipality; taxation of tourism services; EU, state, municipal budgets, visitor tickets, etc.).	Information on the use of funds is included in the annual activity reports of the responsible authorities and is publicly available on the authorities' websites (number of reports)	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	State and municipal budgets	NMA, KCMA, CSNPA	UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit. Guide 4 Engaging local communities and businesses
P.4.1.3.	To periodically organise and carry out surveys of visitors and tourists to the area, collecting relevant data: demographic information, knowledge and understanding of the area, travel patterns, behaviour, satisfaction, expectations and needs, accessibility of attractions, costs, etc.	Visitor and tourist surveys carried out in the property (>300 respondents) (pcs.)	-	1	-	1	-	1	30 thousand	State and municipal budgets, other legal funds	NMA, CSNPA	UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit. Guide 3 Developing effective governance

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.4.1.4.	To implement an integrated visitor and tourist counting system to determine the potential load and capacity of the Curonian Spit.	Expert assessment and preparation of data collection methodology (units)	-	-	1	-	-	-	100 thousand	State and municipal budgets, other legal funds	NMA, CTIC Agila, KTCIC, KCMA, SP, LMM, Public Institution Travel Lithuania, CSNPA	UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit. Guide 8 Managing visitor behaviour
		Implementation of calculators and other devices specified in the expert assessment (units)	-	-	-	0,5	0,5	-				
		Creation of a visitor and tourist counting data management system (units)	-	-	-	1	-	-				
P.4.1.5.	To develop Smiltyne as a model of sustainable tourism by implementing the measures envisaged in Strategic	As foreseen in the Strategic Development Plan	1	1	1	1	1	1	As foreseen in the Strategic	As foreseen in the Strategic	KCMA	Strategic Development Plan of Klaipėda City Municipality 2021-2030, Measure 1.2.1.1.

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
	Development Plan of Klaipėda City Municipality 2021–2030.								Development Plan	Development Plan		

6.4. Axis IV: Education, awareness raising and inclusion

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
T5.	Aim: To raise awareness of the OUV of the Curonian Spit among the local community, tourists and visitors											
U5.1.	Objective: To raise community awareness of the importance of conservation of the property											
P.5.1.1.	To implement projects for the adaptation of cultural heritage sites to the needs of the community in Juodkrantė (or Smiltynė) through the establishment of a training workshop infrastructure for the restoration of wooden architectural elements and wooden ships	Preparation of the building reconstruction project (units)	-	-	-	1	-	-	15 thousand	State and municipal budgets, other legal funds	MoC, DCH, NMA, LMM, CSNPA	

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
		Execution of building reconstruction works (units)	-	-	-	-	0,5	0,5	700 thousand			
		Installation of equipment required for restoration and other workshops (units)	-	-	-	-	-	1	50 thousand			
P.5.1.2.	To continue the implementation of artist and scientist residency programmes, including the interpretation and conservation of the OUV of the Curonian Spit.	Number of residencies per year focused on the interpretation and preservation of the Curonian Spit OUV (10 people/year)	10	10	10	10	10	10	360 thousand	EU Creative Europe, Nordic, Erasmus, state and municipal budget funds, other legal funds	Vilnius Academy of Arts, NRC, ICTW, NMA, CSNPA	
P.5.1.3.	When defining cultural and art project funding priorities at all institutional levels, priority should be given to projects that emphasize the OUV of Lithuania's World Heritage properties, while avoiding support for activities that could potentially harm this OUV.	Number of funding programmes where priority is maintained per year (pcs.)	4	4	4	4	4	4	-	State and municipal budgets	DCH, NMA, KCMA, LCC	

No.	Measure	Measure implementation indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.5.1.4.	To implement ongoing local community actions and clean-ups of natural and/or cultural heritage	300 participants per year (pcs.)	300	300	300	300	300	300	18 thousand	State budget and SFE funds	CSNPA, NMA, KCMA, SFE	
U5.2.	Objective: To increase the knowledge of the residents of the OUV of the Curonian Spit through formal and non-formal education programmes											
P.5.2.1.	To implement activities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of the Education Cluster programme providers in order to integrate the content of the knowledge and learning of the OUV of the Curonian Spit into the formal education process of Neringa Gymnasium, both inside and outside the gymnasium.	Number of programmes prepared by the education cluster per year (pcs.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	State and municipal budgets	CSNPA, NMA, Neringa Gymnasium	
P.5.2.2.	To organise events (meetings, seminars, etc.) for the population on the importance and vulnerability of the OUV of the Curonian Spit.	Organised events (pcs.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	12 thousand	State budget funds	CSNPA	
U5.3.	Objective: To raise awareness of tourists and visitors of the uniqueness of the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit											
P.5.3.1.	To develop and implement information measures for tourists and visitors on the restrictions in place in the area and their importance for the protection of the OUV of the Curonian Spit.	Number of developed measures (pcs.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	30 thousand	State and municipal budgets, other legal funds	CSNPA, NMA, KCMA	
P.5.3.2.	To promote tourism products promoting the attributes of the OUV of the Curonian Spit (fairs, hikes, excursions, events, etc.)	Number of publicity campaigns, implemented events (unit)	5	5	5	5	5	5	50 thousand	State and municipal budget funds	NMA, CTIC Agila, KCMA, KTCIC, CSNPA, Guides Guild	

No.	Measure	Measure implementation on indicator	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031				
P.5.3.3.	To attractively present information about the OUV of the Curonian Spit, including information in English	Created or improved website (units)	-	1	-	-	-	-	7 thousand	State budget funds	CSNPA	

6.5. Axis V: Risk management

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2026				
T6.	Aim: To increase the resilience of the Curonian Spit to climate change and other risks, ensuring the protection of the OUV in the long-term.											
U6.1.	Objective: To increase the resilience of the Curonian Spit infrastructure, heritage and community to the impacts of climate change, natural phenomena and human-induced disasters.											
P.6.1.1.	To prepare a Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Neringa Municipality, ensuring compatibility with the plans of municipalities in the region	Prepared documents (pcs.)	-	-	-	1	-	-	20 thousand	State and municipal budget funds	NMA, MoE	Draft Law on Adaptation to Climate Change of the Republic of Lithuania (Article 8)
P.6.1.2.	When updating the National Water Sector Plan for 2022–2027, set national goals, objectives, and measures aimed at reducing and/or mitigating the potential negative impact of sea level rise and flooding on the OUV of the Curonian Spit.	Prepared document (pcs.)	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	State budget funds	MoE	

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2026				
P.6.1.3.	Plan funds annually and implement physical measures to reduce, eliminate or adapt to the potential negative effects of climate change.	Report on planned funds and implemented physical measures (units)	1	1	1	1	1	1	As required	State and municipal budget funds	NMA, KCMA, MoE	Law on Coastal Zone, Coastal Zone Management Programme, Law on Local Self-Government
P.6.1.4.	Upgrade shoreline infrastructure to strengthen resilience to potential climate change impacts.	Upgraded shoreline infrastructure (percent)	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	31 million	Municipal budget and other legal funds	NMA, KCMA,	Neringa Municipality Strategic Development Plan for 2021–2030 (measure 1.1.3.3.); Neringa Sustainable Mobility Strategic Plan (2018)
P.6.1.5.	To expand the network of meteorological monitoring stations by installing additional wind measurement stations or facilities in the Curonian Spit.	Installed wind monitoring station (pcs)	-	-	-	-	1	-	100 thousand	State budget funds	MoE, LHMS	Climate Vulnerability Index assessment for the Lithuanian component of the Curonian Spit World Heritage property
P.6.1.6.	To implement and monitor the Curonian Lagoon shoreline stabilisation measures foreseen in the EIA for the development of the KSS	Implementation of measures according to the performance indicators of the KSSA Strategic Activity Plan for 2026–2029 and subsequent periods.	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As required	As provided in the KSSA strategic activity plans for 2026–2029 and subsequent periods.	As provided in the KVJUD strategic activity plans for 2026–2029 and subsequent periods.	KSSA, SSPA, EPD	EIA for the development of the southern part of the KSS, 2024; EIA for the improvement (dredging and widening) of the outer and inner navigation channel of the KSS, the reconstruction (construction) of the southern and northern

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2026				
											breakwaters, and the strengthening of a part of the Curonian Spit and the construction of the southern harbour gate, 2019	
P.6.1.7.	To mark the Curonian Spit with the Blue Shield to protect property in the event of armed conflict.	Installation of signs at the place foreseen by the working group (pcs.)	3	-	-	-	-	-	15 thousand	State budget funds	DCH, CSNPA, NMA, KCMA	23 February 2007 Resolution of the Government "On the Approval of the Lists of Objects of Immovable Cultural Heritage, Buildings and Premises of Outstanding Cultural Value for the Preservation and Display of Movable Cultural Objects Bearing the Distinctive Symbol of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in Times of Armed Conflict.
P.6.1.8.	To prepare and approve a plan for the preservation of the movable museum objects of the Curonian Spit in the event of disasters, mobilisation and other emergencies.	Prepared document (pcs.)	-	1	-	-	-	-	15 thousand	State budget and municipal funds	NMA and subordinate cultural institutions, KCMA and subordinate cultural institutions	

No.	Measure	Indicator for the implementation of the measure	Target value for implementation indicator						Preliminary need for funds (EUR)	Source of funding	Responsible promoter, participating institutions and partners	Links with strategic documents, other documents
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2026				
P.6.1.9.	To organise education and awareness raising of residents and visitors about risks and preventive measures to build resilience to climate change, crises and disasters.	Number of organised events and meetings (pcs)	1	1	1	1	1	1	6 thousand	Municipal budgets, SFE funds, and other lawful sources of financing.	NMA, KCMA, SFE, CSNPA	
P.6.1.10.	To carry out urban development within the boundaries of the zones identified in the CSNP Special Plan (2012), where development is planned, applying the quality criteria and assessment tools provided for in the Republic of Lithuania Law on Architecture in accordance with the OUV of the Curonian Spit, its authenticity, integrity, and the specific characteristics of the area.	Preserved planned development (2 % of the land area of the property)	Continuously	Continuously	Continuously	Continuously	Continuously	Continuously	-	-	NMA, KCMA, CSNPA	CSNP Special Plan, Republic of Lithuania Law on Architecture, Republic of Lithuania Law on Special Conditions of Land Use, other legal acts.

CHAPTER VII. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

7.1 Implementation cycle of the Management Plan

The development, implementation and updating of the Management Plan shall be overseen by a Supervisory Group, the composition of which shall be approved by an order of the Minister of Environment. It shall formulate and submit conclusions to the Site Manager on the progress of the preparation, implementation, monitoring and updating of the Management Plan and advise the Site Manager on matters related to the management of the property. The Supervisory Group may make proposals to the MoE and the Site Manager on strategic and legal developments related to the management of the property.

The Management Plan is prepared for a period of 7 years, with a cycle of implementation and updating coordinated with a Cycle of Periodic Reporting, which takes place on average every eight years¹⁴⁷. The Third Cycle of Periodic Report on the Curonian Spit ended in 2023, and the Management Plan is therefore targeted for implementation by 2031.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the Management Plan, the monitoring of the Management Plan implementation starts one year after its adoption¹⁴⁸. The CSNPA collects and organises data related to the implementation of the Management Plan and the state of conservation of the property. The CSNPA shall prepare a monitoring report on the implementation of the Management Plan once a year (by 15 March) and submit it to the Supervisory Group for evaluation. The report shall be discussed at a meeting of the Supervisory Group, where the progress of implementation shall be assessed and decisions on possible adjustments to the Management Plan shall be taken. Upon receipt of a conclusion on the monitoring report from the Supervisory Group, the CSNPA provides it to the MoE. The monitoring report shall assess the progress of the Management Plan against the implementation indicators set out in the Management Plan and shall provide comments and suggestions for improving the conservation and management of the property. The monitoring report on the implementation of the Management Plan shall be made publicly available on the websites of the CSNPA and other responsible authorities.

In addition, it is recommended that an assessment of the effectiveness of the overall management system be carried out at least every 7-8 years, based on the methodology recommended by UNESCO their Guidelines for Assessing Management Effectiveness of World Heritage properties.¹⁴⁹ The purpose of this evaluation is to analyse not only the implementation of the Management Plan, but also the strengths, weaknesses and responsiveness of the Curonian Spit's management system as a whole to emerging threats. The evaluation covers the following aspects: legal protection, actors' involvement and cooperation, human and financial resources, and conservation outcomes. The assessment of management effectiveness helps to ensure the long-term improvement of the management

147 UNESCO Periodic Reporting. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/periodicreporting/>

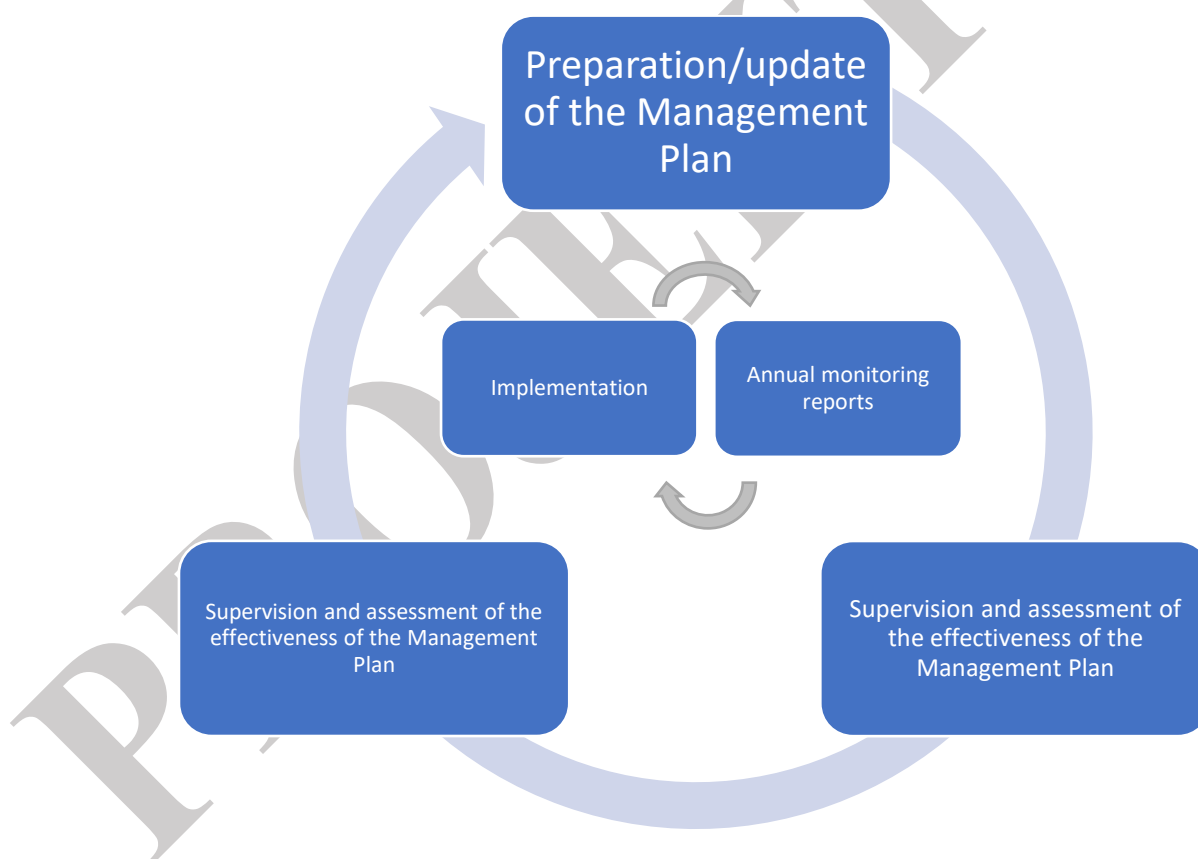
148 Order No JV-505 of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 May 2022 "On the Approval of the Guidelines for the Preparation of Management Plans for the UNESCO World Heritage in Lithuania"

149 UNESCO (2023). Enhancing our heritage toolkit 2.0. Assessing Management Effectiveness of World Heritage Properties and Other Heritage Places. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eoh20/>

system and it is therefore recommended to integrate this assessment into the process of updating the KNAP.

In order to ensure that the Management Plan remains dynamic and adaptive to changing conditions, it may be reviewed every 3 years. In objective circumstances, as assessed and agreed by the Supervisory Group, the Management Plan and/or parts thereof may be adjusted in accordance with the procedures for the approval of the Management Plan set out in the General Provisions (Chapter I). The World Heritage Centre must be informed of the revisions of the Management Plan and/or its components. At the end of the 7-year period, a new Management Plan must be drawn up for the next period, taking into account the current situation at the time and the challenges faced by the responsible authorities. The cycle of preparation, implementation, monitoring, review and updating of the Management Plan is shown in Figure 8. The MoE shall ensure that the Management Plan is regularly updated by publicising the reasons, relevance and needs for its revision and by presenting evolving political and technical priorities.

Figure 8. Cycle of implementation of the Management Plan.



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PROJEKTAS

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Characteristics of the Values and Attributes of the Curonian Spit

Value 1: Unique and vulnerable coastal cultural landscape

Value	Attributes
Unique and vulnerable coastal cultural landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The unique size, shape and spatial structure of the Curonian Spit• Forested dune landscape with coastal settlements• Characteristic panoramas and silhouettes• Historical parts of the settlements of Nida, Juodkrantė, Preila, Pervalka, Smiltynė and Alksnynė homestead• Example of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature

The size, shape and spatial structure of the Curonian Spit. The Curonian Spit reflects the geomorphological features of the Quaternary geological period, revealing the different stages of the formation of the Baltic Sea. It is the 5th longest sand spit in the world (the longest is the US Padre Spit at 360 km). The Curonian Spit is an example of ongoing marine geomorphological processes, with predominantly linear dunes formed by the accumulation of aeolian and marine sediments. It is the largest area of marine deposits in the Baltic Sea region. The Curonian Spit is unique in the Baltic Sea region and in Northern Europe in terms of its parameters, landforms, their formation and development, geological structure, climatic features, diversity of landscape and flora and fauna in a relatively small area, and has no analogues¹⁵⁰.

The decrease in forest cover at the expense of an increase in open, unvegetated areas has created favourable conditions for the formation of large shifting dunes. A large part of the old parabolic dunes in the western part of the spit have been transformed into shifting dunes, which, supplemented by the sand thrown up by the sea, reached the parabolic dunes in the east and filled them in quite quickly, changing their shape. The period 1730-1830 is the most rapid and intense phase of aeolian processes and coping in the Curonian Spit, when the relief and the structure of the spit were fundamentally changed¹⁵¹. During the period 1706-1846, the shifting dunes buried 14 villages¹⁵². This mass movement of sand was only stopped by the massive consolidation and greening of the dunes at the end of the 19th century, which once again fundamentally changed the Curonian Spit landscape.

The spatial structure of the Curonian Spit is characterised by its distinctive topography, the different shores of the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon, the natural landscape and

150 Curonian Spit Nomination File <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>; IUCN Technical Assessment of the Curonian Spit (Lithuania/Russian Federation) World Heritage Nomination File, 2000. Available online at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>

151 Gudelis V. Lithuanian gulfs and coast: Monograph (Lietuvos jūris ir pajūris: Monografija), 1998. p. 208

152 Curonian Spit National Park Administration. Available online at: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/lt/apie-nacionalini-parka/krastovaizdis/>

the variety of dunes (tree-covered parabolic dunes, fossil dunes, forested dunes, grey and white desert dunes).

The interaction of natural processes and human activity has resulted in the formation of different types of landscape in the Curonian Spit¹⁵³: open sand dunes of the Great Dune Ridge, forested stretches of the Great Dune Ridge, old forested stretches of the original parabolic dunes, sandy flat, hooded or dune forested coastal floodplains, sandy coastal beaches with a protective coastal ridge (dike), sandy flat or dune-fringed coastal floodplain promontories (promontories), coastal settlements with a distinctive urban development and a unique adaptation to the microclimate and topography of the environment.

The Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea are aesthetically, ecologically and historically an integral part of the Curonian Spit landscape. The following landscape elements are located in the Curonian Spit's transverse profile in the seaward-marine direction: the beach, the protective coastal ridge, the floodplain (a pre-dune deflationary-accumulation plain), the dune massif (the Great Dune Ridge), the Pomeranian floodplain, and the lagoon's beach.¹⁵⁴

The coastline of the Baltic Sea is flat. The Curonian Spit coastline is protected from the effects of sand drift and wave action by a protective coastal ridge (7-16 m high), which has been built up over nearly a century.

The shore of the Curonian Lagoon, which is made of sand that has been washed up in the sea, is winding, with wide bays and headlands (in the middle part of the Curonian Spit). It is 10 km longer than the seashore. The headlands extend into the lagoon where the wind has broken through the dunes, the Great Dune Ridge.

The dominant landform is the Great Dune Ridge (72 km long, about 52 km long in Lithuania and 250-1200 m wide). Its average height is 35 m, but some dunes are more than 60 m high. The Great Dune Ridge consists of the dunes of Parnidis, Urbas, Angiai, Giedružė, Vecekrugas, Preila, Karvaičiai, Skirpstas, Nagliai, Avikalnis, Meškos galva and Hagenas. The highest dune is Vecekrugas Dune (height – 67.2 m). In the Curonian language, “vece” means “old” and “kruogs” (in German means “Krug”) means “inn”. The thickness of the compacted sand is about 70 m.

The Great Dune Ridge and its dunes are characterised by their distinctive spatial elements, their clearly perceived compositional relationships and their visual distinctiveness. The predominantly distinct forms, the semi-open spaces that are most often overlooked, the Curonian Lagoon coastline, the forest thickets and the mosaic of sand dunes are aesthetically pleasing, provide optimum conditions for understanding the structure of the landscape, its character, the relationship between the grey (unforested) dunes and the forests, and also create conditions for migrations. At present, more than half of the ridge is overgrown and forested.

Forested dune landscape with coastal settlements, characteristic panoramas and silhouettes. The visual and aesthetic expression of the landscape is one of the most important factors shaping the international uniqueness and tourist attractiveness of the

153 Preparation of landscape structure schemes for state parks. State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment, State Enterprise State Land Fund. Available online at:

https://vstt.lrv.lt/uploads/vstt/documents/files/VP_kr_str_schemos/Kursiu_nerijos_NP_krastovaizdzio_strukturos_schemos_aprasas.pdf

154 Curonian Spit Nomination File <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>

Curonian Spit. The landscape of the Curonian Spit is characterised by its dynamic panorama, which varies from north to south.

The old farmhouses built in parallel rows next to the lagoon, the roof decorations, porches and windows, the original wall and roof structures, the traditional colours of the houses, the gardens and the fences form a very picturesque and valuable heritage, which is one of the main features of its OUV.

The steep slopes of the sand dunes merge with the lagoon along the relatively straight stretches of the shores of the Curonian Lagoon in Nagliai and Grobštas Nature Reserves and in the Parnidis Landscape Reserve. The stretch between Pervalka and Nida is dominated by winding lagoon shores with pronounced promontories, i.e. headlands.

The panorama of the Curonian Spit is unique not only in Lithuania but also in Europe. It is unique for its combination of old settlements with the impressive height and varied structure of the Great Ridge (forested, grey, open sand). The settlements on the eastern shore of the lagoon, with their low-rise red-roofed houses, are an integral part of a harmonious cultural landscape, the height of the houses not exceeding the line of the wooded dunes. The overall eastern panorama of the Curonian Spit, as seen from the lagoon (from the harbour piers or from ships), is one of the most well-known features of the area and one of the most inspiring for artists. The changing views of the lagoon remain an important attraction for visitors, and the aesthetic values are not only easily understood, but are also an important recreational and economic resource.

In Smiltynė, the panorama of the Curonian Lagoon coastline is shaped by the luxurious villas built in the early 20th century, and by the greenery with the dominant feature - the Smiltynė Kurhaus.

From the highest points of the dunes and from the Curonian Lagoon, there are exceptional panoramas and silhouettes, and the mountain pine forest on the Great Ridge, which is a testimony to the history of the taming of the sands. Exceptional panoramas of the Curonian Spit and the lagoon can be seen in other places.

Historical parts of the settlements of Nida, Juodkrantė, Preila, Pervalka, Smiltynė, and Alksnynė homestead.

The spatial structure of the settlements is shaped by the architecture of the old fishing villages that have become resort settlements: old wooden fishermen's houses, 19th century professional architecture, i.e. lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas; elements of maritime cultural heritage¹⁵⁵. The plan-spatial structure of Juodkrantė and Smiltynė is most closely linked to the distinctive architecture of the villas, while the spatial structure of Nida, Preila and Pervalka is inextricably linked to the fishermen's farmhouses.

The old residents of the Curonian Spit are no longer living, but the cultural heritage they created and the elements that bear witness to it are preserved¹⁵⁶. The historical structure of the Curonian Spit and the elements of the lifestyle of the old residents of the Curonian Spit, i.e. the Curonians, are represented by parts of the historic seaside settlements of Nida, Preila, Pervalka, Juodkrantė and Smiltynė, as well as by Alksnynė homestead. They have been assigned a national level of significance in the Register of Cultural Property (except for the

155 Retrospective Statement of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Curonian Spit. Available online at: https://kpd.lrv.lt/uploads/kpd/documents/files/Veiklos_Sritys/Tarptautiniai_Rysiai/UNESCO/Kur%C5%A1i%C5%B3%20nerijos%20IVV_LT.pdf

156 Curonian Spit Nomination File <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>

Alksnynė homestead, which has been assigned a regional level of significance). The protected values are the historic parts of the settlements, their planned and volumetric spatial structure, historic buildings and their features, landmarks, open spaces, old cemeteries, etc.

Nida Settlement (unique number 17098) is the administrative centre of Neringa Municipality and the largest and most popular settlement in the Curonian Spit. As soon as the first tourists began to arrive in the Curonian Spit, Nida received the title of an artists' mecca, which it has retained ever since. As early as the end of the 19th century, it was home to an artists' colony and a summer house built by Thomas Mann, the Nobel Prize-winning writer. Today, Nida is attracted by Parnidis Dune, its historical legacy and the local spirit of creativity.

The history of Preila settlement (unique number 2069) dates back to 1843, when the residents of the deserted village of Nagliai moved here. The beautiful Curonian Spit fishermen's farmhouses, the restored old Preila school, and the historic cemetery with baptisms are located along the lagoon shore. Preila is situated between Preila and Goat Cape, sheltered by the dreaded Preila Dune. Preila is the only one in Neringa that still resembles a fishing village. As many as 19 of the old fishermen's houses have been declared architectural monuments, and the new architecture blends in beautifully with the old. On the other side of the village's only street is an old ethnographic cemetery, surrounded by forest.

Pervalka settlement (unique number 2068) is the smallest settlement in Neringa, founded by settlers from the deserted Nagliai in 1844. In the northern part of Pervalka, the only lighthouse built in 1900 stands on an artificial island in the lagoon near the Horse Cape. It offers one of the most beautiful panoramas of the Curonian Spit, overlooking the dunes in Nagliai Nature Reserve, which stretch 10 km to the north.

The historic promenades of the settlement of Juodkrante (unique number 2067) can still be traced today in the hayfield covering the old parabolic dunes. It was Juodkrantė that became the first resort in the Curonian Spit. The fishing village of Juodkrante became famous in the 19th century when amber mining began in the Curonian Lagoon. Soon after, a steamboat pier, a lagoon promenade, walking paths, luxury villas, which together with the village's Evangelical Lutheran Church became architectural treasures, were built one after another.

Smiltynė settlement (unique number 21809) is the northernmost settlement of the Curonian Spit, which became part of Klaipėda City in 1900 after it was acquired from Germany. There are two ferries connecting the Curonian Spit with Klaipėda City.

Alksnynė homestead (unique number 2070) is a three-building homestead halfway between Smiltynė and Juodkrantė by the lagoon, reminiscent of the architecture of the buildings of the old Smiltynė forestry. The character of the buildings, the red bricks and the landscaping of the homestead are in harmony with the woodland setting and create the image of a rural homestead environment¹⁵⁷.

Example of harmonious coexistence between human and nature. Over the centuries, not only generations have changed, but also the Curonian Spit ethnic community itself has changed, but the close relationship between man and nature has remained very close. The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit is still evolving and undergoing evolutionary processes, but it retains an active social role in modern society, linked to traditional ways of

157 Bučas J., Curonian Spit National Park. Savastis, Vilnius, 2001, 167 p.

life. The Curonian Spit landscape reveals the essential signs of development, inextricably linked to natural processes and human activity.

Value 2. The result of human efforts to restore suitable living conditions

The Curonian Spit is an example of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, a living combination of natural and cultural heritage, which is linked not only to spiritual and material aspects, but also to the experience of the local population, which has made it possible to restore the lost conditions for living in Curonian Spit. It is a unique relationship between man and nature and man's ability to adapt to nature. The reforestation of the dunes in the Curonian Spit began a couple of centuries ago and is still going on today. Humans have formed a protective coastal ridge and stopped the dunes from sliding by planting forests. This is the only time in the world that coastal dune reinforcement and reforestation has been carried out on this scale.

Value	Attributes
The result of human efforts to restore suitable living conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afforested parts of the Great Dune Ridge and their maintenance methods • Planted forests, including montane pine forests, and their management and maintenance methods • Human-made protective foredune ridge and its maintenance methods

Afforested parts of the Great Dune Ridge and their maintenance methods, planted forests, including mountain pine forests, and their management and maintenance methods. The renewed development of the barren dunes after destructive human activity was halted in the 19th century by purposeful human activity. This began in 1802 when Søren Bjørn, a dune inspector in West and East Prussia, developed and practically tested a method of reinforcing sand dunes by planting plants and forming barriers. This methodology has led to the systematic planting of the Great Spit and the creation of a protective coastal spit in the Curonian Spit. The main objective of this work is to break up the continuous mass of sand dunes into individual sections, reducing the amount of sand left behind and the rate of dune subsidence. The most intensive dune stabilisation works took place between 1873 and 1903, during which time the dunes between Preila and Pervalka, Urbas and Angiai mountains near Nida, and the dunes between Kopgallis and Juodkrantė were greened under the supervision of the dune inspector Vilhelm Franz Epha.

After major afforestation works, the forest cover of the spit (in terms of area of stands) was 59% in 1923 and 72.7% in 2009 (according to the latest forest inventory).¹⁵⁸ Currently, the Curonian Spit (Lithuanian territory) has a forest cover of 7,074 ha, more than half of which

¹⁵⁸ Order No D1-553 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 July 2013 "On the Approval of the Internal Forest Management Project of the Curonian Spit National Park and the Revised Internal Forest Management Project of the State Enterprise Mažeikiai Forest Enterprise". Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.454033?jfwid=rivwzvvpvq>

is of cultural origin. All of them are state forests, managed and maintained by Kretinga Regional Unit of the State Enterprise SFE and the Neringa Municipality.

The composition of the stands of the Curonian Spit has changed in the course of forestry activities. In 1873-1903, the Great Dune Ridge near the settlements was stabilised by the planting of mountain pine (*Pinus montana*) and the base of the ridge was planted with Scots pine (*Pinus silvestris*). Unlike in the early 20th century, the stands are now dominated by Scots pine (about 4300 ha in 2012). The area of Scots pine is gradually decreasing due to over-aged and dry stands and the risk of fires (about 1350 ha in 2015). The stands of Scots pine on the Great Ridge are valued as the landscape and forestry heritage of the Curonian Spit.

Mountain pine stands do not have a high biodiversity, but their biological characteristics make mountain pine an important material for coastal management, as it is used for the anchoring of the protective coastal ridge with branch sheets and for weaving of frogs' webs. It reinforces up to 4 ha of the coastal ridge per year, which is why it is so important to use this sustainable resource.

Human-made protective foredune ridge and its management methods. Formation of the protective foredune ridge of the Curonian Spit began in 1805–1811 at the narrowest point of the Curonian Spit, with the main work being completed in the early 20th century. Throughout the 100-year period of creation of the protective foredune ridge, its formation and maintenance have been managed by professionals, with considerable public attention and funding.

Value 3: Diversity of Natural Heritage

There are no special species or ecosystems in the Curonian Spit whose survival is determined solely by the conditions of the Curonian Spit. The OUV of the Curonian Spit is not based on natural heritage criteria, but the ecosystems and their components, which have been created by the coexistence of nature and mankind, reflect the exceptional value of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape.

Value	Attributes
Diversity of Natural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with remnants of ancient parabolic dunes and old-growth (ancient) forests ● Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with grey and white (shifting) dunes ● Prominent dominant dunes of the Great Dune Ridge (Vecekrugas, Urbo, Angiai, Preila, Pervalka, etc.) and the individual dunes (Giedružė, etc.) ● Lagoon capes and bays ● Exceptional natural habitats, unique sand flora and fauna ● Bird migration path

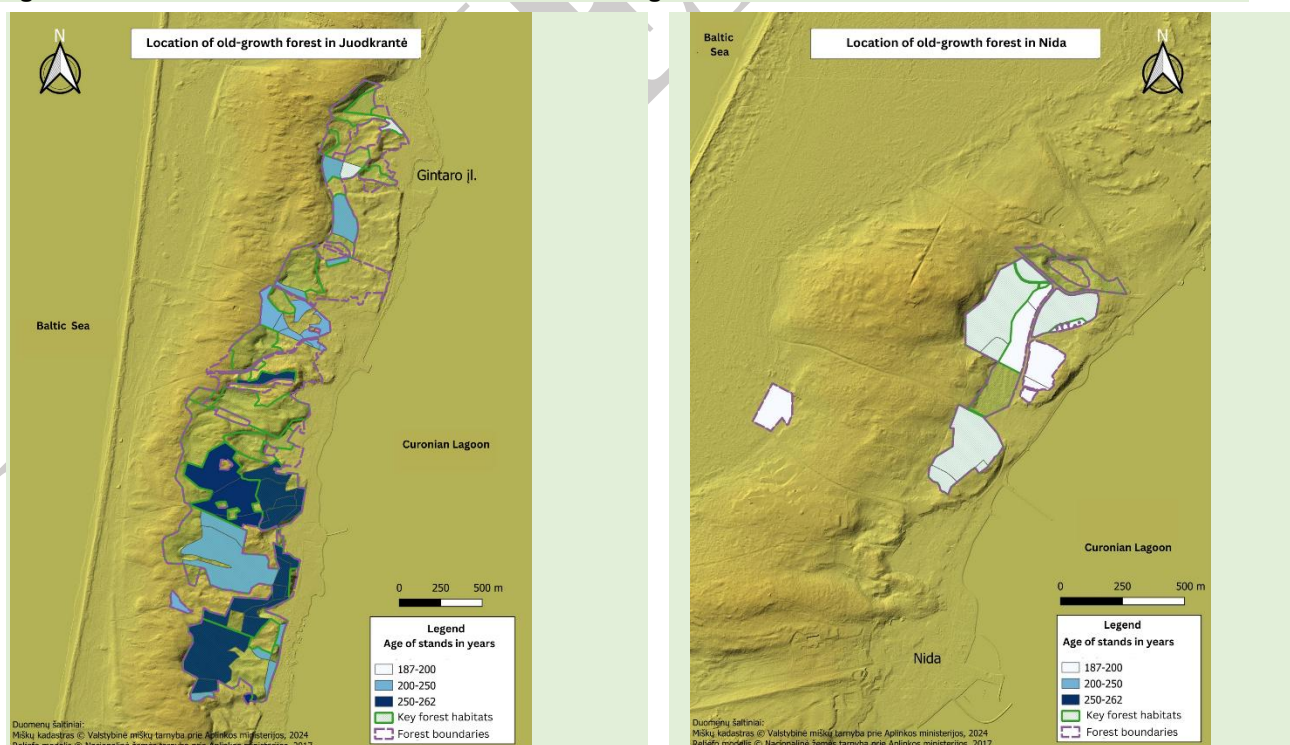
Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with remnants of ancient parabolic dunes and old-growth (ancient) forests. Parabolic dunes (crescent-shaped or horseshoe-shaped sand hills) were formed on the coast of the Baltic Sea, where waves dumped large quantities of sand. During the formation of the parabolic dunes, winds were moderate and rainfall was

high. This provided excellent conditions for the growth of vegetation. The intersection of the dunes' glide paths, the obstacles in the path of the shifting dunes and the varying degrees of vegetation cover have led to the formation of entire parabolic dune masses. Over time, the dunes of the parabolic spit became forested. From the 16th century onwards, as the forest gradually disappeared, the vast expanses of sand that opened up allowed the formation of large shifting dunes. These dunes became a large part of the old parabolic dunes in the western part of the spit, which, together with the sand that was constantly being thrown up by the sea, reached the parabolic dunes in the east and quite quickly filled them in. Only near Nida and Juodkrantė, small areas of parabolic dunes covered with old-growth forests, i.e. ancient forests, remain.

In the Curonian Spit, there are surviving ancient forests near Juodkrantė and a small fragment near Nida. It is a unique ecosystem of sandy forest of marine-eolian origin. The Juodkrantė ancient forest contains sandy soils dating back about 3 000 years and older, as well as bi- and even tri-arid sandy soils with genetic horizons characteristic of pine forest vegetation. Distinctive biocenoses, distinctive forest types (e.g. lingonberry-blue pine forest on parabolic dunes) have been preserved, which have no analogues in the typical phytocenological typology of forests. Ancient forest pines (*Pinus sylvestris* L. f. *rigensis* Loudon) are distinguished by their fast growth (especially when young), their waist-high trunk, their thick, sparse branches, their brownish bark, their long, broad and shiny spines, their wide crown, which is the widest in Lithuania, and their extensive root system, with a greater number of anchoring roots, especially on the upwind side. They are characterised by eccentric trunk cross-sections with denser annual bark, more abundant latewood on the upwind side.

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Figure 5. Locations of the Juodkrante and Nida old-growth forests



159 Prof. emeritus, habil. dr. E. Riepšas. "Topical issues of cultural and natural heritage preservation in the forests of the Curonian Spit", conference presentation, 3-4 November 2016.

The area of Juodkrantė ancient forest is 171.5 ha, and that of Nida ancient forest is 27.7 ha. In the ancient forests, spontaneous stands of more than 187 years old according to the 2009 forest inventory are fragmented, but they are connected by core forest habitats, which are characterised by the criteria of mature forests (abundance of dead wood, occurrence of associated organisms). Juodkrantė ancient forest has 40.3 ha of stands which are ≥ 250 years old. This represents 45.59% of the total area of such an old stand in Lithuania¹⁶⁰.

There are 17 core forest habitats identified in the ancient forest and its surroundings, almost 2 forest blocks are included in the Natura 2000 area, and 4 Scots pine seed stands have been identified.

Parts of the Great Dune Ridge with grey and white (shifting) dunes. The Great Spit, which stretches across the entire peninsula, is considered to be the most prominent and valuable landform of the Curonian Spit. It began to form after deforestation and loss of grass cover in the 16th century, and in the Curonian Spit between 1730 and 1830, aeolian processes and coproduction were particularly active¹⁶¹. The Great Dune Ridge is characterised by grey and white (drifting) dunes. The white dunes are dunes that are not covered with grass or forest and are still undergoing eolian processes. Grey dunes are covered with grassy vegetation and are at a standstill. Areas of loose sand visible after the vegetation cover has disappeared only in isolated parts of the dunes.

Dominant prominent dunes of the Great Dune Ridge and individual dunes. The Agila (53.1 m) and Vingis (51 m) dunes in Nagliai Nature Reserve, Angiai Hill (58.4 m), Karvaičiai Dune (59.4 m), Urbas Hill (52 m), Vecekrugas Dune (67.2 m), the Hill of Witches (50 m), Skirpstas Dune (53 m)¹⁶² are landscape features with the status of geomorphological natural heritage object¹⁶³. All of these sites, with the exception of the Agila and Vingis dunes, are planted or forested.

Lagoon capes and bays. The Curonian Spit has 21 bays and 20 capes, of which two are declared natural heritage sites¹⁶⁴. These are Nagliai and Lydumas capes.

The cape of the Curonian Spit is cumulative in origin and geological structure, consisting of loose sediment (sand). They were formed in places where the process of desertification was most intense, and the sand was gradually discharged into the lagoon through the deflation trenches between the trenches. The sandy deposits were redistributed by the waves and coastal currents of the lagoon and folded to form horns. The most distinctive are Avikalnis Cape, Nagliai Cape, Lydumas Cape, Horse Cape, Pervalka Cape, Goat Cape, Great Preila Cape, Bulvikis Cape, Parnidis Cape and Grobštas Cape.

The spit was formed in the 17th and 19th centuries, when sand wasting and dune subsidence resumed. During this period, the shapes and sizes of the headlands changed and grew rapidly. In the mid-19th century, many capes of the Curonian Spit were still growing. The average annual rate of dune subsidence in the spit was about 8-11 m, so that Cape

160 Data of the Forest Cadastre, 2024.

161 Gudelis V. Lithuanian gulfs and coast: Monograph (Lietuvos įjūris ir pajūris: Monografija), 1998.

162 Elevation based on the Cadastre of Protected Areas.

163 Resolution No 1578 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 18 December 1995 "On the Declaration of State Natural Monuments in the Curonian Spit National Park".

164 Resolution No 1578 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 18 December 1995 "On the Declaration of State Natural Monuments in the Curonian Spit National Park"

Nagliai was growing 12.8 m longer per year, Parnidis Cape 13.7 m, and Grobštas Cape 9.1 m. By the end of the 19th century, most of the dunes had been replanted, and without the additional sand, the dunes had stopped growing, and even started to decline.

Exceptional natural habitats, unique sand flora and fauna. The following natural habitats of the European Community importance are found and protected in the Curonian Spit: fossil desert dunes (19.5 ha); white dunes (375 ha); grey dunes (775.5 ha); dune laurel groves (5.5 ha); dune willow groves (7.1 ha); tree-covered coastal dunes (1,753.5 ha); wet inter-dune forests (10.5 ha); coastal sand spits (2.9 ha); swamp deciduous woodlands (102.3 ha). The habitats of grey dunes and dune driftwood are classified as priority habitat types of European Community importance.

The Curonian Spit is home to 21 plant species listed in the Lithuanian Red Data Book. The exceptional ecological conditions of the Curonian Spit are responsible for the distinctive nature of its vegetation. Most of the rare and protected plant species are associated with open-air habitats and grow only on dune sands and different types of grassland. 15 plant species are threatened with various levels of extinction in the wild: 2 species are classified as Critically Endangered, 12 species are classified as Endangered, 3 species are classified as Vulnerable and 1 species are classified as Near Threatened. The list of outstanding species of the Curonian Spit is given in Annex 7.

The sandy beaches of the spit support plants belonging to the endemic species of the sandy beaches of the Eastern Baltic Sea coast, i.e. Baltic linseed grass, Baltic pimpernel, and Baltic searocket flowers .

Various species of organisms are associated with sandy habitats. The Great Dune Ridge and Protective Coastal Ridge has a very rare mushroom species, the sand earwort (*Peziza ammophila*). The coastal and coastal sand dunes are home to rare insect species such as the Sand Earwig (*Labidura riparia*), the Spotted Grampus (*Polyphylla fullo*), the Baltic Silkworm (*Colletes caspicus*), and the Seaside Soilworm (*Agrotis ripae*). The dunes, which are not covered with woody vegetation, are breeding and foraging habitats for the rare bird species, the Sooty Shearwater (*Anthus campestris*), which is also used by other protected species, such as the Kestrel and the Common Kestrel.

The shores of the Curonian Lagoon are important habitats for rare and protected plant species and are covered by massive reed beds. Between 1985 and 2002, in the Curonian Spit (from Juodkrantė to Nida), *Phragmites australis* was planted along the lagoon shoreline as a means of protecting eroding shores. Over time, reedbeds have spread to stretches of coastline where they are not relevant as a shoreline management tool.

Bird migration path. The geographical position of the Curonian Spit and its insertion into the Baltic Sea allow coastal migratory birds to shorten their migratory route. The Curonian Spit is part of the White Sea-Baltic Sea flyway, which connects north-eastern Russia, Finland and the Baltic countries with central and southern Europe¹⁶⁵. This natural “bridge” is responsible for the high density of birds, with between 10 and 20 million migratory birds passing over the spit each year during the spring and autumn seasons. Some of them stop

165 Curonian Spit Nomination File <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/994/documents/>

in the spit for rest, breeding or wintering. The Curonian Spit is home to 251 species of birds, 106 of which breed here regularly.¹⁶⁶

The most abundant birds during the autumn bird migration are passerines, such as the common lapwing, the alder warbler, the great and blue tits, and the common starling. Migratory passerines such as Black-crowned Night-Herons, Sandpipers, Iceland Plovers, etc. are found on the beach. Migration of passerines is most intense and best observed in autumn, as adults and chicks fly to their wintering grounds after breeding, and the Curonian Spit, after the summer season in autumn, is rich in seeds and berries (the colony of great cormorants in Juodkrantė, where ornithochoric shrubs (hawthorn, common hawthorns, common rowan) grow, becomes a particularly important site). The Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea are used for migration by terns, terns and gulls. The Curonian Lagoon is a feeding and resting area for great and lesser spotted sandpipers, waders, tufted ducks and other duck species during autumn and spring migration, while in the Baltic Sea it is home to waders, ice ducks, black-necked and brown-necked divers, eared grebes, and other species of sea birds. Some seabirds remain in the Curonian Spit of the Baltic Sea for the winter. The Curonian Spit is an important confluence point for migratory bird flows.

Value 4: The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape highlighted by authentic historical cultural heritage

The cultural heritage of the Curonian Spit is rich in distinctive architecture as well as in traditions of life, beliefs and businesses. The various forms of cultural expression here have been shaped by the historical setting, the geographical location and man's ability to adapt to nature. The first human settlements in the Curonian Spit date back some 5000 years. Later, the Curonian Spit played an important role as a transport route: in the 13th and 18th centuries, a military route passed through the Spit, and in the 17th and 19th centuries it became an important European postal route, linking Western and Eastern European cultures. The strategic location of the Curonian Spit led to the creation of fishing communities, the residents of the Curonian Spit and its settlements, with inns and post stations built to serve and rest travellers. Over the centuries, deforestation caused by human activity and natural processes has turned the area into a sandy wasteland. Between the 16th and 19th centuries, the sand buried a significant part of the old cultural heritage.

The industrialisation of the Curonian Spit began an era of cultural transformation when the movement of sand stopped. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the area flourished with a resort, business, art and science culture, referred to in literary sources as the "Golden Age"¹⁶⁷. Unfortunately, the 20th century brought not only growth but also a tragic ethno-demographic transformation. During the Second World War, about 87% of the autochthonous residents of the Curonian Spit were forced to leave their homes^{168, 169}. Their place was gradually taken by settlers from various republics of the Soviet Union, and then later from Lithuania. However, the ideology of the Soviet era did not succeed in suppressing the cultural essence of the

166 Ibid.

167 Strakauskaitė, N., The "Golden Age" of Juodkrantė resort: from its establishment in the mid-19th century to the catastrophe in 1945. Druka: Liudvikas Rėza Cultural Centre, 2018

168 Ravaityte-Meyer R., 2019, History of the Curonian Spit from a Different Perspective. Raimonda Ravaityte-Meyer talks to Prof. Dr. Vasilijus Safronovas, Culture Almanac Dorė. Printing house Druka, Klaipėda.

169 Safronovas V., 2018, Migrants and Refugees in the Curonian Spit in the Middle of the 20th Century, Klaipėda University, Institute of History and Archaeology of the Baltic Region, Publishing House of Vilnius Academy of Arts

Curonian Spit and the authentic tangible and intangible cultural heritage that gives it meaning. The preserved or restored architectural and archaeological elements, the ethnographic elements of the fishermen's lifestyle, traditions, crafts and folklore create the special and lively atmosphere of the Curonian Spit.

Value	Attributes
<p>The vitality, spirituality and special mood of the cultural landscape highlighted by authentic historical cultural heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heritage of traditional architecture – old wooden fishermen's houses and their decorative elements ● Heritage of professional architecture – buildings and their decoration built in the 19th and early 20th centuries (including lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas, elements of resort infrastructure) ● Sand-buried and other archaeological heritage (artefacts and cultural phenomena associated with the post road, 16th–19th century buried fishing villages, ancient settlements of Nida, Alksnynė etc.) ● Maritime cultural heritage (fishing techniques at sea and in the lagoon, ice-knocking fishery of smelts, flat-bottomed boats, navigation in the water, waterways, marinas, weathervanes, amber fishing and related navigation) and underwater heritage ● Traditional crafts and arts (tradition of building flat-bottomed boats, production and decoration of distinctive weathervanes used since the middle of the 19th century, production of wooden burial markers in authentic shapes. preserved in Nida Old Cemetery, etc.) ● Ethnographic elements of the fishermen's lifestyle and folklore (the Curonian language, songs, fishing (catching smelts, vimba), the tradition of catching crows, drying and smoking of fish, net weaving and handling, typical of the 15th and 19th centuries in the coastal area)

Heritage of traditional architecture – old wooden fishermen's houses and their decorative elements. The everyday life and living environment of the Curonian Spit is inseparable from fishing traditions. The unique nature and the historical and cultural heritage of the Curonian Spit have determined the character of the ethnographic architecture of the Curonian Spit and the aesthetics and symbolism of its elements, the development of the plot, the functional diversity of the farmhouse and the buildings, the evolution and even the eating habits of the residents¹⁷⁰. The fishermen's house reflects the traditional architecture of the region, which has been shaped over the centuries and adapted to the environment. Fishermen's dwellings are characterised by their simplicity and functionality, reflecting the fishermen's way of life. They were built with local materials such as wood and often covered with reeds. The Register of Immovable Cultural Properties includes 93 buildings of ethno-cultural significance, which are characterised by their distinctive architecture and ethnographic exterior and interior decoration: the paired curbstones of the hipped roof of the valmy roof, the cut and/or variously ornamented weatherboards, the decorative flights of the

170 Neringa Architecture Guide, Viltė Migonytė-Petruilienė, p. 67.

steep roof ridge, the cladding of the façade in wooden planks with bricks and other means of ethno-architectural expression.¹⁷¹

The traditional (fisherman's) homestead is accepted as a compact spatial structure of the dwelling house and its annexes (auxiliary farm buildings), homestead plantations, flower garden, garden, vegetable garden, squares, characteristic of the Curonian Spit, which is in harmony with the landscape, continues the traditions of landscaping and environmental management, and has typical elements of grouping of the buildings, decoration and small architecture. The uniqueness, uniqueness, integrity and harmony of the Curonian Spit with nature shall be preserved.¹⁷²

Heritage of professional architecture – buildings (including lighthouses, piers, churches, schools, villas, resort infrastructure) built in the 19th century and early 20th century and their decoration. In the mid-19th century, as the dredging of the fairway for water transport became more active, amber was discovered in the Curonian Lagoon and mining began to develop. This paved the way for the transformation of Juodkrantė, and later all the settlements, into resorts, and eventually changed the daily life of fishermen. As the number of residents and holidaymakers grew, luxurious villas, marinas, stone churches, sea navigation structures and their appurtenances, and administrative buildings were built. Many fishermen extended their homestead-type houses by adding verandas (mostly used for serving breakfast to holidaymakers), terraces, stairs to attics, rooms for rent, reducing the number of outbuildings to auxiliary buildings, which they used for their own accommodation during the summer, and by redecorating them in accordance with the style of the villa style of the time. The architectural decoration of the new villas was based on catalogues of decorative elements for resort-style houses, popular in Venice. Professional architecture, industrialisation and resort architecture changed the cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit fishermen's settlements forever and helped the local population to escape from poverty. The buildings, complexes and valuable features of professional architecture are listed in the Register of Immovable Cultural Properties and are protected at regional or national level.

Sand-buried and other archaeological heritage. Archaeological finds of the first residents of the Curonian Spit (the Narva culture) have been found mainly in the Stone Age settlement of Nida (unique number 26019) and in the vicinity of Juodkrantė (in the Drumzakis site), but the exact location of the latter is unknown. Late Stone Age sites have been recorded at Meškadaube, Alksnynė and the section between Juodkrantė and Pervalka. The most important information about the Pomeranian culture was provided by the research of the Nida settlement, which was carried out in 1974–1978 by a group of archaeologists led by Rimutė Rimantienė. The Curonian Spit has been little explored, but recent research carried out by the Lithuanian Historical Institute in 2011–2012 near Alksnyne revealed two settlements of the Brass Age¹⁷³.

Research on archaeological sites is limited by forested and sensitive areas such as desert or grey dunes. It is known that during the great Curonian Spit wastelands of the 16th–19th centuries, 14 villages were buried under the shifting dunes (on the territory of Lithuania and the Russian Federation). However, the exact location of their sites is limited by the

171 Register of Cultural Heritage. Available online at: <https://kvr.kpd.lt/#/static-heritage-search>

172 Resolution No 702 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 6 June 2012 "On the Approval of the Management Plan of the Curonian Spit National Park"

173 Sereika, R., 2021, Guide to the Curonian Spit, Vilnius, Didakta

geological conditions of the area and the preservation regime. Information on historical buried settlements can be found in historical sources or identified using the latest environmentally friendly technologies.

The European Postal Route, of which no material fragments have survived, is associated with the abandoned cultural heritage. The European Postal Route was a key factor in the cultural growth of the spit, as the movement of correspondence, parcels and travellers from one part of Europe to the other required infrastructure such as post offices and inns, which became the foundations of the fishermen villages of the Curonian Spit. One of the most striking reminders of this phenomenon in cultural memory is the date on which the payment of taxes at Nida inn is mentioned in historical sources. It is 11 November 1437¹⁷⁴. The European Postal Route is associated with various cultural initiatives, events and historical research.

Maritime cultural heritage (fishing methods at sea and in the lagoon, ice-knocking fishery of smelts, flat-bottomed boats, navigation in the water, waterways, marinas, weathervanes, amber fishing and related navigation) and underwater heritage. Although the vast majority of Curonian Spit fishermen are not the direct successors of the tradition, due to the complex history of the region, the craft of fishing has been destined to survive to the present day. The distinctiveness of the area is shaped by a living tradition, the continuity of which is ensured by a small but practising fishing community.

Three navigational installations are still in operation in the Curonian Spit: the lighthouses of Nida (the old one from 1874–1944 and the new one from 1953¹⁷⁵), Pervalka (since 1900) and Juodkrantė (since 1953). The oldest lighthouses in Nida and Pervalka are symbols of the industrial era, maritime, cooperation with the other shore and even the resort culture of the Curonian Spit. Meanwhile, the later and different ethno-cultural lighthouse in Juodkrantė also works in a common chain with other maritime lighthouses in Lithuania. All three lighthouses mark the historical importance of water communication in the Curonian Spit and have become symbols of the identity of the site. The system of navigational landmarks for fishermen in the late 19th century and early 20th century is complemented by the surviving churches of Nida and Juodkrantė, and the wind semaphore, installed in 1902 on the northern rampart of the Spit Fort, which was the most prominent feature of the Spit's peaked coastal landscape from afar until World War II.

The underwater cultural heritage of the Curonian Spit includes objects recorded in both the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea. These date from the Late Palaeolithic (c. 10000 years BC) to the 20th century. According to the 2001 Convention Concerning the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, only objects older than 100 years are considered to be underwater cultural heritage, and the recording of ships from the early 20th century is complicated by legal constraints. Among the most significant finds are more than 400 Neolithic artefacts found in Juodkrantė in the 19th century, known as the Amber Hoard, and the spectacular remnants of a relict forest in the Baltic Sea at Juodkrantė, the stumps of pine trees (*Pinus sylvestris*), dated to around 10 000 years old, discovered at a depth of about 27 m in water, 3.5 km from the shoreline outside the site, which are evidence of the changing of

¹⁷⁴ Decision No T1-198 of the Council of Neringa Municipality of 14 November 2022 “On the Approval of the Historical Date of the Origins of Neringa”. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/3217afc261c811ed9df7cab9fe34d2f>

¹⁷⁵ Investment project “Overcoming of the Nida Lighthouse Complex (Taikos g. 10A)”, 2022, promoter Public Institution PRIC, customer Budgetary Institution Neringa Museums.

the old landscape. In the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea, shipwrecks dating from the Middle Ages to the 20th century have also been found. In the Bay of the Ice Cape, the deliberate sinking of ships has been documented, with metal ships being launched here before 1970, including wooden structures possibly more than 100 years old.

Currently, the locations of the underwater heritage sites are reflected in the Register of Cultural Heritage Properties and in the Master Plan of the KSS. However, the latter only record sites in the northern part of the Curonian Spit in the Baltic Sea. Meanwhile, in the Curonian Lagoon, despite the numerous and valuable archaeological finds recorded there, the underwater heritage is not marked. Underwater heritage sites are also not identified in the CSNP Special Plan. This situation reveals the lack of knowledge and data included in legal documents and registers, and highlights the need to systematically document, assess and formalise this heritage in order to ensure its protection and inclusion in heritage planning.

Traditional crafts and arts (tradition of building flat-bottomed boats, production and decoration of distinctive weathervanes used since the middle of the 19th century, production of wooden burial markers in authentic shapes, preserved in Nida Old Cemetery, etc.)

The ethnography, folklore, crafts and creativity of the old residents of the Curonian Spit were mainly influenced by the geographical location of the area and the harsh conditions of life on the sands. The communities of the area bounded by two coastlines have always been dominated by a fishing culture, which has shaped the elements of their lifestyle and fishing traditions. These include the various fishing methods used in different seasons, smoking, drying and curing fish, the production of fishing gear, wooden flat-bottomed sailing boats and their identifying signs, the weather vane. The tradition of creating authentic gravestones (baptismal monuments) is also outstanding, as is the Curonian colloquial language, which has existed for centuries and has become one of the most important tools for the creation of ethno-cultural heritage. Some of this intangible heritage, passed down from generation to generation, has been preserved and restored, some of it has been nurtured by various academic and amateur communities, and some of it is on the verge of extinction.

Baptismal fonts have been mentioned in historical sources under this name since the 16th century, and at one time were widespread not only in Lithuania Minor, but also in Western Samogitia. Later on, the area of their erection narrowed down and in the early 20th century, only the residents of the Pomeranian coast, Nemunas delta, the Tilžės area and the Curonian Spit marked their graves with baptisms. Authentic copies of baptisms can only be seen in the ethnographic cemeteries of Nida and Preila in the Curonian Spit. The baptismal fonts on the eastern shore and elsewhere have decayed and deteriorated. The preservation of these unique monuments in the spit was taken care of by the folk artist Eduardas Jonušas. In the 1970s, after collecting iconographic material, he prepared a project for the restoration of the cemetery and achieved the restoration of these monuments of small architecture in their graves. However, no detailed research has been carried out on these tombstones.

The fishermen of the Curonian Lagoon have always fished exclusively in wide-bottomed sailing boats typical of the region, known by the generic Soviet name of “traditional fishing boats”¹⁷⁶ (*korno valte* in the Curonian dialect)¹⁷⁷. The first wooden sailing ship “Kuršis” was

176 Monument to the Curonians. Prof. Dr. Dalia Kiseliūnaitė interviewed by Raimonda Ravaitytė-Meyer, Culture Almanac “Dorė”, 2023, Druka, Klaipėda, p. 13.

177 Sereika, R., 2021, Guide to the Curonian Spit, Vilnius, Didakta, p. 25.

built in 1993 by the folk artist Eduardas Jonušas on the basis of historical drawings from the Bremerhaven Museum, with the advice of the old shipbuilding master Kurth Sakuth and the help of the engineer Henrikas Milašauskas. The “traditional fishing boat”, one of the symbols of the Curonian Spit, which is awaiting the status of a cultural heritage object, is still sailing along the Curonian Lagoon today, and its maintenance is partly taken care of by the Neringa municipality and small businesses. In 2025, a total of 17 old flat-bottomed sailing boats (wherry, cruising, windward and other boats, traditional fishing boats, eel boat, Viking ship) are registered on both shores of the lagoon. The weather vanes marking historic fishing sailing boats have been widely popularised since ancient times. During the warm season, the carving of these sailboats by restorers who have mastered the craft of carving them adorns the quaysides of the Nida seafront, while during the cold season they are replaced by stylised street decorations for winter festivals, and a weathervane gallery has been opened in Juodkrantė.

Masterpieces of the oral and intangible cultural heritage of humanity have been proclaimed prior to the entry into force of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. In 2001, the Cross Carving and Symbolism of Crosses in Lithuania was added to the list of this heritage. The nomination application also describes a group of wooden baptismal monuments common in the Curonian Spit¹⁷⁸. It was added to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2018.

In 2008, the Lithuanian National Memory of the World Register included the works of filmmaker Romualdas Jarašauskas, which testify to the ethnographic elements of the fishermen's lifestyle and the promotion of the traditional crafts of the Curonian people, such as the documentary film “The Return of the Traditional Fishing Boat” (Kurėno sugrįžimas) (1993) and the cycle of documentaries “The Land of Lithuanians” (Lietuvininkų kraštas) (1998). These works are preserved in the Lithuanian National Radio and Television.

Ethnographic elements of the fishermen's lifestyle and folklore (Curonian language, songs, fishing (catching smelts, vimba), the tradition of catching crows, drying and smoking of fish typical of the coastal region of the 15th and 19th centuries, net weaving and handling). The intangible local cultural heritage is fostered and its continuity promoted by the CSNPA, the municipalities of Neringa and Klaipėda and their cultural institutions, the local community, businesses and academia. Traditions that are alive, fading or already extinct, i.e. singing, dancing, games, wedding customs, fishing methods and various crafts, are passed on through the activities of ensembles, educational programmes, excursions, cognitive tourism and small businesses. The Curonian colloquial language, which has existed for centuries, is strongly linked to the identity of the area. Thanks to the research of Prof. Dalia Kiseliūnaitė, it has been discovered that most of the place names of the Curonian Spit that have survived to this day are Curonian language creations, such as Priedinė, Žirgų ragas, Parnidis Dune, Vecekrugas Dune, Preila, Pervalka, etc. The names of parts of the Curonian Lagoon and fishing gear, winds, fish are also mostly Curonian words¹⁷⁹. Also noteworthy are the activities of cultural and artistic residences, which attract artists and academics to create and reflect on historical traditions through new forms of expression in the form of festivals, concerts, discussions or other intellectual events. Events representing

178 Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Available online at:

<https://unesco.lt/kultura/nematerialus-kulturos-paveldas/reprezentatyvusis-zmonijos-nematerialaus-kulturos-paveldo-sarasas>

179 Cultural Almanac Dorė. 2023. Available online at: https://www.neringosvb.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/DORE_2023_perziurai-su-virseliu.pdf, p. 13

the authentic heritage of the ancient communities of the Curonian Spit are organised throughout the year, but they are most popular in the warm season.

Value 5: Traditions, spirituality and local lifestyle shaped by different historical periods

The cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit is inseparable from the various historical periods and the communities that have lived there, i.e. curonians, artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers. The exceptional geographical and geopolitical location and the aesthetic significance of the area have contributed not only to the peculiarities of the fishermen's lifestyle, but also to the attraction of science, art and cognition, which have given the area a distinctive cultural identity.

Value	Attributes
Traditions, spirituality and local lifestyle shaped by different historical periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-cultural traditions, spirituality and social perceptions shaped by fishermen, later, artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers • Harmonious recreational activities and cultural leisure traditions developed since the 19th century • Cultural memory

Socio-cultural traditions, spirituality and social perception shaped by fishermen, later artists, scientists, sailors, gliders and travellers. The Curonian Spit has been the subject of a wide range of scientific research at various times. The most famous personality born in the Curonian Spit, in the deserted village of Karvaičiai, is the theologian, Lithuanianist and folklore writer Martynas Liudvikas Rėza. In 1818, he was the first to publish the poem "The Seasons" (Metai) by K. Donelaitis in Lithuanian at his own expense, and in 1825 he compiled a collection of Lithuanian folk songs. The Culture and Art Prize was established in his memory in 2008, and is awarded for his significant, active and creative activities in the Curonian Spit in promoting ethnic culture and cultural heritage. German linguist, archaeologist and ethnographer Adalbert Bezzenberger, considered one of the founders of Baltic philology, carried out significant archaeological research in the Curonian Spit. The naturalist, traveller and geographer Alexander von Humboldt measured the speed of the tidal current in the Klaipėda Strait near Smiltynė. The Danish scientist Soren Bjorn prepared and implemented the Curonian Spit's protective coastal ridge. These and many other scientists¹⁸⁰ have left a distinct imprint on the geography, oceanology, archaeology, ethnography, ethno-culture and other scientific disciplines of the Curonian Spit and have been recorded in the history of its development.

In the mid-19th century, the Curonian Spit began to attract artists. The first to arrive were the painters of the Königsberg Academy of Art, and in 1867 Friedrich Blode hotel was established in Nida, which was bought by his son Herman Blode in 1885 and soon became the centre of the artists' colony of Nida. The most famous artists who worked in the colony, such as Lovis Corinth and Ernst Mollenhauer, captured the aesthetics of the area in their

180 Curonian Spit National Park Administration. Available online at: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/lt/apie-nacionalini-parka/kulturos-paveldas/zmones-palike-pedsakus/zymus-zmones-susije-su-kursiu-nerija/>

work, and their work was influential in German Impressionism and Expressionism. Nida, also known in the 19th century as the “Prussian Sahara”, was christened both a “painters’ paradise” and a “wonderland” in the 20th century, and Blode hotel was called the “Sand Academy”.¹⁸¹

The Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea have become an important part of sailing culture. The first regatta took place in 1938 and a round-the- Lagoon regatta was launched in 1954.¹⁸² Sport and recreational sailing in the spit is an integral part of the identity of the area. The growing popularity of the sport and the active way of spending time is attracting more and more sailors to the Curonian Spit marinas and increasing the need to develop the water infrastructure.

A inter-war gliding school in Nida has also become a symbol of the modernisation of the resort, and its festivals have attracted visitors from around the world. In the early 1940s, the Gliding Club of the Baltic Sea was a major attraction for visitors to the region, the most talented masters Ferdinand Schulz and Alfred Gysas set records at the gliding school near Nida. The most famous Lithuanian pilots Bronius, Oškinis, Viktoras Ašmenskas and others worked here. Every year, visitors from Germany, England and America used to come to the gliding festivals. The event was held in the Gliding Museum in England, England, England, Sweden, even Africa and other countries. After the Second World War, all the buildings on the territory (the wooden gliding hangar and the administrative buildings) were demolished, and three monuments have been erected on the site of the gliding school to commemorate the former historical complex.¹⁸³ Due to the sensitivity and vulnerability of the landscape of the area, paragliding in the reserves has been restricted under the LPA since 1995.¹⁸⁴

Lutheranism in the Curonian Spit is an integral part of the region’s history and cultural identity, which has deeply influenced the worldview, architecture and social life of the population of the Curonian Spit. The Protestant worldview that emerged from the 16th century onwards has shaped the spirituality, daily life and values of the residents, such as communality, diligence and moderation. Evangelical Lutheran churches played a role not only as centres of faith but also as centres of education and social life. Lithuania Minor (Prussian) began publishing a Lithuanian press and created a comprehensive collection of church books necessary for religious life: catechisms, hymnbooks, prayer books, gospels, the first translations of theological works, grammars and dictionaries.¹⁸⁵ As the priests in the church preached not only in German but also in Lithuanian, the spread of the Lutheran tradition became one of the factors of Lithuanianisation and the formation of Lithuanians in the Curonian Spit. Today, the Evangelical Lutheran churches of Nida and Juodkrantė, built in the 19th century, are not only an architectural heritage, but also a space for cultural and academic initiatives.

The Lutheran legacy in the Curonian Spit remains an important historical, cultural and sacred memory. Preserved churches and old cemeteries bear witness to the centuries-old local communities. The spirit of the Lutheran faith is reflected in contemporary cultural

181 Curonian Spit National Park Administration. Available online at: <https://nerija.lrv.lt/lt/apie-nacionalini-parka/kulturos-paveldas/ivykiai-isgarsine-nerija/menininku-kolonija/>

182 Butkus, V., Krasauskas, L., Dovydenas, A., History of the development of Lithuanian sailing. Dates and events. Available online at: <http://www.lbs.lt/Istorija/LIETUVOS%20BURIAVIMO%20RAIDOS%20ISTORIJA.pdf>

183 Drėmaitė M., Migonytė V., Mankus M., Safronovas V. Neringa. Guide to Architecture, Publishing House LAPAS, 2020, p. 62.

184 Republic of Lithuania Law on Protected Areas. Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.5627>

185 Ravaityte-Meyer R., 2017, When faith changed the world. Doc. habil. dr. Inge Lukšaitė is interviewed by Raimonda Ravaitytė-Meyer, Culture almanac Dorė. Printing House Druka, Klaipėda, p. 14.

festivals, musical events and educational programmes that encourage interest in the past of the site.

Harmonious recreational activities and cultural leisure traditions developed since the 19th century. At the end of the 19th century, the fishermen's villages of the Curonian Spit became a refuge for people seeking respite from the industrialisation of the cities. In 1835, Klaipėda City Magistrate approved the bathing regime in Kopgalis-Smiltynė. In 1880, Juodkrantė became a first-class climate and sea resort, offering relaxation surrounded by natural surroundings, mud baths, sand steam and carbonic acid baths, active leisure on the tennis courts or walks along the forest promenades.¹⁸⁶ Eduard Stellmacher from Tilžė, who founded the Kurischer Hof Hotel on the site of a former inn, and later the Sturmhoefel Hotel, founded by Otto Sturmhoefel, and others, provided services here.¹⁸⁷ Nida and other villages also began to attract holidaymakers, including artists, scientists, Lithuanian military officers and foreign tourists. Unlike other Lithuanian resorts of the time, the Curonian Spit did not see intensive construction of recreational architecture, and the old buildings were mainly used for the needs of summer visitors. The German people, who gave birth to the holiday culture, provided the region with a fascinating historical narrative, and the exceptional nature enriched the content of the summer holidays¹⁸⁸.

Cultural memory. The 20th century was a particularly transformative and difficult period for the Curonian Spit autochthonous community. The ethno-demographic transformation brought about by the Second World War destroyed a large part of the population's traditions, but thanks to the return of about 13% of the population of the Curonian Spit^{65, 66} and the settlers interested in their heritage, some of the intangible cultural heritage was preserved. Although the process of transmission of traditions was interrupted when Lithuania regained its independence, the opportunities for the knowledge, restoration and preservation of the intangible cultural heritage of the Curonian Spit have been greatly expanded and appreciated nationally and internationally.

The historical research and scientific works of Dr. Nijolė Strakauskaitė, Associate Professor of Klaipėda University, Dr. Vasilijus Safronovas and other scientists have made a significant contribution to the preservation of the cultural memory of the place. Since 2010, the cultural almanac "Dorė", published by the Victoras Miliūnas Public Library of Neringa Municipality, has been an important contribution to the historiography of the Curonian Spit. Scientific research, historical recording and publicity significantly contribute to the strengthening of the identity of the area, the involvement of the contemporary community, and lay the foundation for future research.

Fostering of traditions and community art in the Curonian Spit is an integral part of the area. Folklore ensembles, folk dance groups and musical groups organise performances, celebrations and festivals. Over 100 residents of Neringa regularly participate in the activities of art groups.⁶⁷ The festivals "Stintapūkis" (The Fishbone), "Žiobrinės", the international folklore festival "Tek saulužė ant maračių", Juodkrantė Resort Days and other events

186 Drėmaitė M., Migonytė V., Mankus M., Safronovas V. Neringa. Guide to Architecture, Publishing House LAPAS, 2020, p. 33

187 Strakauskaitė N., The Curonian Spit: European Postal Road. S. Jokužis publishing house-printing house, 2001, p. 64.

188 Drėmaitė M., Migonytė V., Mankus M., Safronovas V. Neringa. Guide to Architecture, Publishing House LAPAS, 2020, p. 33

promoting ethno-culture combine old traditions with modern culture, involving the local community and visitors.

It should be noted that some initiatives by the public or non-governmental organisations can become significant phenomena uniting institutions, communities and cultural heritage. One of the best examples is the preservation of the Nida Lighthouse Complex (unique number 41559) (hereafter referred to as the “complex”) for community use. When the risk of transferring some of the buildings of the complex to the State Enterprise Turto bankas and eventually privatising them arose, the public and community representatives came together and defended their view that the buildings of the complex should serve for awareness raising, education and the preservation of cultural heritage. Today, the Nida Lighthouse (the old structure, demolished during World War II, which existed from 1874 to 1944, and the new¹⁸⁹ structure built on its site in 1953), the old staircase leading up to it, the lighthouse-keeper’s house and the other buildings in the complex symbolise not only maritime and navigational heritage. It is one of the most iconic examples of professional architecture in the Curonian Spit, reflecting different historical epochs, and a symbol of unification of contemporary communities, visitors, scientists, cultural representatives and institutions.

The community’s perception and awareness of the living environment leads to the preservation of the unique cultural landscape of the Curonian Spit and its historical-cultural memory. Preservation of the values of the Curonian Spit are influenced by population changes due to migration, the emergence of new closed communities, and other socio-demographic changes (ageing, declining birth rate, out-migration of local young people).

PROJEKTA

Annex 2: Other important values of the Curonian Spit and the elements, processes and characteristics that illustrate them

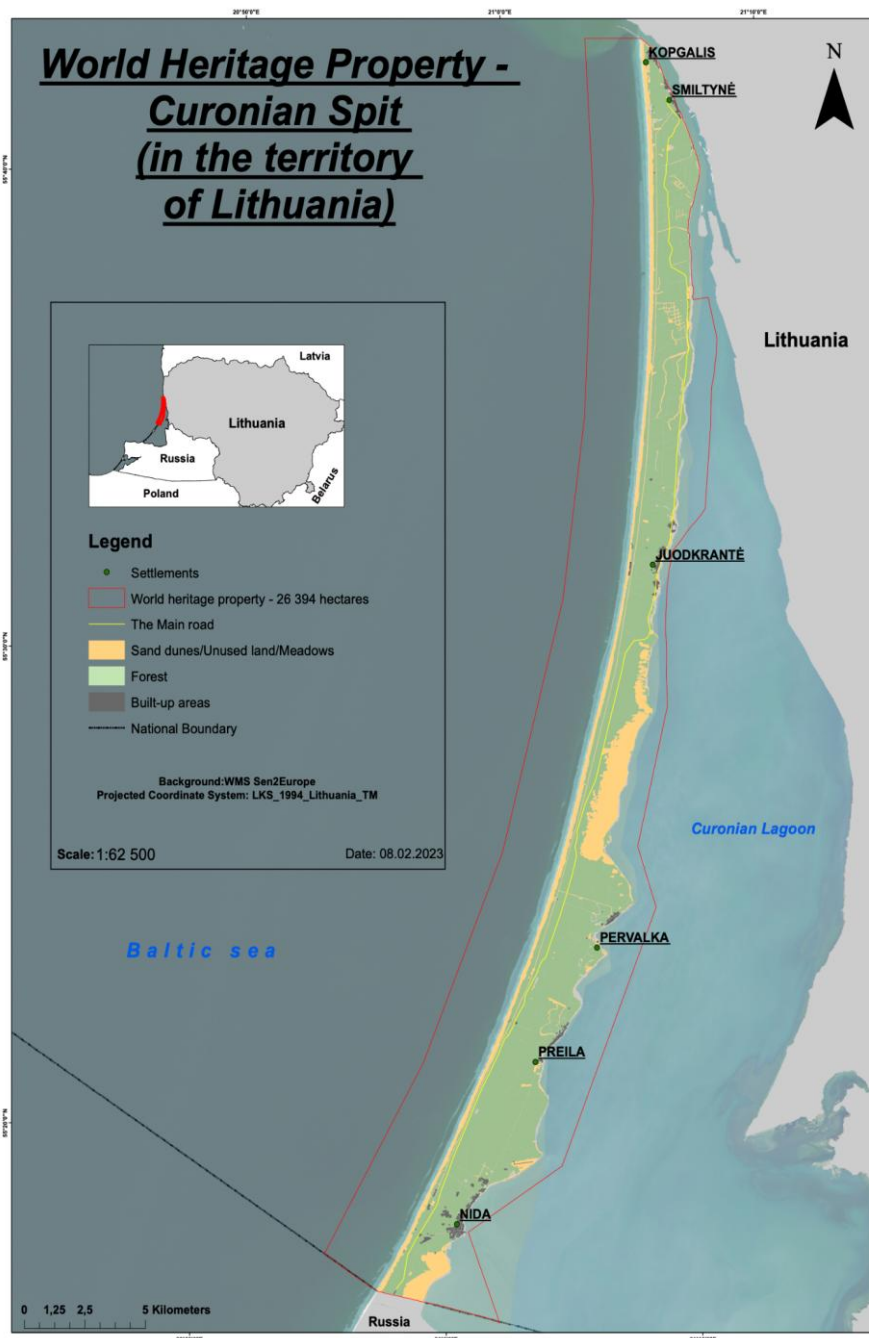
Group of other important values	Other important values of the Curonian Spit	Characteristics
Active and vibrant community	Education	The preservation of the education system is one of the most important values to keep the local communities of the Curonian Spit vibrant throughout the year. A strong and integrated education system can contribute to attracting young families and raising awareness among local communities and visitors about the uniqueness and vulnerability of the Curonian Spit. The declining number of children threatens to undermine the survival of the area's kindergartens and gymnasium.
	Residents living year-round in the Curonian Spit	Contributes to the preservation of the cultural integrity of the property, sustains the local economy and ensures the continued maintenance and protection of the heritage, preventing it from becoming a mere tourist attraction. Opportunities for young families, financial and social incentives, social care, service housing, education and other measures to encourage people to stay in Neringa and Smiltynė.
	Institutional cooperation and good governance	Applying the principles of good governance and strengthening inter-institutional cooperation can make a significant contribution to addressing the issues of compatibility between the cultural heritage of the Curonian Spit and the sustainable development of the resort.
	Sustainable business supporting the community	Sustainable businesses help to balance economic growth with environmental protection. They ensure that unique landscapes and cultural heritage are protected and that local livelihoods are sustained. This promotes community well-being and responsible tourism.
	Community-engaging activities	These activities are important for restoring and transmitting local cultural memory, strengthening local identity, promoting intergenerational knowledge exchange, and preserving history and traditions.
Uniqueness and vulnerability of nature	Biological diversity, including terrestrial mammals	The Natura 2000 network is designed to protect rare or endangered animals and plants (sea eagle, great cormorant, hen harrier, smooth bullfinch, etc.) and natural habitats (sheltered dunes, white dunes, grey dunes, dune bell ponds, willow groves, tree-covered dunes, wet inter-dune forests, etc.) that are common throughout Europe. Proximity to wildlife and its mammals (elk, foxes, roe deer, hares, etc.) is one of the natural phenomena of the protected area, offering a memorable experience, knowledge and respect for nature.
	Locations with sunrise and sunset over different waters on the same day	The extremely rare spectacle of sunrise in the lagoon and sunset in the sea reinforces the attractiveness of the area and the sense of local life between the waters.
	Other natural phenomena	The exceptional geographical position and the prevailing maritime climate lead to sudden and frequent changes in the weather, while the open panoramas of the seaside and the foreshore reveal spectacular natural phenomena that are less common in urban areas. Here, the seasons are still vibrant, with wind, low fog, icicles, freezing lagoons and the most sunny days in Lithuania.
	Natural resources, including fresh air	Naturally growing medicinal plants, mushrooms, amber found in the sea - this is the added value of the protected area for residents and visitors. The Curonian Spit is not only a place separated from the big cities by the vast expanse of water, but also by the fact that only 6% of the territory is inhabited by settlements. As a result, the fresh air is one of the attractions for visitors and creates favourable conditions for a healthy lifestyle for local communities.

Group of other important values	Other important values of the Curonian Spit	Characteristics
Inspiring space for creativity and science	Traditional and contemporary cultural events and their diversity	Festivals, traditional celebrations, linking the past and the present, celebrating the living culture of the region: the Shortest Night Festival, the Regatta of the Old Sailing Boats, the Festival of Old Crafts, the Autumn Equinox, etc.
	Variety of scientific research fields	The history, cultural and biological diversity, geographical location and spatial structure of the Curonian Spit is a multi-layered field of research. The ongoing activities of researchers in the area and the interrelationship of their research contribute significantly to the understanding of the Curonian Spit at local, national and international level.
	Residency programs	Residency programs and spaces for artists, scientists, writers, etc., promote cultural and academic exchange, awareness-raising and education, and the relationship between research and art. The patronage of the residencies contributes to the preservation of the cultural memory of the area.
	Academic music events	Promotes high quality cultural experiences that enrich the cultural life of the region in sacred, cultural and open spaces.
	Painting and photography plein-air events and exhibitions	Fosters artistic expression and presents cultural heritage through the visual arts, locally and internationally.
Recreation, health, knowledge	Diversity of sustainable tourism	Ecological, nature, hiking, cultural heritage, sustainable, culinary experience, bird watching, water and other types of tourism opportunities in the Curonian Spit that are less harmful to the environment and benefit both visitors and local communities.
	Blue Flags and wild white sand beaches	The public beaches of the Curonian Spit, which are awarded the Blue Flag every year, together with the wild beaches along the coast, are the benchmark for clean, safe and natural beaches to be experienced in the Curonian Spit.
	Eco-friendly outdoor sports opportunities and infrastructure	Hiking and cycling trails, wind sports, sailing, orienteering, running, tennis, etc. promote sustainable recreation, contributing to a healthy lifestyle while minimising harmful environmental impacts.
	Calmness and silence	The natural charm of the area created by the protected nature is an invaluable asset for the local population and for visitors expecting a tranquil, stress-free experience.
	Stargazing	The Curonian Spit offers breathtaking views of the sky thanks to minimal light pollution.
	Authentic culinary traditions	The preparation of local fish (salting, smoking, drying), fish soup, fresh fish, bream ribs and other dishes contribute to the preservation and presentation of the area's gastronomic heritage to visitors.
	Museums and visitor centres	The Amber Museum-Gallery, Thomas Mann Museum, Culture, Tourism and Visitor Centres, the Nature School, Eduardas Jonušas Crafts House, the Maritime Museum, etc. educate the public about the history, culture and natural environment of the Spit.
	Dolphin Therapy	The Dolphin Therapy Centre of the Lithuanian Maritime Museum is the only centre in Lithuania and the Baltic States that offers holistic assistance to people with disabilities through interaction with dolphins. Based on specialist rehabilitation principles, this activity strengthens the emotional bond between human and animal, promotes self-disclosure, social skills and positive emotions. The centre, which has been operating since 2015, also develops research in the field of human and animal welfare.
Forest bathing	The practice of forest bathing in the Curonian Spit promotes a slow presence in nature and a conscious relationship with the forest. The practice helps to reduce stress, enhance emotional well-being and general health, while deepening people's connection to the protected environment. Forest bathing initiatives reflect the principles of sustainable tourism and nature therapy.	

Group of other important values	Other important values of the Curonian Spit	Characteristics
Cultural heritage	Resort architecture of the 20th century	The examples of resort architecture in Curonian Spit in the 20 th century reflect the dynamics of ethno-cultural change, resort development and the intersection of cultures in this century. By adopting and modernising the architectural features of the fishing villages, the resort architecture of the last century took on a distinctive style not found elsewhere.
	Legacies of public figures of the 19 th –20 th century	The legacies of Thomas Mann, Hermann Blode, Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt, Wilhelm Franz Eph and many other scientists, artists, architects, writers, athletes, engineers, have left their mark on the natural, cultural and intellectual history of the Curonian Spit.
	Nature protection history, traditional knowledge and documentation	The detailed history of nature conservation and research can be used to develop more effective contemporary strategies for the protection of the ecosystems of the area, the management of natural complexes and the landscape. The accumulated and structured knowledge helps to educate the community and stakeholders about the importance of conservation and sustainable practices.
	Museum artefacts, movable properties	Memories of past communities, ethnic groups and their way of life in the Curonian Spit.
	Traditions and memorial of the gliding school	A monument commemorating the aviation history of the region and the cultural memory of the area.
	Military heritage	Tells the story of the strategic importance of the region and the painful historical events of the 20 th century, enriching the cultural narrative.

Source: Compiled by CSNPA, summarising the results of meetings and discussions with different groups of actors during the scientific workshop “Climate Vulnerability Index Assessment for the Curonian Spit”. It is not exhaustive.

Annex 3: Geographical location of the Curonian Spit in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania on the map



Source: Compiled by SSPA, 2023

Annex 4: Legislation relevant to the Curonian Spit and planning documents

Document	Links to the Management Plan
National legislation	
General	
Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania	Provides (Article 42(2)) that "The State [...] shall take care of the protection of the history, art and other cultural monuments and values of Lithuania", Article 47(1) that "The Republic of Lithuania shall have the exclusive right of ownership of the following [...] objects of history, archaeology and culture", Article 54(1), that "The State shall take care of the protection of the natural environment, fauna and flora, individual natural objects and particularly valuable areas, and shall see to it that natural resources are used in moderation and that they are restored and enriched".
Law on the Protection of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania	The Law regulates social relations in the field of environmental protection, establishes the basic rights and obligations of legal and natural persons in preserving the biodiversity, ecological systems and landscape characteristic of the Republic of Lithuania, ensuring a healthy and clean environment, the rational use of natural resources in the Republic of Lithuania, in its territorial waters, on the continental shelf and in the economic zone, as well as their responsibilities.
Laws, regulations and other legal acts aimed at preserving the values	
Law on Protected Areas of the Republic of Lithuania	Regulates the legal basis for the establishment and creation of the national park, changes to its boundaries, changes to its status, protection, management and control, regulates activities within the park, social relations, and the creation of sites of international importance, including Natura 2000 sites, and the natural framework, and the regulation of activities within them.
Law on the Protection of Immovable Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Lithuania	Establishes the legal framework for the recording, protection and management of the immovable cultural heritage in the Curonian Spit, the supervision of compliance with the heritage protection requirements laid down in this and other legislation, and the monitoring of the condition of cultural heritage objects.
Law on Special Conditions of Land Use of the Republic of Lithuania	Establishes special land use conditions, specifies the territories in which these conditions are to be applied, regulates the establishment of these territories and determines the rights and obligations of the persons involved in this process. Article 84 of the Law establishes special land use conditions in state parks and Article 97 in the coastal zone.
Law on the Framework Law on State Protection of Ethnic Culture	Establishes the general framework for the state protection of Lithuanian ethnic culture, measures and conditions for the protection, continuity, development and enrichment of ethnic culture. The Law aims to preserve the heritage of ethnic culture, to ensure the continuity of living traditions, to preserve the uniqueness, knowledge, recording and transmission of the traditions of ethnographic regions, to foster the expression of ethnic culture living in the natural environment, etc.
CSNP Regulations	Defines the objectives of the CSNP, its exceptional value, the requirements based on the traditions of architecture and homestead planning of the Curonian Spit part of the Lesser Lithuania ethnographic region, and the peculiarities of its management, protection and management.
Order No JV-190 of the Minister of Culture of the	The urban areas of the Curonian Spit have been recognised as cultural property and protected for public knowledge and use.

Republic of Lithuania of 29 April 2005 'On the Recognition of Immovable Cultural Properties as Protected'	
Regulations on general areas important for the protection of habitats or birds	Regulates the designation of sites of importance for the conservation of habitats and birds and the necessary measures for their protection, as well as the prevention of deterioration and significant disturbance to natural habitats and species of European Community importance for which sites of importance for the conservation of habitats and birds have been designated.
<i>Concept of the Law on the Protection of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Lithuania</i>	The Law provides for the necessity to regulate the legal framework for the legal regulation of social relations related to the protection, management and use of UNESCO World Heritage sites and their protection (buffer) zones, the Law provides for the regulation of the state management of UNESCO World Heritage sites, the functions and distribution of responsibilities in the field of their protection between state and municipal institutions and bodies, the activities of owners and managers of real estate and users in the areas of UNESCO World Heritage sites, the specifics of financing and the participation of the public in the decision-making process on the issues related to the use, protection and development of these sites.
Laws regulating the use of land and natural resources	
Law on Forests of the Republic of Lithuania	Regulates the restoration, protection and use of forests and creates the legal preconditions for forests of all forms of ownership to be managed in accordance with the same principles of sustainable and balanced forestry, ensuring the rational use of forest resources [...] ensuring the preservation of biodiversity, the enhancement of the productivity of forests, the stability of the landscape and the quality of the environment, and the possibility of fulfilling, now and in the future, their ecological, economic and social functions, without causing harm to other ecosystems.
Land Law of the Republic of Lithuania	Establishes (Article 6(1)) that all land in the CSNP belongs exclusively to the Republic of Lithuania. It cannot be acquired by municipal or private ownership.
Water Law of the Republic of Lithuania	Regulates the social relations arising from the use, management and protection of surface and underground water bodies and the water contained therein in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania. The provisions of this Law shall apply to the protection of the marine environment in so far as it concerns the chemical status of water in territorial waters.
Law on the Coastal Zone of the Republic of Lithuania	Identifies the objectives of the coastal zone, its components, and establishes the protection and use of the land and the sea water area of the coastal landscape.
Laws, regulations and other legal acts regulating processes	
Law on Spatial Planning of the Republic of Lithuania	Regulates spatial planning and establishes the rights and obligations of the persons involved in the process.
Construction Law of the Republic of Lithuania	Establishes essential architectural requirements for constructed, reconstructed and repaired buildings. Establishes requirements for the CSNPA to check the compliance of the designs of structures designed in the State Park with the requirements laid down in the planning documents for protected areas and other legal acts regulating activities in protected areas.
Law on Environmental Impact Assessment of Planned Economic Activities	Regulates the processes of screening for EIA and EIA of planned economic activities and the relations between the participants in these processes. The aim of this Law is to align the regulation of the process of EIA of planned economic activities with EU legislation.

Description of the procedure for strategic EIA of plans and programmes	Sets out the procedure for the strategic EIA of plans and programmes, the relationship between the participants in this process, and the links between the assessment and the decision-making. The assessment shall be carried out during the preparation of the plan or programme, prior to its adoption and/or approval, in order to select the most appropriate alternative to the plan or programme.
Description of the procedure for the preparation of strategic planning documents for protected areas	Sets out the objectives, content, preparation, publicity, coordination, approval, review and amendment procedures for strategic planning documents for protected areas, Natura 2000 sites, including sites meeting the selection criteria for sites important for the conservation of natural habitats and for the conservation of birds, or parts of protected areas. The strategic planning document may also lay down protection and/or management measures for other territories located outside the boundaries of a protected area of the Republic of Lithuania or a Natura 2000 site of the network, if this is necessary to ensure or restore the favourable conservation status of the natural or cultural values protected in the territories.
Description of the procedure for screening plans and programmes for strategic environmental assessment	For the organisers of plans and programmes or their consultants in the screening process for strategic environmental assessment, as well as for the subjects of strategic environmental assessment and the public.
Description of the procedure for determining the significance of the effects of plans or programmes and the implementation of planned economic activities on established or potential Natura 2000 sites	Applicable for determining the potential impact on designated or potential Natura 2000 sites of the implementation of plans or programmes relating to designated or potential Natura 2000 sites or the immediate setting of such sites; implementation of planned economic activities relating to designated or potential Natura 2000 sites or the immediate setting of such sites.
Law on environmental monitoring	Establishes the organisational structure, procedures and responsibilities for monitoring. It is the basis for state environmental monitoring in the CSNP.
Rules on monitoring of real cultural heritage sites	Sets out the requirements for the monitoring of individual, integrated and complex cultural heritage sites, and defines the operators of monitoring of immovable cultural heritage sites according to their status.
Rules for monitoring cultural heritage sites	Regulates the purpose, scope, organisation and performance of monitoring of cultural heritage sites, except for sites for the protection of which a municipal reserve has been established and stipulates that the monitoring of the Curonian Spit is carried out by the DCH.
Law on Tourism of the Republic of Lithuania	Establishes the principles of the organisation of tourism services, the requirements for the provision of tourism services, the requirements for the protection of travellers' rights, the competence of state and municipal authorities and bodies in the field of tourism, and the peculiarities of the employment relationship of the managers of tourism information centres.
Laws, regulations and other legal acts laying down the competences of institutions	
Law on Local Self-Government	Establishes the local self-government municipal institutions and their competences, functions, the status of the mayor of a municipality, the status of a member of a municipal council, and the basis for the economic and financial activities of municipalities

Law of the Protected Areas	Establishes (Art. 27(2)) that for the coordination of protection and management activities in the State Park [...] a joint council shall be formed from the protected area management, the authorities of the municipalities in whose territories the State Park is located [...], the territorial units of the environmental protection and cultural heritage authorities operating in the regions, the forest management, the representatives of the local communities operating in the State Park or the biosphere reserve, and the representatives of non-governmental organizations.
CSNPA Regulations	Regulates the activities of the CSNPA: defines the scope of its activities, types of activities, objectives and functions, rights and duties, the structure of the administration and the organisation of its activities. These Regulations entrust the administration with the implementation of the World Heritage Convention as the Site Manager of the World Heritage property, responsible for the management, monitoring, conservation, management and promotion of the World Heritage property and its OUV <i>in situ</i> .
Statutes of the State Forest Enterprise	Defines the objectives and types of activities, functions, management, etc.
Order No D1-76/IV-170 of 8 February 2021 of the Ministers of Environment and Culture of the Republic of Lithuania "On the Approval of the Procedure for the Establishment of the Joint Council of the State Park or Biosphere Reserve and the Description of its Activities"	Establishes the procedure for the establishment, organisation and operation of the CSNP Joint Council, a collegial body coordinating conservation and management activities in a State Park or Biosphere Reserve. The composition of the CSNPA Joint Council was approved by Order No V-79 of 10 August 2023 of the Director of the SSTT
Government Resolution No 544 of 19 May 2010 'On the Designation of the Authorities Responsible for the Protection of the properties on the UNESCO World Heritage List in Lithuania'	At the state level, the MoE is responsible for the conservation of the Curonian Spit in Lithuania
National strategic planning documents	
State Progress Strategy "Lithuania's Vision for the Future "Lithuania 2050"	In the area of strengthening the role of culture in the state and community ties, the aim is to make Lithuania's historical and cultural heritage, as an integral part of the common European cultural heritage and the basis of the society's identity, better known to the citizens, and to continuously update and rethink it in the public sphere. In the field of sustainable and coherent territorial development, it will ensure integrated development at the appropriate territorial level, taking into account local conditions and regional demographic projections. In planning and implementing local development, it will be guided by the principles of climate neutrality, universal design (providing equal access to infrastructure for all people) and the updating of cultural heritage, as well as by the views of the local community (the principle of creative place-making).

Policy concept for the preservation and upgrading of cultural heritage	One of the relevant lines of action of the Policy for the Safeguarding and Modernisation of Cultural Heritage is 41.2 'Effective management for the safeguarding of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage', 41.2.6, which provides for 'Ensuring that the management of the tangible and intangible heritage of UNESCO is made more effective'.
Provisions of the Lithuanian Baltic Sea Coastal Management Strategy	The objective is to ensure a balanced development of the coastline, preserving the natural complexes of the coastal zone and creating conditions for the rational use of natural resources. Guiding principles: Priority is given to the preservation of natural landscapes and natural shoreline processes; integrated coordination of coastal protection and coastal management; shoreline management measures are coordinated with each other, taking into account the dynamic integrity of the shoreline management processes, and are applied independently of the administrative distribution of departmental interests, and the introduction of shoreline management measures on one stretch of the coast should not undermine the state of the adjacent stretch of the coast; differentiated coastal protection measures are applied depending on the functions of the coast; natural and legal persons are responsible for the direct or indirect impact of their activities on the coast and, depending on the extent of the impact, shall compensate for the damage caused to the environment and, in coordination with the competent authorities, organise the implementation of measures to mitigate and compensate for this impact.
State Environmental Monitoring Programme (Government Resolution No 996 of 3 October 2018 on the Approval of the State Environmental Monitoring Programme 2018-2023)	Purpose - to provide the responsible state and international institutions and the public with reliable information on the state of the natural environment and changes in the state of the natural environment caused by anthropogenic impacts, taking into account international obligations and national needs. The implemented Programme will enable proper assessment, management and forecasting of the state of the natural environment in Lithuania, both nationally and internationally, and will provide environmental quality and public health authorities at all levels with the information on the state of the environment necessary for decision-making. One of the objectives is to monitor the state of the landscape of the State Parks, including CSNP, to assess land use change, the aesthetic condition of the parks, the areas of damaged and restored areas, to determine the condition of heritage sites, to assess the pressures on, and the impact of, the visited areas, and to determine the degree of adaptation of the areas to visitation.
Coastal Zone management programme 2023-2032	Sets out coastal management measures to preserve or restore important or characteristic coastal features and to reduce the impact of climate change on the mainland coast of the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Spit. The following priority shoreline management measures are prioritised: protection of natural processes; regeneration and protection of the ridge and dunes; securing of the ridge and dunes with frogs; construction of paths and stairs, removal of beaten paths; and securing of the ridge with a branch roller.
National Climate Change Management Agenda	The 2030 Climate Change Adaptation Plan for water resources and coastal zone protection aims to reduce the decline in groundwater levels, the negative impacts of ocean level rise and natural and catastrophic hydrometeorological events. Objective 35.4.5, which is relevant for the management of the area, aims to 'reduce the negative impacts of water level rise and natural and catastrophic hydrometeorological events on the coastal zone of the Baltic Sea through coastal management measures based on natural analogues'.
Curonian Spit Nature Management Plan, approved by Order No D1-32 of the Minister of the Environment of the	The main objectives of the CSNP, except for its functional priority zones for recreational, economic communal and other (residential) purposes (area - 7576 ha), are: to restore and preserve habitats, to improve the characteristic structure of the dune habitat, to restore, preserve and increase the abundance of protected species.

Republic of Lithuania of 14 January 2008.	
Municipal strategic planning documents	
Neringa Municipality Strategic Development Plan 2021-2030	Neringa Municipality Vision 2030: Neringa: a legend that inspires. With this vision, Neringa in 2030 will be a thriving municipality with a socially responsible community, a clear identity, a safe and attractive cultural and natural environment, and a distinctive resort culture. Nature and people are in harmony with each other, with a sustainable seaside and water tourism concept, an inclusive and unique environment, cultural heritage and UNESCO status.
Klaipėda City Municipality Strategic Development Plan 2021-2030	An important cultural heritage site is the settlement of Smiltynė, a part of the city of Klaipėda located on the Curonian Spit. The development of cultural heritage sites creates attractive conditions for the creation and development of tourism products, educational activities and business development. The plan provides for increasing the city's tourist attractiveness by developing Smiltynė into a resort area; pursuing a targeted sustainable mobility policy in the municipality; and making efficient use of cultural heritage objects (adapting the Memel Sud anti-aircraft battery in Smiltynė for visitors).
Neringa Municipality Sustainable Mobility Strategic Plan	Given the trend of population and visitor growth in the municipality of Neringa, the long-term vision of the resort's transport system must be oriented towards the possibility of managing the growing number of trips without increasing the negative impact on the quality of life of the population and the environment. Integrated multimodal transport development: the aim is to limit the flow of people travelling by car for short periods (one or several days) to the Curonian Spit for sightseeing and recreational purposes, providing attractive alternatives in terms of cost and recreational value, such as water transport, public transport and eco-transport, and upgrading the existing and creating new infrastructure of pedestrian and cycle paths for the daily needs of the local population as well as for the recreational needs of holidaymakers.
Klaipėda City Sustainable Mobility Plan	The aim is to provide Klaipėda's residents with a wide range of mobility options and to increase the accessibility of the city's main destinations by different modes of transport; to ensure safety and traffic security; to reduce pollution and energy demand in Klaipėda; to improve the urban environment and the spatial quality of the urban environment; to increase the city's efficiency for the benefit of its residents, the economy and the social environment. These objectives are achieved by analysing the situation in Klaipėda and proposing solutions for the public transport system, pedestrians, cyclists, modal split, optimising traffic organisation, increasing traffic safety, improving the efficiency of logistics in the city, promoting the use of less polluting means of transport, and proposing various other ways and means.
Klaipėda City Municipality Environmental Monitoring Programme 2022-2026	Monitoring of the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon is carried out at national level. The responsible authority for monitoring is the EPA. The monitoring data is available online at: http://vanduo.gamta.lt/
Territorial planning and other documents at national level and in the CSNP	
General plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania	Establishes the guidelines for the implementation of the spatial development of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, the spatial structure of the state territory, the mandatory provisions for the use of the state territory and other related decisions for the purpose of the sustainable development of the territory. The aim is to ensure the requirements for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of Lithuania's UNESCO World Heritage properties (Curonian Spit, [...]), to preserve and maintain the IVV, authenticity and integrity, and to maintain these values for present and

	future generations. Priority shall be given to the protection of the valuable features identified in the SOUV.
CSNP and its Zones Boundary Plan	Boundaries of the CSNP and its functional priority zones have been approved and the objectives of the conservation functional priority zones have been defined.
CSNP Special Management Plan (adopted by the Government in 2012)	The principle provisions of the CSNP management have been approved, which are in line with the ideology of sustainable development: ensuring the requirements of the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Site, giving priority to the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage; preserving the authenticity and integrity of the state of the integral features and components of the Curonian Spit IIV and its permanent maintenance, in order to preserve the value of this site for the current and future generations; guaranteeing the continuity of the experience of the CSNP planning and the transfer and development of innovative ideas acceptable to the Curonian Spit.
CSNP Internal Forest Management Project	Establishes a framework for specific forest management measures. Its solutions are in line with the provisions of the CSNP Special Plan concept.
Master plan for the Klaipėda State Seaport (land, inner water area, outer raid and related infrastructure)	<p>The aim is to create a sustainable environment that meets the needs of the port and the city development, ensuring the continuous and sustainable development of the territory, taking into account the development of the port and the city, the protection of the cultural heritage, nature and landscape values and their rational utilisation in order to achieve the desired positive result - the increasing competitiveness of the Port of Klaipėda and the city of Klaipėda, creating conditions for the development of port companies, investments, attracting passenger and cargo flows.</p> <p>However, the Curonian Spit, with the exception of individual immovable cultural heritage values - sites (historical settlements), complexes or individual objects, as an immovable cultural heritage value, does not have its territorial boundaries, its protection zone defined in accordance with the procedure established by the NKPAJ, and, at the same time, no mandatory heritage protection requirements have been established. Although the planned port development in the southern part of the harbour adjacent to the island of Pig's Back will not physically affect the Curonian Spit itself, it will change the spatial structure of the whole area - the character and visual perception of the Curonian Spit as a narrow strip of land between the Baltic Sea and the wide Curonian Lagoon as a narrow strip of tall dunes planted by humans in the past.</p>
Klaipėda State Seaport Strategic Action Plan	Sets out the directions, goals and objectives of the port's development, outlining investments, infrastructure improvements and operational efficiency improvements in the long term. It is updated every five years to ensure consistency with changing market conditions and national priorities.
Municipal spatial planning documents	
Master Plan for the territory of the Municipality of Neringa and its parts (Neringa Municipal Council Decision No T1-164 of 21 September 2012)	The main objective is to ensure the sustainable development of the territory in the environmental, social, economic and spatial structure development. It identifies the factors determining the development of the territory, the objectives for the development of the territory, the general spatial composition, and the specific use and protection of the territory.
Klaipėda City Master Plan (Klaipėda City Municipal Council Decision No T2-191 of 30 September 2021)	The main directions of the city's development have been defined in order to create conditions for the sustainable development of the city, for the continuous and long-term growth of the quality of life based on social, economic and ecological considerations, and for the reduction of territorial disparities. The territory of Klaipėda City includes only a small part of the Curonian Spit, Smiltynė. The plan does not foresee more intensive urbanisation of the territory, but rather an

	improvement in the quality of management of existing systems in line with nature conservation and CSNP requirements.
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Legislation on the protection of the Curonian Spit in times of armed conflict	
Law on National Security Framework of the Republic of Lithuania	The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage of the Curonian Spit provides (Section 1, Chapter 2) that [...] the environment and cultural heritage are among the main objects of national security, and Section 3, Chapter 4 provides that "The State has a duty to preserve and promote the national cultural identity [...] by protecting the cultural heritage. [...]. The State shall create the economic, technological and legal conditions for the protection of cultural heritage, and encourage owners to invest in the protection of cultural heritage. The State shall develop measures to ensure the protection of cultural heritage in the event of emergencies (acts of terrorism, fires, floods, accidents, etc.).
List of immovable objects of outstanding cultural value, i.e. cultural heritage sites bearing the distinctive symbol of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict	In order to ensure that the obligations under Article 3 of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict to protect cultural property as defined in Article 1 of the Convention from the possible consequences of armed conflict are fulfilled, the Government has included the Curonian Spit (CSNP) in the list of immovable objects of outstanding cultural value, i.e. sites of cultural heritage, which are to be marked with the distinctive symbol of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.
Instruction on the participation of the armed forces in the conservation of immovable objects of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflicts and other emergencies	The Instruction regulates the activities of the armed forces in preserving or rescuing immovable objects of cultural heritage in the event of an armed conflict or other emergency situation on the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, and provides for the preservation and rescue of objects of cultural heritage to be carried out by the military units of the Lithuanian Armed Forces in the event of an emergency situation; provides that in the event of an armed conflict, when World Heritage properties are at risk of being destroyed or attacked in any way by the enemy due to the presence or deployment of armed forces, they shall immediately move out of the World Heritage sites located in the UNESCO World Heritage properties within a distance of at least 1 500 metres (radius) outside the property; defined that in the event of armed conflict of any kind, the armed forces may not use the World Heritage properties and their surroundings for any other purpose if, in the event of armed conflict, this could lead to the destruction or damage of such World Heritage properties.

Annex 5: Responsibilities (details) and functions of the authorities involved in the management of the Site

<u>National level</u>	
Policymaking institutions	
Parliament	Shapes the policy on protected areas by approving the National Strategy for Environmental Protection and the Concept of the Master Plan for the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania, which defines the long-term spatial development directions and functional priorities for the use of the territory of the State (including the continental shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone in the Baltic Sea). It adopts laws establishing general legal norms to regulate the most important human relations, including the protection and use of the Curonian Spit.
Government	Establishes protected areas, approves schemes for the protected area system or parts thereof, and other spatial planning documents. Appoints the authorities responsible for the protection of UNESCO World Heritage sites in Lithuania.
Ministry of Environment	Responsible for the protection of the Curonian Spit (Government Resolution No 544 of 19 May 2010 'On the Designation of the Authorities Responsible for the Protection of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Lithuania'). It: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepares and submits to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee periodic reports on the state of the CN site; • provide information on the implementation of the decisions taken by the Committee and the recommendations made by UNESCO's advisory bodies; • appoint a National Focal Point (NFP);¹⁹⁰ • initiate scientifically based environmental research on the IP; • monitoring of the Curonian Spit's coastline and coastal erosion; • Formulates public policy in the field of environmental protection, pollution prevention and EIA, environmental monitoring, biodiversity, landscape, pet welfare and protection, genetically modified organisms; • submits the CSNP planning scheme and regulations to the Government for approval.
Ministry of Culture	Formulates state policy in the field of protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, organises, coordinates and controls

¹⁹⁰ Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, p. 13, WHC.24/01 31 July 2024.

	its implementation , administers the Register of Cultural Property, coordinates the improvement of heritage sites . ¹⁹¹
Ministry of Economy and Innovation	<p>Formulates the national policy on resorts and resort areas and organises, coordinates and monitors its implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing up a long-term programme for the development of resorts and resort areas; • Promotes and organises the carrying out of resort research and effective cooperation between research and study institutions and economic operators; • Evaluating and monitoring the compliance of a resort or a resort area with the general and specific requirements approved by Government Decree.
National advisory bodies	
Lithuanian National Commission for Cultural Heritage, accountable to the Parliament	<p>It is an expert and advisor on the state policy for the protection of cultural heritage, its implementation, evaluation and improvement.</p> <p>It also provides expert advice on the formulation of state policy for the protection of cultural heritage in order to ensure the protection, use and transmission of Lithuania's cultural heritage to future generations and to preserve the foundation of the State's identity.</p>
Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO	<p>The National Commission for UNESCO shall ensure the active participation of the Republic of Lithuania in the activities of UNESCO, in the development, evaluation and implementation of programmes in line with the objectives of UNESCO.</p> <p>The Commission is composed of specialists in education, science, culture and communication and information working on a public basis.</p> <p>The composition of the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO is approved by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, and the Chairman of the Commission is elected during the General Conference.</p>
ICOMOS Lithuania	Part of ICOMOS, an advisory body to the World Heritage Committee. Accredited by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), it assesses whether a World Heritage property is being properly protected and managed.
National policy implementing bodies	
State Service for Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishes and coordinates protected area directorates; • organise the preparation and implementation of specific spatial planning documents for protected areas; • advising the authorities concerned;

¹⁹¹ Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No 1469 of 13 October 2010 "On Approval of the Regulations of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania". Available online at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.383845/asr>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinate the implementation of measures for the protection of the immovable cultural heritage in protected areas; • cooperating with the MoC, the DCH and other institutions. <p>The representative of the SSSI is assigned the function of National Nature Coordinator.</p>
<p>Department for Culutral Heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinates and organises the process of recording and inventorying cultural heritage and manages the Register of Cultural Property; • provides methodological guidance for the protection of cultural heritage and advice on cultural heritage management issues; • preparing and organising the implementation of programmes for the management and compensation of immovable cultural heritage; • organising the preparation of special territorial planning documents for the protection of immovable cultural heritage; • dealing with matters relating to the research, organisation and execution of studies on immovable cultural heritage and movable cultural property; • organise and coordinate international cooperation in the field of cultural heritage protection; • organising and coordinating research, monitoring, knowledge and dissemination of knowledge on immovable cultural heritage and movable cultural property. <p>In the Curonian Spit, these functions have been assigned to the Klaipėda Territorial Division of the DCH.</p>
<p>Environmental Protection Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinates EIA processes, examines EIA documents, adopts screening conclusions on EIA and decisions on the environmental impact of planned economic activities. • examines and evaluates proposals from the interested public on EIA; • examining strategic EIA documents for plans and programmes; • coordinating environmental monitoring programmes for municipalities and economic operators (e.g. Klaipėda State Seaport); • issuing permits for excavation and disposal operations at sea and in the water areas of seaports; • State monitoring of the condition of surface water bodies, the dynamics of changes in the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon coastline, monitoring of ambient air quality and other areas, in accordance with the State Environmental Monitoring Programme; • carry out measurements and investigations of pollutants and contaminants in environmental elements (air, water, soil) for the purposes of state control of environmental protection, in

	<p>the event of extreme events, emergencies or major industrial accidents, in other cases established by legislation, and provide information to interested institutions or other persons on the results of such measurements and/or investigations for the purposes of state control of environmental protection;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor the D6 oil platform near the border between the Republic of Lithuania and the Russian Federation using the state monitoring station N-6, where water indicators (oxygen, pH, nutrients, phytoplankton, zooplankton, zoobenthos) are analysed 4 times a year, and bottom sediment contamination indicators (heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons) are analysed 1 - 2 times a year
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Local level

National policy implementing and site administering authorities

<p>CSNPA – Site Manager for Curonian Spit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carries out educational and awareness-raising activities in cooperation with the public, professionals, national authorities, municipalities, local communities and other stakeholders; • initiate and organise research and educational campaigns for the World Heritage Site; • prepare conservation status and periodic reports, and carry out follow-up monitoring in advisory missions; • strengthen cooperation and partnerships for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention; • cooperate at international level and represent the World Heritage Site at international events and meetings of the World Heritage Convention.
<p>Neringa Municipality, Klaipėda City Municipality</p>	<p>Municipal functions are either autonomous or state functions (delegated by the state to municipalities).</p> <p>State functions are assigned to the State, but the Seimas delegates them to municipalities in the interests of the population. Functions of national importance are entrusted to local governments because they are best placed to administer the function at local level and to implement it in practice. The implementation of public functions is the organisational responsibility of the municipalities, while the financial and material resources must be provided by the State.</p> <p>The autonomous functions of municipalities are important in the management of the CN area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the management, use and disposal of land and other assets owned by the municipality; • the development of the culture of the population and the promotion of ethnic culture;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spatial planning, implementation of the decisions of the municipality's general plan or the general plans and detailed plans of the municipality's parts; • the establishment of special architectural requirements and the issue of building permits in accordance with the procedure laid down by law; • supervision of the use of buildings in accordance with the law; • preparation and implementation of the municipality's strategic planning documents and their implementing planning documents; • protection of the landscape, protection of immovable cultural property, protection, maintenance and management of green areas and plantations in the municipality's green areas and plantation areas, monitoring of the condition of green areas, organisation of plantation creation and plant propagation, inventory and accounting of green areas and plantations, formation of land plots for separate green areas; • improvement and protection of the quality of the environment, environmental monitoring; • maintenance, repair, construction and traffic safety of municipal roads and streets of local importance; • organising passenger transport on local routes; • creating conditions for and promoting the development of business and tourism.
<p>State Territorial Planning and Building Inspectorate</p>	<p>Carries out state supervision of territorial planning, state supervision of construction and supervision of land use.</p> <p>In accordance with the Law on Construction, in all cases it checks the legality of the issuance of building permits in the land part of the Curonian Spit.</p>
<p>Environmental Protection Department</p>	<p>Exercises state control over environmental protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • controls whether natural and legal persons comply with the requirements set out in the legislation on environmental protection in the areas of pollution prevention, waste (except radioactive waste) management, accounting and sanitary protection of raw timber, compliance with the obligations of producers/importers and operators placing timber and timber products on the market, use of chemical substances and deliberate release of genetically modified organisms into the environment for purposes other than market supply, control of the restricted use of genetically modified micro-organisms, landscape, forest and biodiversity protection; • carry out preventive activities aimed at ensuring compliance by natural and legal persons with the requirements of laws and regulations governing the protection of the environment and the use of natural resources.

State Forest Enterprise	<p>Implements public policy in the field of management of the part of natural resources entrusted to the Minister for the Environment - forests .¹⁹²</p> <p>In accordance with the CSNP internal forest management project, it restores, maintains, manages, exploits (timber, recreation) forests, carries out sanitary, fire protection and protection against illegal activities. The forestry departments also carry out biodiversity conservation, conservation of landscape values, bank protection and protection of the coastal ridge.</p>
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192 Law on Forests of the Republic of Lithuania. Available at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.6036/asr>

Annex 6: Results of the survey “The Present and Future of the Curonian Spit. World Heritage Property Management Plan”.

The survey was carried out from 10 to 27 January 2025 and 474 respondents took part. The survey was publicised on social networks, partner networks and public internet channels. It is important to note that this survey was carried out on a voluntary basis and is therefore *not* representative of all residents or visitors to Curonian Spit. The results reflect only the opinions of the survey participants and should not be taken as a reflection of the views of the whole community or the general public.

When using or quoting the results of this survey, the source of the data and the exact number of respondents **must be** clearly stated in order to reduce the possibility of misinterpretation of the results. It is important to note that the total number of respondents may vary for each question.

The recommended format for citing the source is:

These data were obtained based on a non-representative online survey conducted in January 2025, titled “The Present and Future of the Curonian Spit. World Heritage Property Management Plan” (N = 474), aimed at adult residents and visitors of the Curonian Spit. The survey was carried out by the research and design agency ‘The Critical’ on behalf of the CSNPA.

* *Note:* When quoting, it is recommended to indicate the exact sample of the respondent group, and if the question was only shown to a certain group, this is indicated in the comments of the questions (e.g. *question for Curonian Spit residents (N = 210)*). **“N” indicates the total number of respondents who answered a particular question.**

Profile of respondents

An overview of the respondents is given, showing their distribution according to the main demographic criteria and their relationship to Curonian Spit. Responses by gender revealed no significant differences. However, given that one of the main cross-sections of the survey is the distribution of opinions between permanent and temporary residents of Curonian Spit and those who do not live in Curonian Spit, we provide an overview of each of these profiles.

Permanent residents of Curonian Spit. 26.8% of respondents (N=474) were permanent residents of Curonian Spit. This represents 127 respondents. The following is a breakdown of this group of respondents according to certain characteristics.

- The main relationship of the population to the Curonian Spit was that they lived here - 91.3% (N=126), worked - 52.8%, owned real estate - 41.7% or had a business - 19.7%. Other responses included people who grew up in the Curonian Spit and who chose to live here because of the good windsport conditions.

Among the permanent residents of Curonian Spit, there are both settlers and longer-term residents: 14.4% (N=118) have lived in the area for 0-5 years,

18.6% for 6-15 years and 66.9% for 16 years and more (according to the survey, up to 70 years).

The majority of respondents living permanently in the Curonian Spit lived in Nida (53.5%, N=126). 32.4% lived in Juodkrante, 11.7% in Preila and 1.9% in Pervalka.

- The largest number of respondents was in the 35-64 age group (79.5%, N=127). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were women - 65.1% (N=126), men - 33.3%. 39.7% of the respondents had children under 18 (N=126).

The largest proportion of respondents were employees - 46.03% (N=126), self-employed - 33.3% and civil servants - 22.2%.

Temporarily or seasonally living in the Curonian Spit. 18.4% of respondents (N=474) lived in Curonian Spit part of the year or seasonally (87 respondents). The distribution of this group of respondents according to certain characteristics is given below.

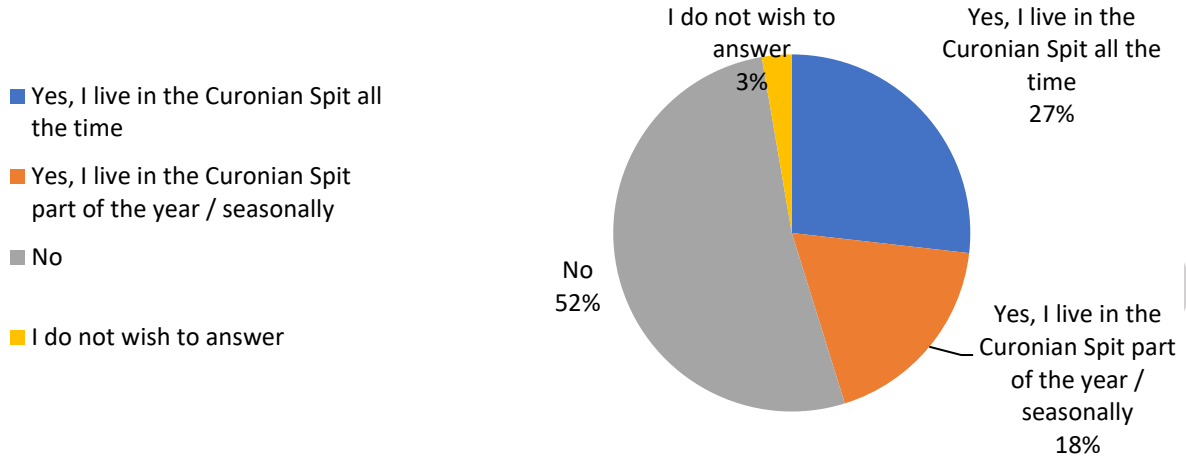
- The main relation of the population to the Curonian Spit was that the Curonian Spit was close to them / they were interested in it - 64.37% (N=87). A large part of the respondents also spent their leisure time in Curonian Spit (60.92%) and had real estate in Curonian Spit (55.17%).
- The highest number of respondents was in the 25-54 age group (70.1%, N=87). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were women - 48.3%, men - 49.4%. 35.6% of respondents had children under the age of 18.
- Respondents who lived in Curonian Spit seasonally or part of the time during the year, most often lived permanently in Kaunas city or district (27.59%, N=87), Vilnius city or district (26.44%), Klaipėda city or district (18.39%).

Most of the respondents were self-employed (48.28%, N=87) and employed (31.03%).

Curonian Spit visitors (living elsewhere). Most of the respondents did not live in Curonian Spit (52.1%, N=474). 247 respondents. The distribution of this group of respondents according to certain characteristics is as follows

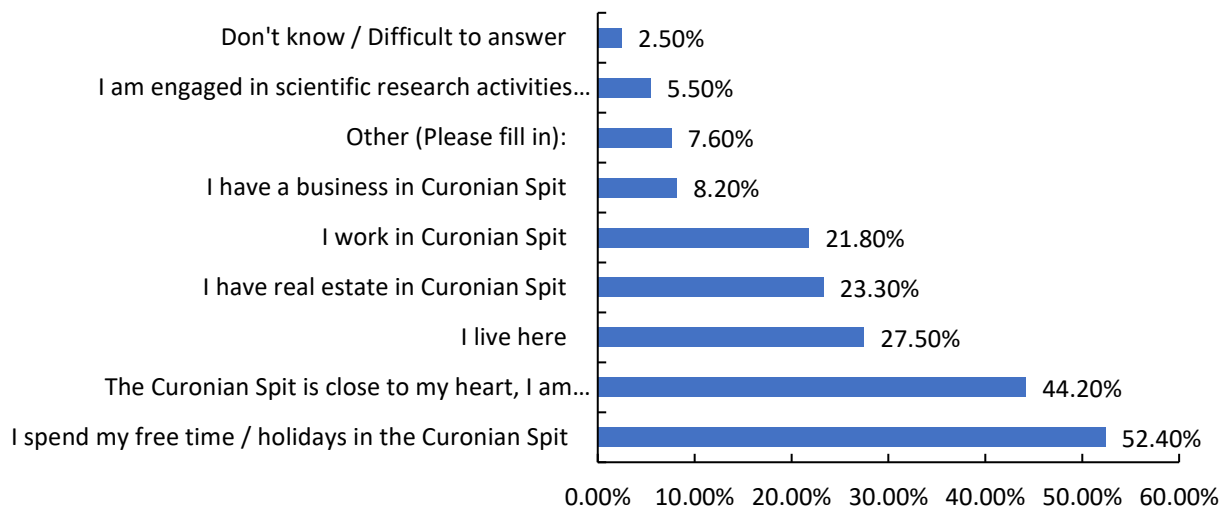
- The main relationship of this group with the Curonian Spit was that they spent their leisure time / holidays in the Curonian Spit - 70.45% (N=247) and that they were close to the Curonian Spit / were interested in the Curonian Spit - 47.37%.
- The most frequent was visiting Curonian Spit several times a year - 44.49% (N=245).
- The largest number of respondents was in the 35-64 age group (77.7%, N=247). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were women - 61.2%, men - 38.4%. 37% of the respondents had children under 18.
- Respondents who did not live in the Curonian Spit were mostly permanent residents of Vilnius city or district (33.2%, N=247) and Klaipėda city or district (31.17%).
- The largest number of respondents were employees - 42.11% (N=247) and civil servants - 39.27%.

1. Do you live in the Curonian Spit?



N=474

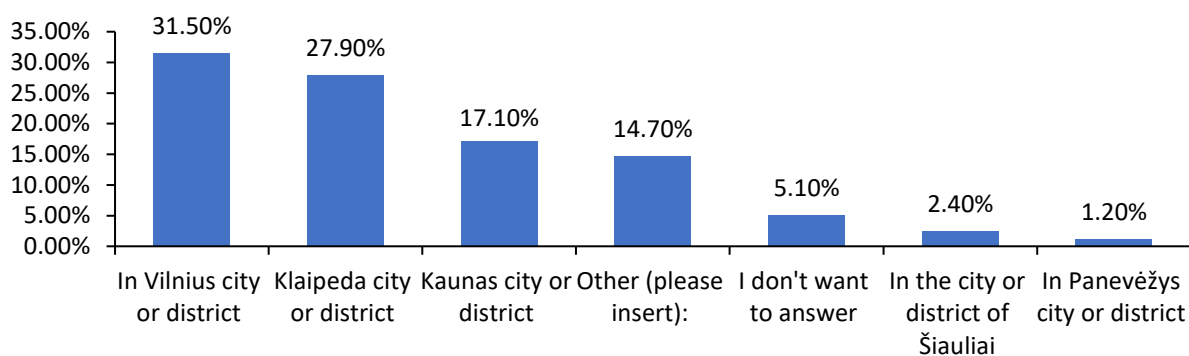
2. What is your relationship with the Curonian Spit?



N=473

3. Where do you live permanently?

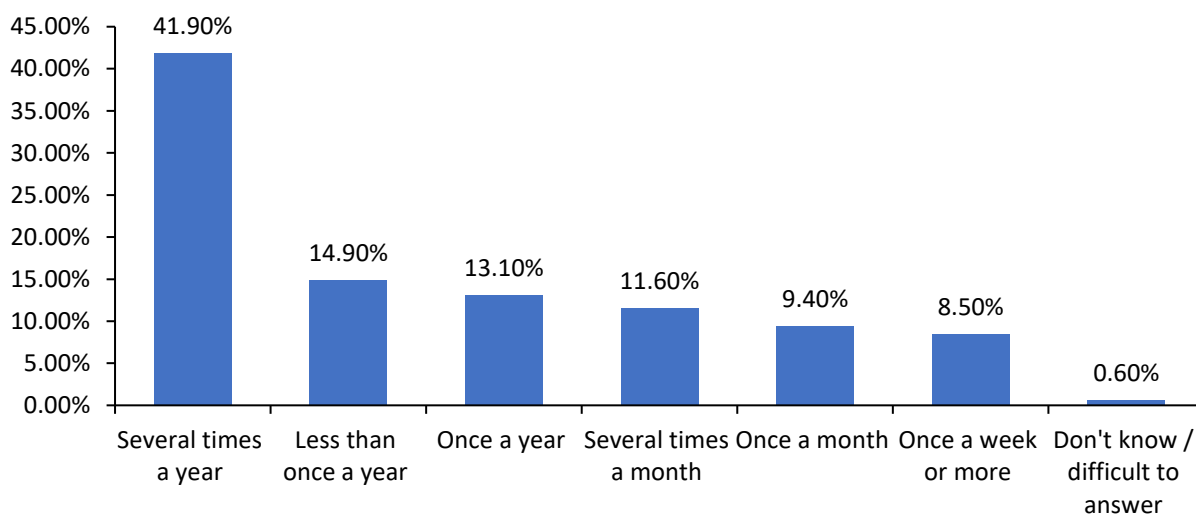
The question was shown only to non-permanent residents and visitors of Curonian Spit



N=333

4. How often do you visit Curonian Spit?

The question was only shown to non-permanent residents and visitors to Curonian Spit



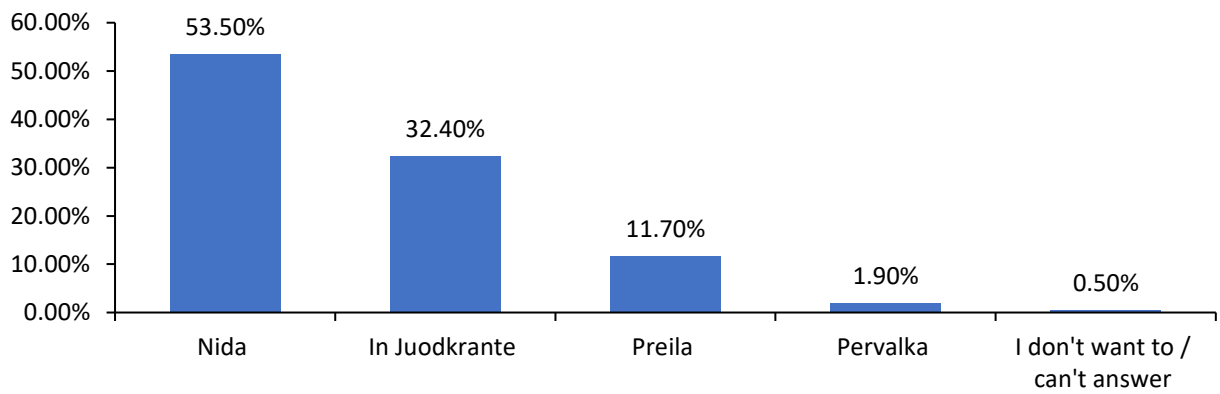
N=329

5. How long have you lived in Curonian Spit?

Among the permanent residents of Curonian Spit, there are also settlers and long-term residents: 14.4% (N=118) have lived in Curonian Spit for 0-5 years, 18.6% have lived in Curonian Spit for 6-15 years and 66.9% have lived in Curonian Spit for 16 years and more (according to the survey up to the age of 70).

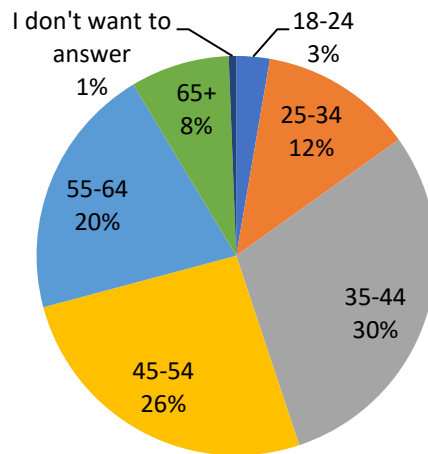
6. In which settlement do you live?

The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents (permanent residents and part of the year)



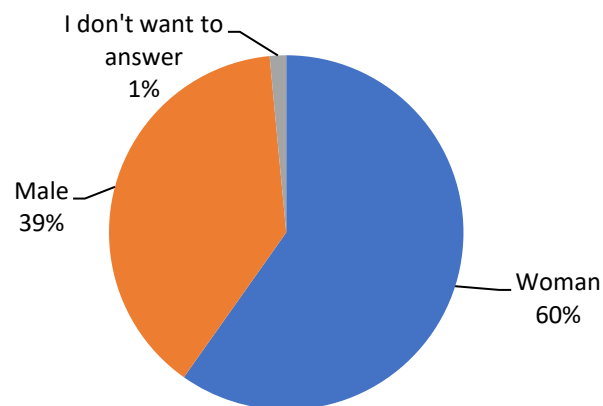
N=213

7. What is your age?



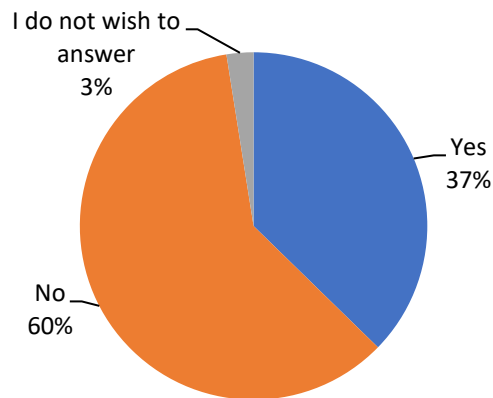
N=474

8. You are...



N=470

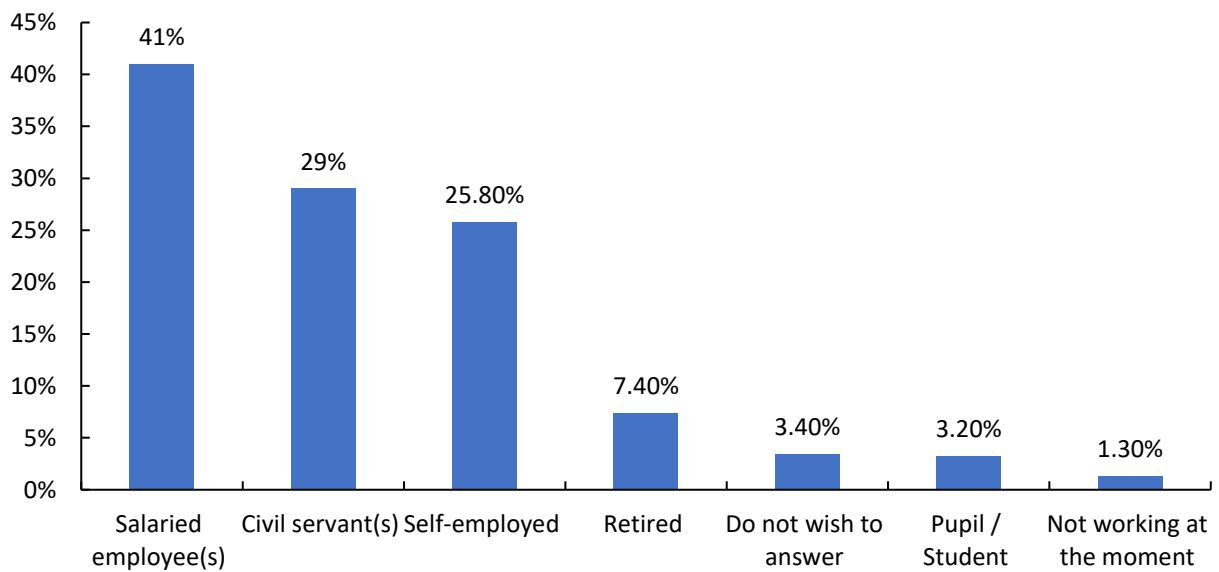
9. Do you have children under the age of 18 living with you?



N=472

10. What is your main occupation at the moment?

More than one answer option was available in the question



N=473

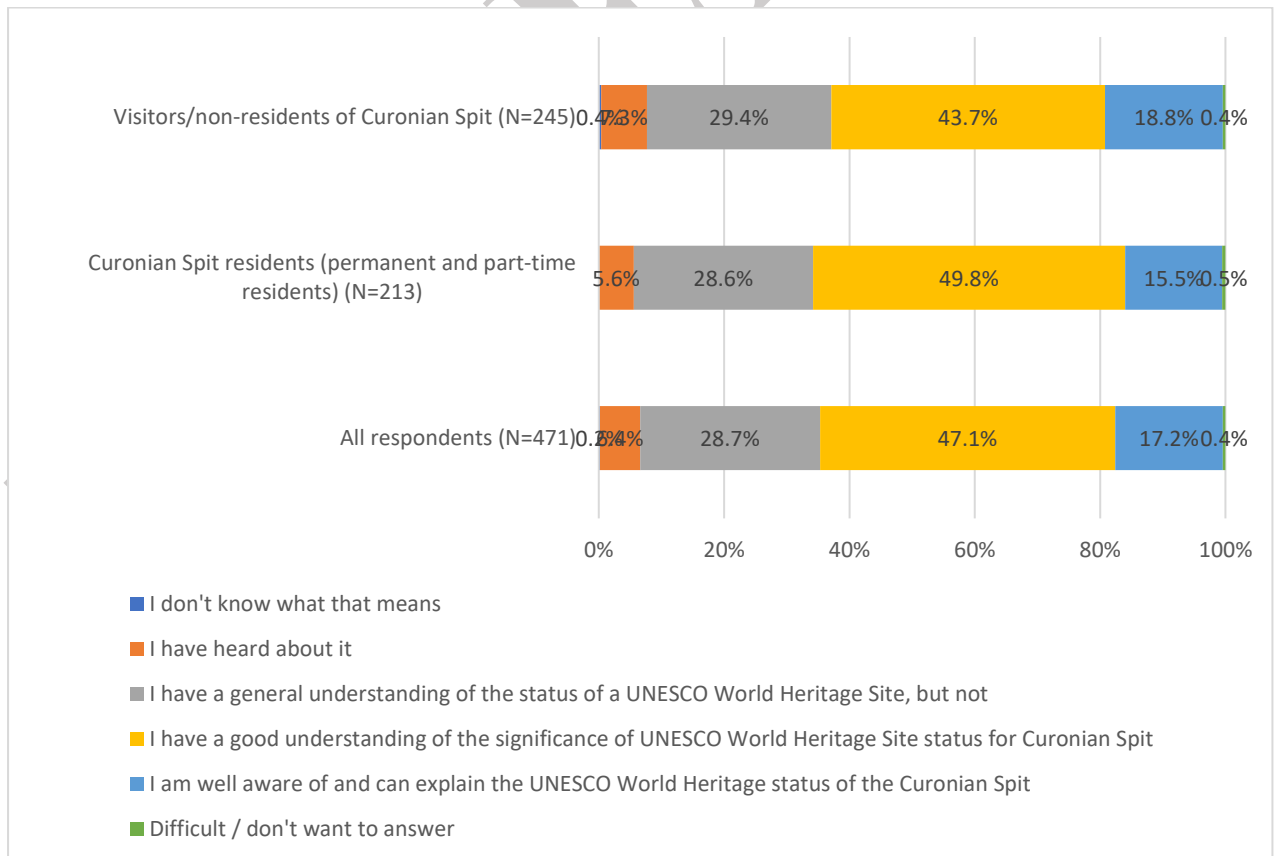
Knowledge about the Curonian Spit and the UNESCO World Heritage Site

Overall, 64.3% (N=471) of the respondents answered that they had a good understanding of the significance of the UNESCO World Heritage Site status for the Curonian Spit, while the remaining 35.7% would like to have more information on this topic. The majority of respondents, regardless of the distribution of their place of residence, have a good understanding of the significance of UNESCO status.

The natural heritage of the Curonian Spit is significantly highlighted as the main value of the Spit (72% of respondents, N=472). 77.7% (N=469) of the respondents feel responsible for the protection of the site's values, and 30.1% of them lack the knowledge of how they can contribute to the protection of the site. Respondents living in the Curonian Spit have a clearer vision of how to protect the values, while respondents not living in the Spit were more likely to say they did not know.

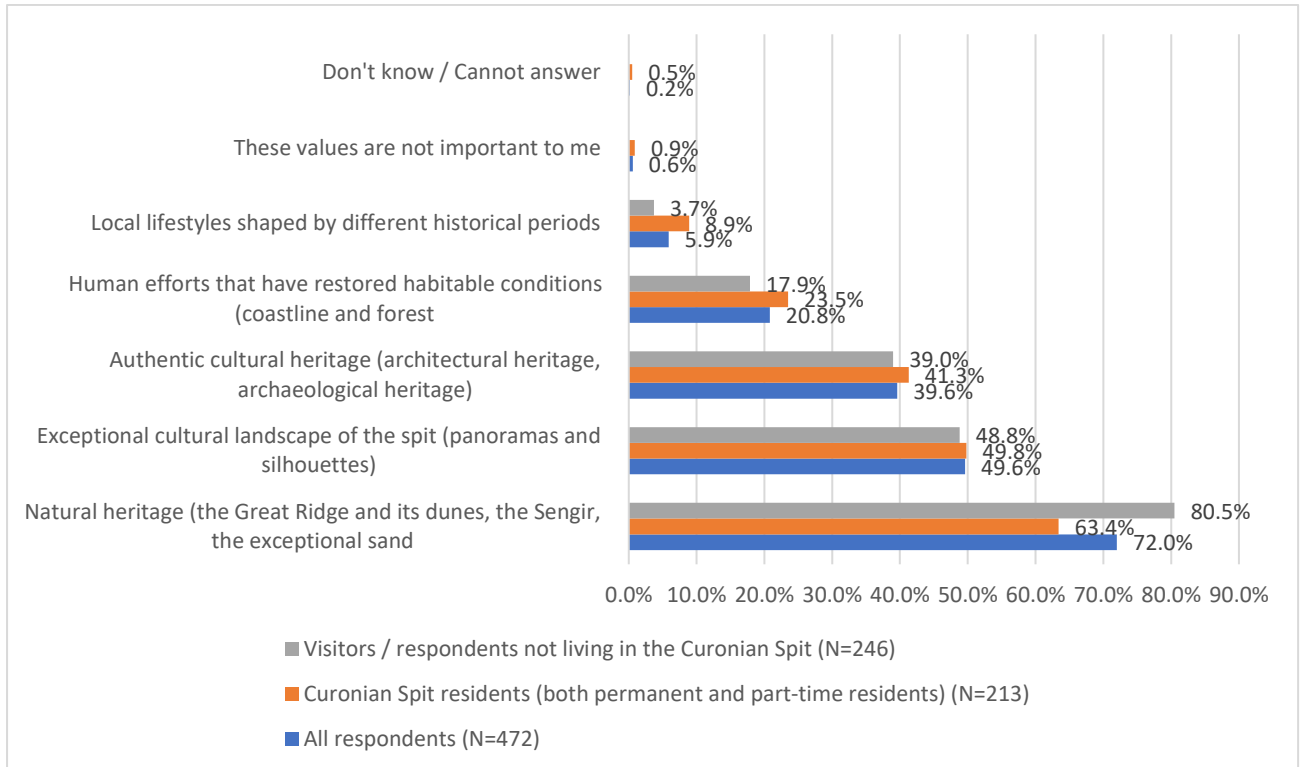
Open answers were quite often repeated. This helped to see the Curonian Spit and its importance to respondents through different categories, which were often repeated. The following categories were associated with Curonian Spit: natural value; sentiments; object of knowledge and exploration; home; nationality and culture; oasis of peace; safety; rich history, architecture, ethnography; uniqueness of the place; slow and healthy way of life; recreation. The disappointment with the adaptation of the Curonian Spit to the upper class of society was mentioned several times in the answers.

11. How would you rate your knowledge of the status of the Curonian Spit as a UNESCO World Heritage Site?

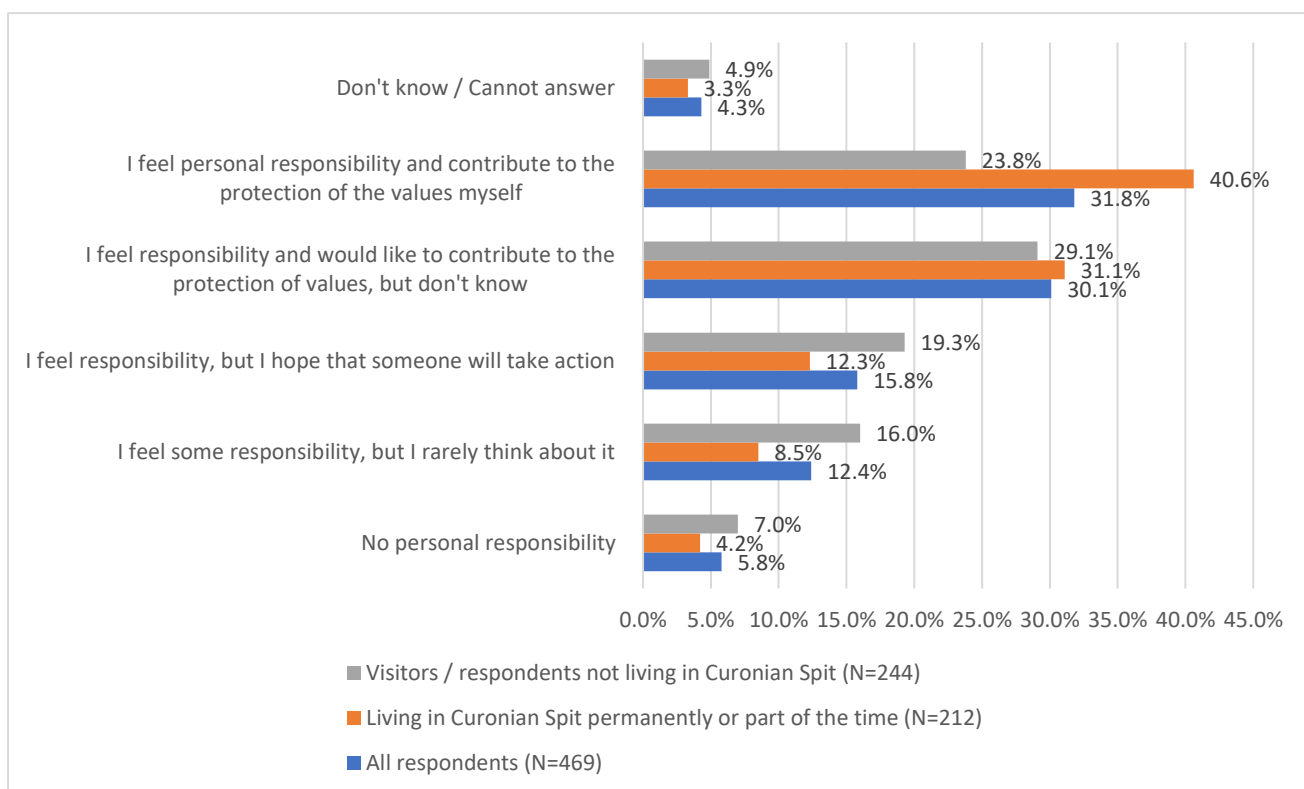


12. The following are the values of the Curonian Spit that have led to its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Which of them are the most important to you?

More than one answer was possible in the question.



13. To what extent do you personally feel responsible for the protection of the values of the Curonian Spit as a UNESCO World Heritage Site?



Visiting and living experiences in Curonian Spit

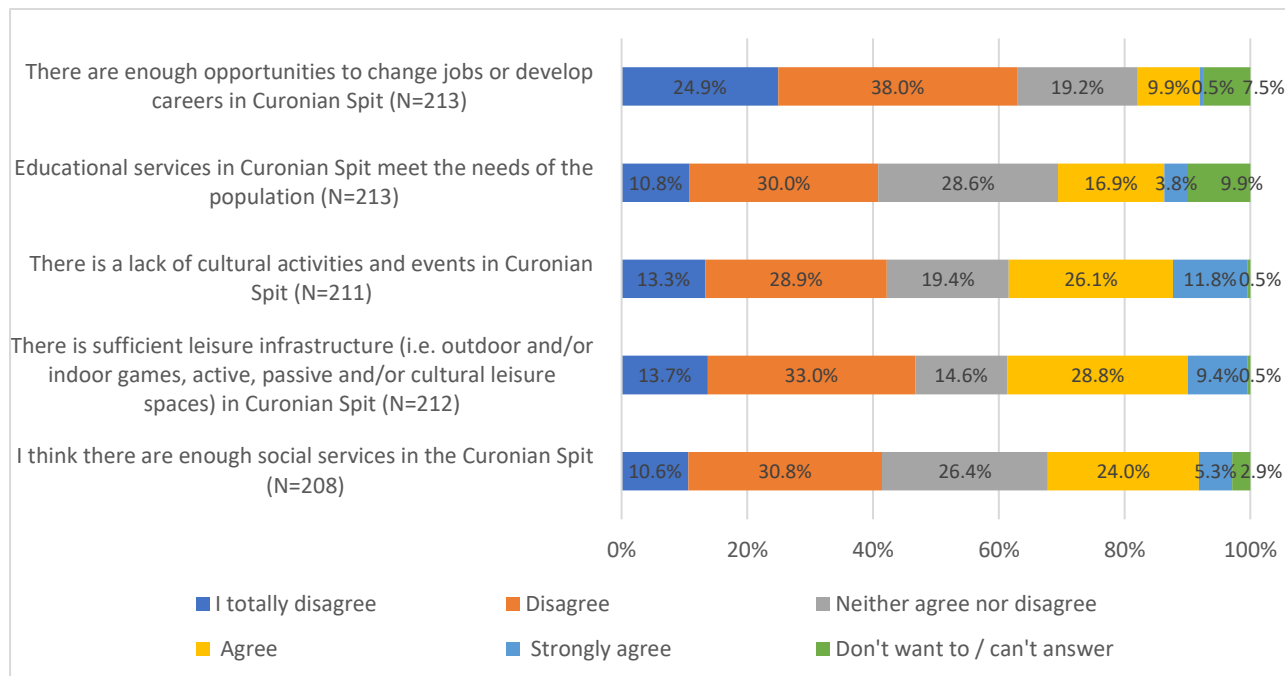
There is a clear division on the sufficiency of social services, leisure infrastructure and cultural activities between permanent and temporary residents of Curonian Spit - while the vast majority of respondents rated Curonian Spit as lacking the services listed above, a slightly smaller but still significant proportion of respondents rated it as sufficient or neutral on this issue. Education services are also considered by the majority of residents to be inadequate to meet the needs of the local population. Permanent residents of Curonian Spit had a stronger opinion on this issue that education services are not sufficient, with 54% of respondents saying so. While 21.8% of temporary residents see the lack of educational services as a problem, a larger proportion remained neutral at 35.6% (compared to 23.8% of permanent residents). Regarding career opportunities, the response was fairly unambiguous, with 62.9% saying that there are not enough opportunities, including 69.8% of permanent residents and 52.8% of seasonal residents.

The majority of temporary and permanent residents, i.e. 50.5% (N=212), do not feel involved in decision-making in Curonian Spit, only 11.8% feel involved and 32.1% remain neutral on this issue. Also, the majority of temporary and permanent residents perceive the decisions of the responsible authorities as not fully clear and transparent (61.1%) and effective (65.5%) in terms of the conservation of the Curonian Spit.

The majority of visitors to the Curonian Spit, i.e. 61.8% (N=241), see the leisure infrastructure as sufficient, while 47.9% do not see any lack of cultural activities. 82.4% of visitors are satisfied with the information provided about the area. For the majority of visitors (43.9%) UNESCO status was not an indicator for visiting Curonian Spit.

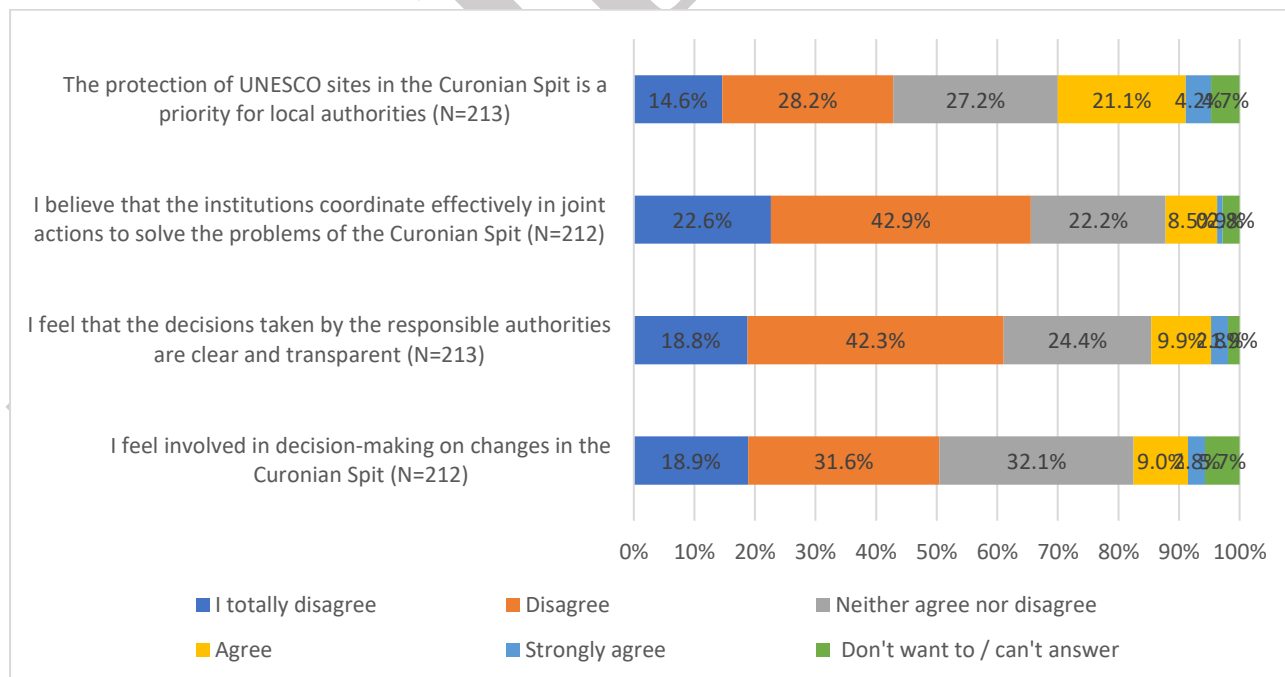
14. To what extent do you agree with the following statements when reflecting on your experience of living in Curonian Spit?

The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents (both permanent and part of the year)



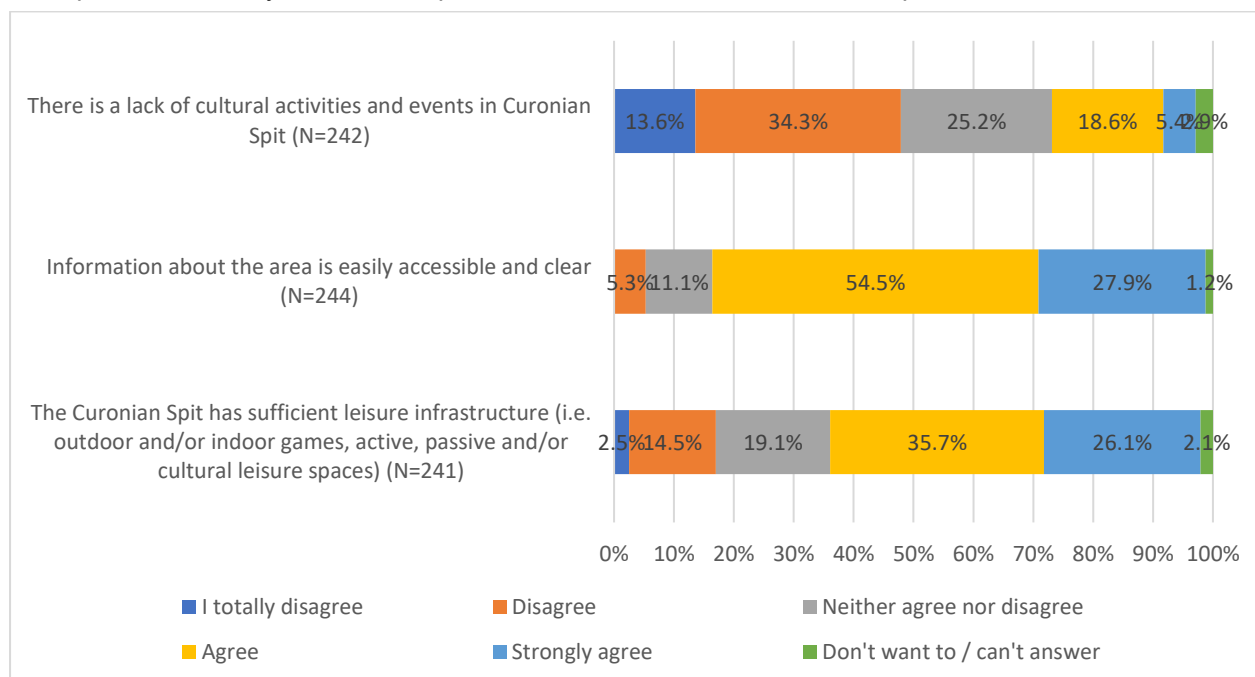
15. How do you evaluate the management of the Curonian Spit based on your experience?

The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents (both permanent and part of the year)



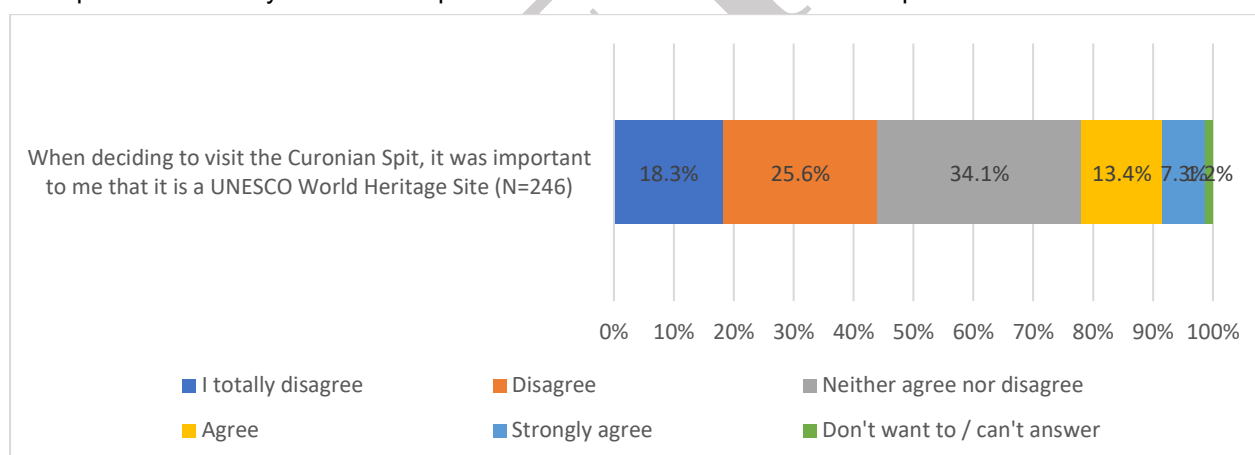
16. How would you rate the following areas based on your experience of visiting the Curonian Spit?

This question was only shown to respondents who do not live in Curonian Spit



17. To what extent do you agree with the statements about the UNESCO status of Curonian Spit?

This question was only shown to respondents who do not live in Curonian Spit



N=246

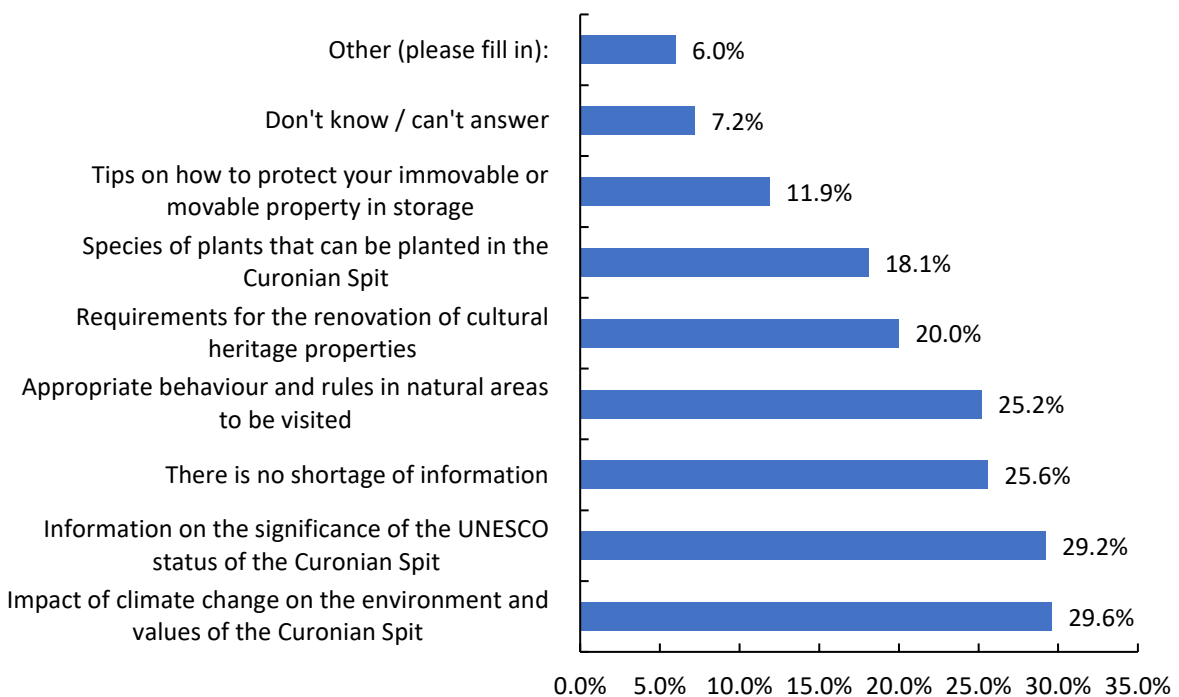
Education and information on Curonian Spit conservation

Overall, respondents lacked the most information about the impact of climate change on the Curonian Spit (29.6% of all respondents) and the significance of UNESCO status (29.2% of respondents). Additional answers included: local animal and plant populations; the functions of the different institutions; recommendations on the preservation of architectural heritage during renovation; information on the authenticity of real estate; information on the preservation of old traditions and crafts.

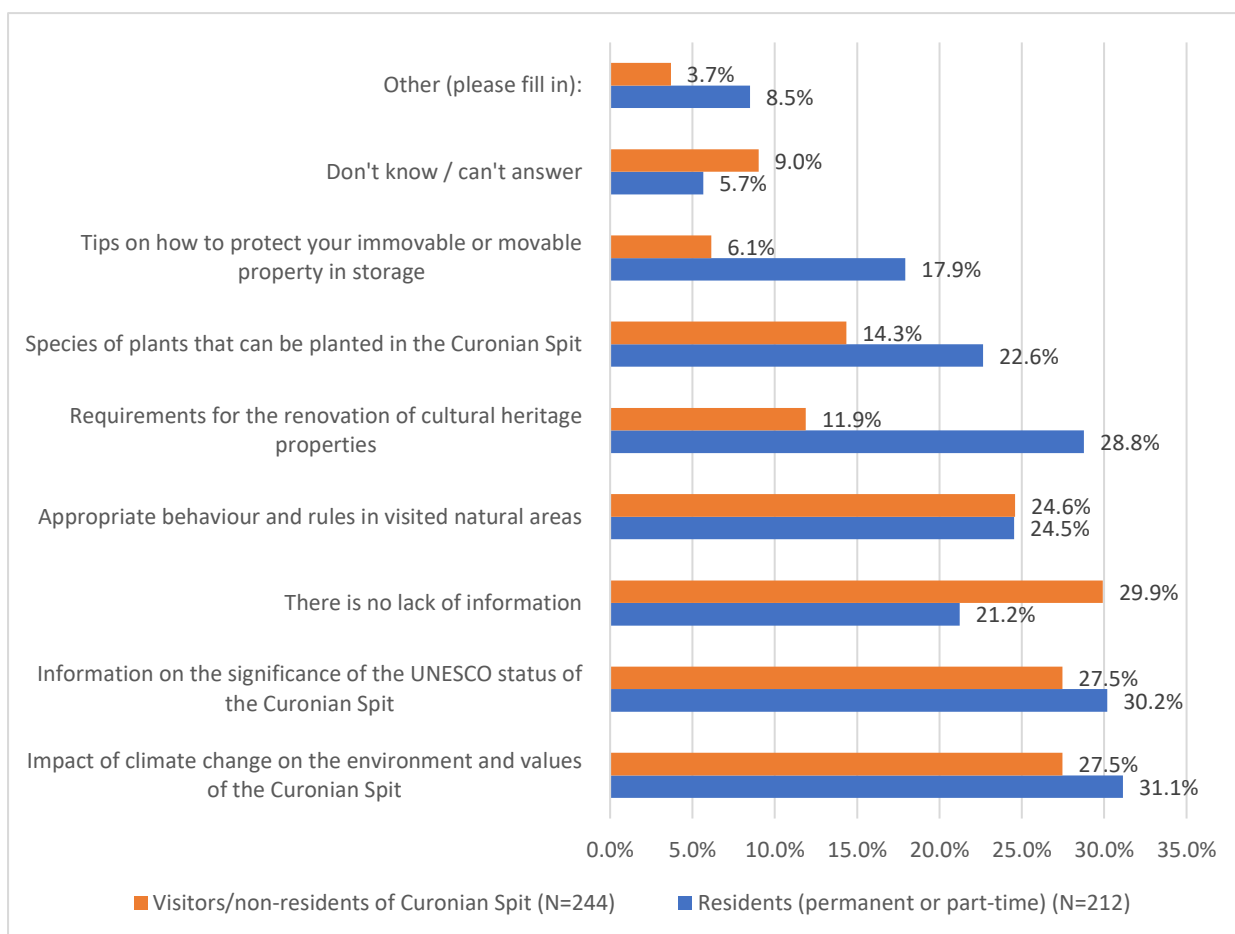
Social networking posts seem to be the most attractive source of information for the majority of respondents (61.4%). The websites of public institutions also seem to be a convenient means of communication for those who do not live in the Curonian Spit, while information meetings with the public are more convenient for those who live here. Additional responses included forms of information provision such as: information provided by artificial intelligence; QR codes in public spaces; TV and radio broadcasts; education in schools and civic actions; close cooperation with scientific institutions.

18. Which of the following topics related to the protection of the Curonian Spit values do you feel most lacking in information?

More than one answer could be selected in the question



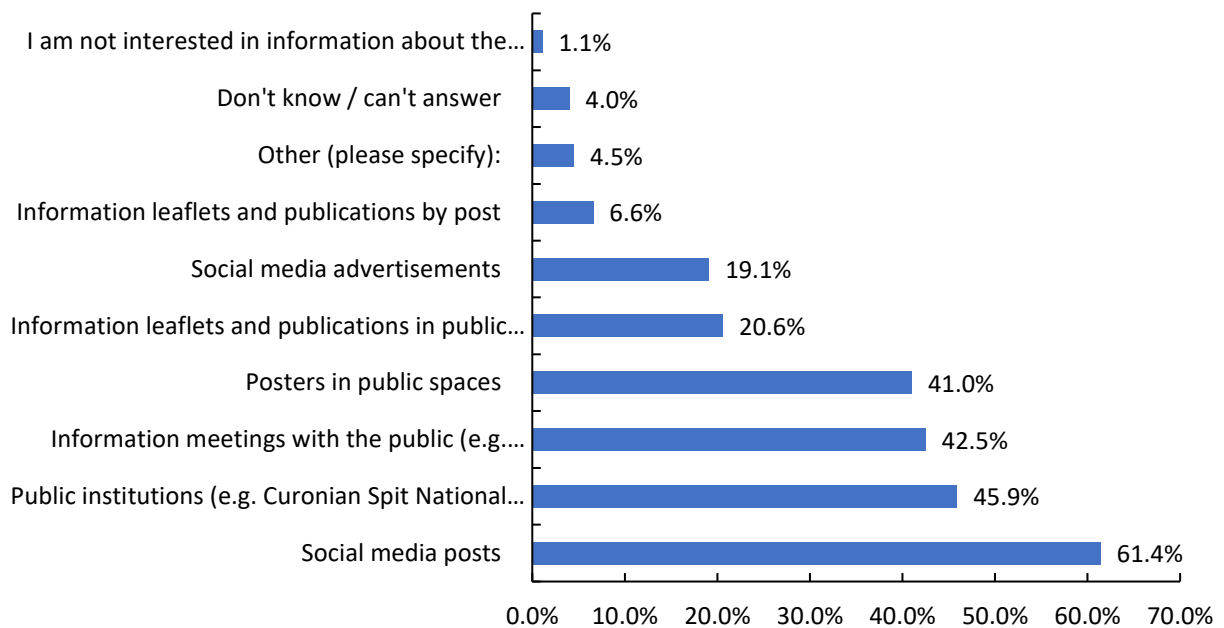
Overall results, N=469



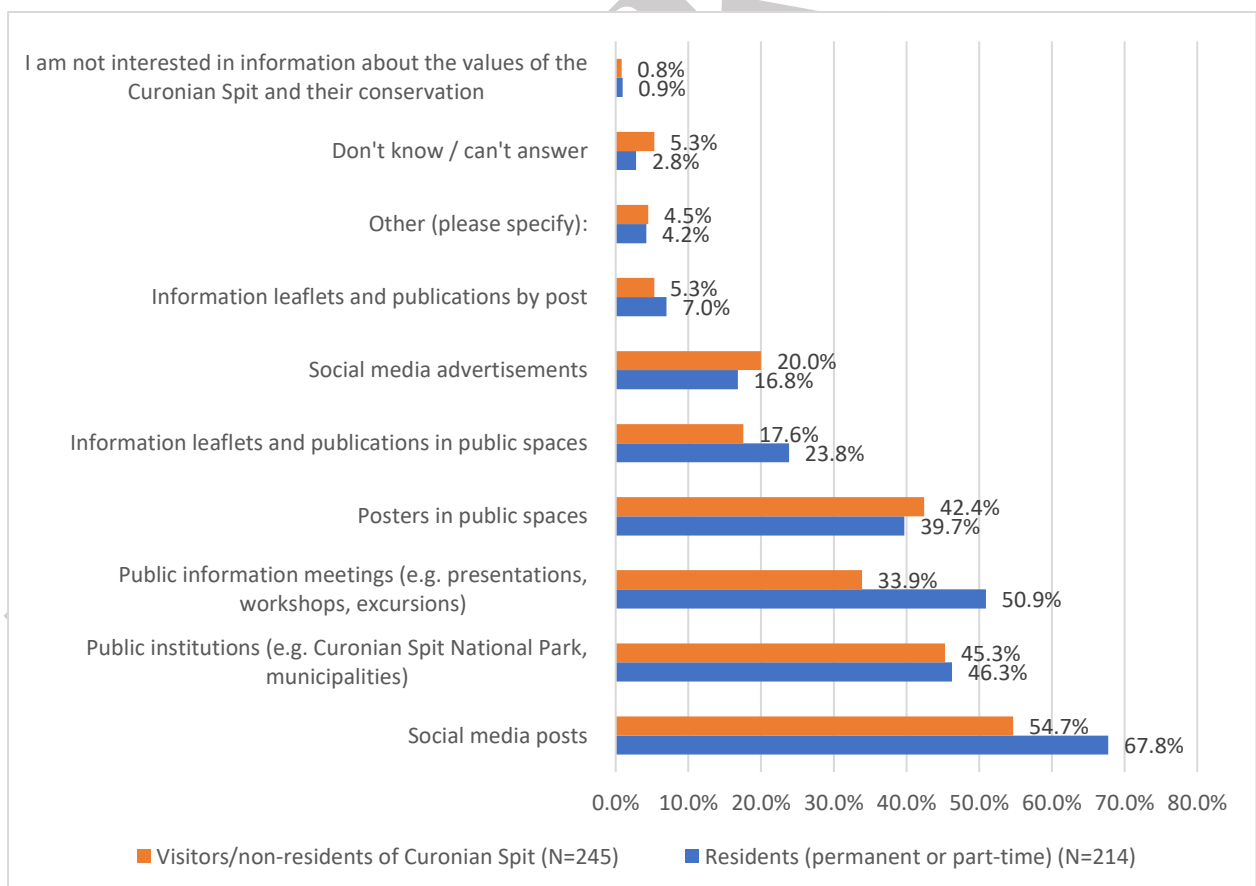
19. Which ways would be the most convenient for you to get information about Curonian Spit values, their protection and other topical issues?

More than one answer option was available for the question

PROJ



Overall results, N=471



Movement in the Curonian Spit

Most respondents move within the borders of their settlement - 55.2%. 19.5% move daily to other settlements in the Curonian Spit and 15.2% to the mainland.

Cycling within the Curonian Spit is perceived as convenient by the majority (about 80%), and the development of infrastructure is also perceived positively. A higher proportion of respondents agree that car traffic could be reduced. Almost unanimously, residents agree that the exemptions for access are fair. Almost 50% of respondents said that they are forced to use private transport because of the lack of public transport. The majority of respondents said that public transport discounts should be available to local residents.

The vast majority of those living in the Curonian Spit use public transport less than once a month, and the vast majority of those who do not live here do not use public transport at all.

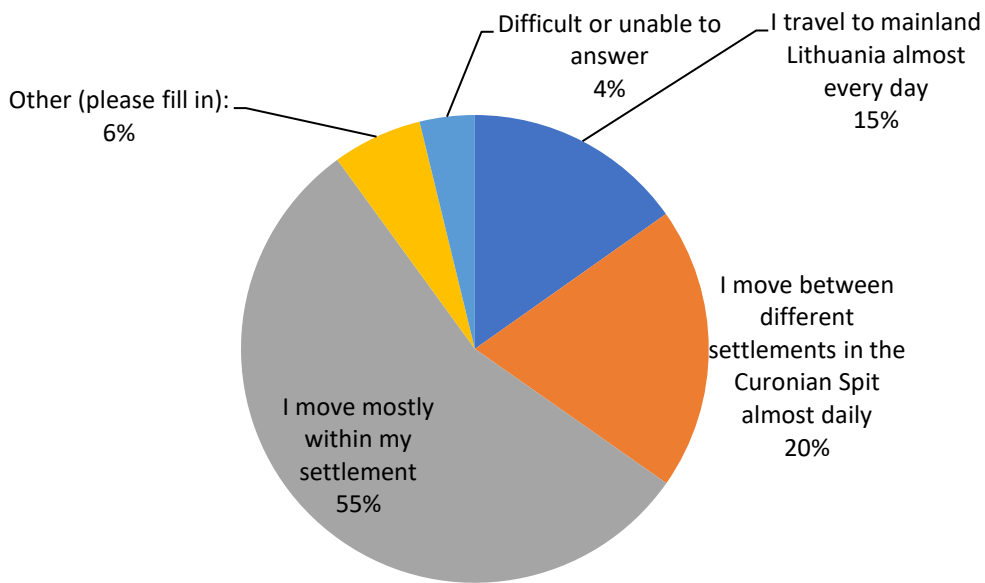
Respondents living in Curonian Spit said that public transport (timetable, lack of it) does not limit their opportunities to study or work. On the other hand, the opinions of the residents are evenly divided according to whether the desired places are accessible by public transport or not. The vast majority coordinate their plans according to the public transport timetable - around 50%. Public transport is not too expensive for the majority of respondents, 44.9%, while 32.4% are neutral on the question. Regarding accessibility for people with disabilities, 36.2% of respondents agree that it is difficult.

Using a car is a common practice among respondents, with almost 90% using it and 47.7% using it regularly (N=472). Those who live in the Curonian Spit are more likely to say they use a car regularly, while a higher proportion of visitors say sometimes.

In order to reduce car use, the most popular alternatives among respondents were more frequent and varied public transport trips (40.4% and 35%) and alternative waterway routes (40.2%). Among the open answers were: increasing the eco-tax; parking spaces for leaving the car; increasing the variety of services within the Curonian Spit; lower public transport prices; maintenance of cycle paths in low season.

20. Which of the following statements best describes your mobility habits in Curonian Spit?

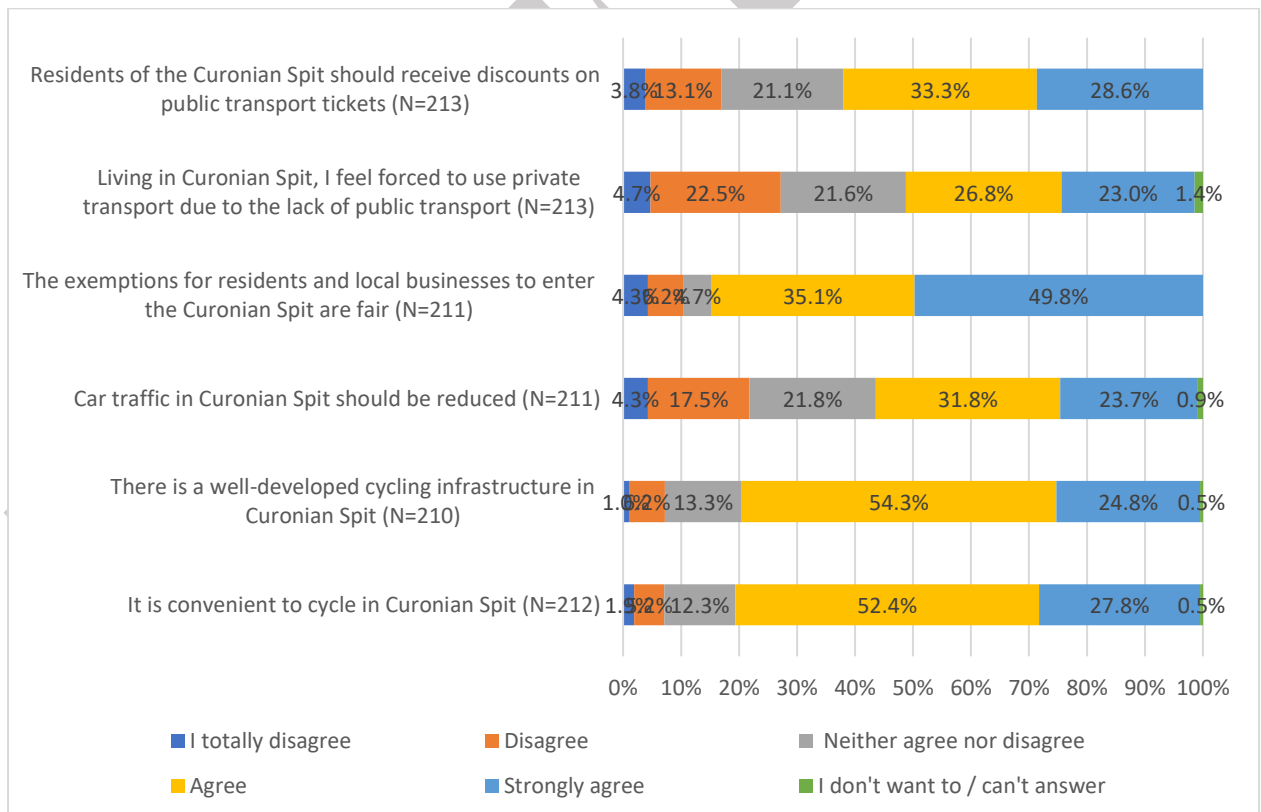
*The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents



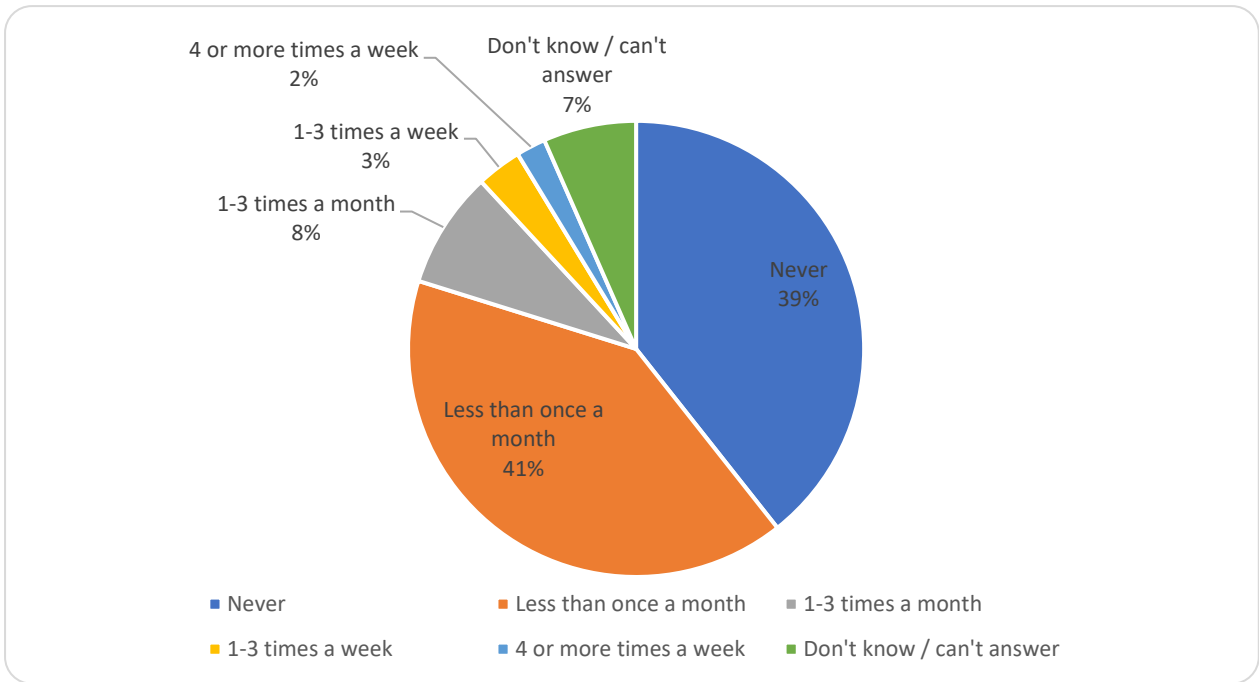
Living in Curonian Spit, N=210

21. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the Curonian Spit?

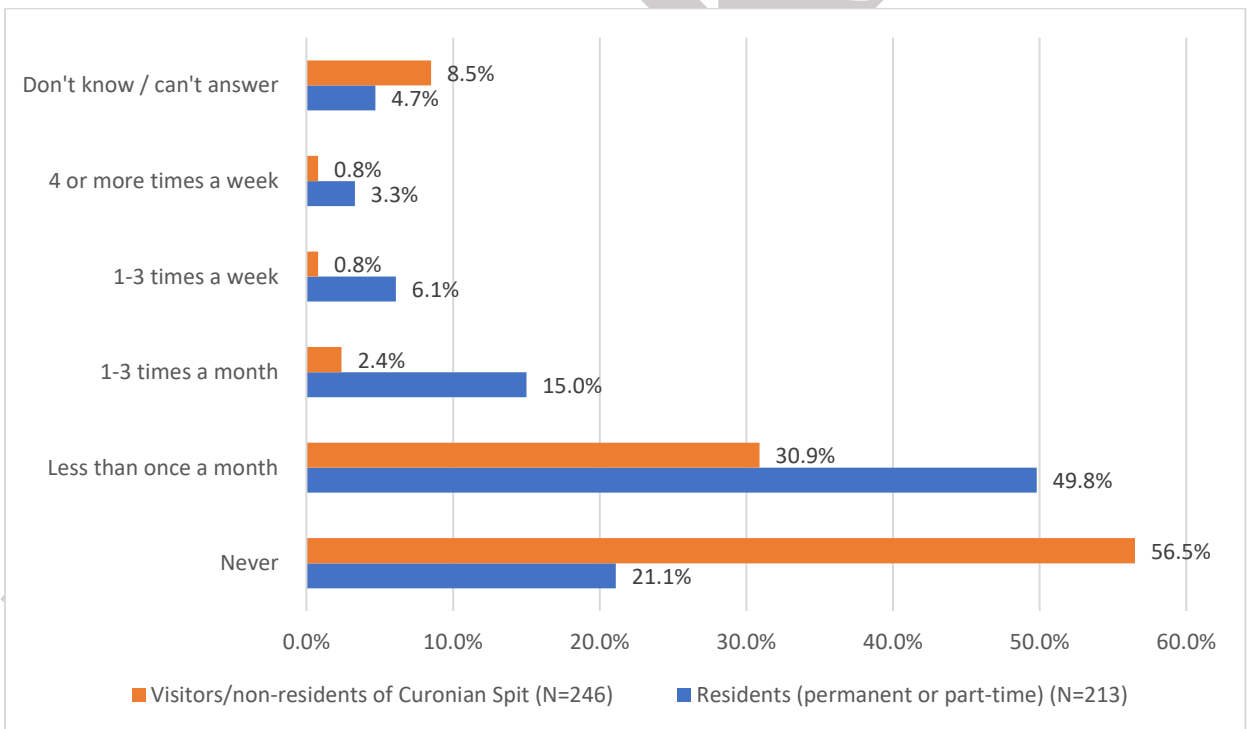
*The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents



22. How often do you use public transport in Curonian Spit?

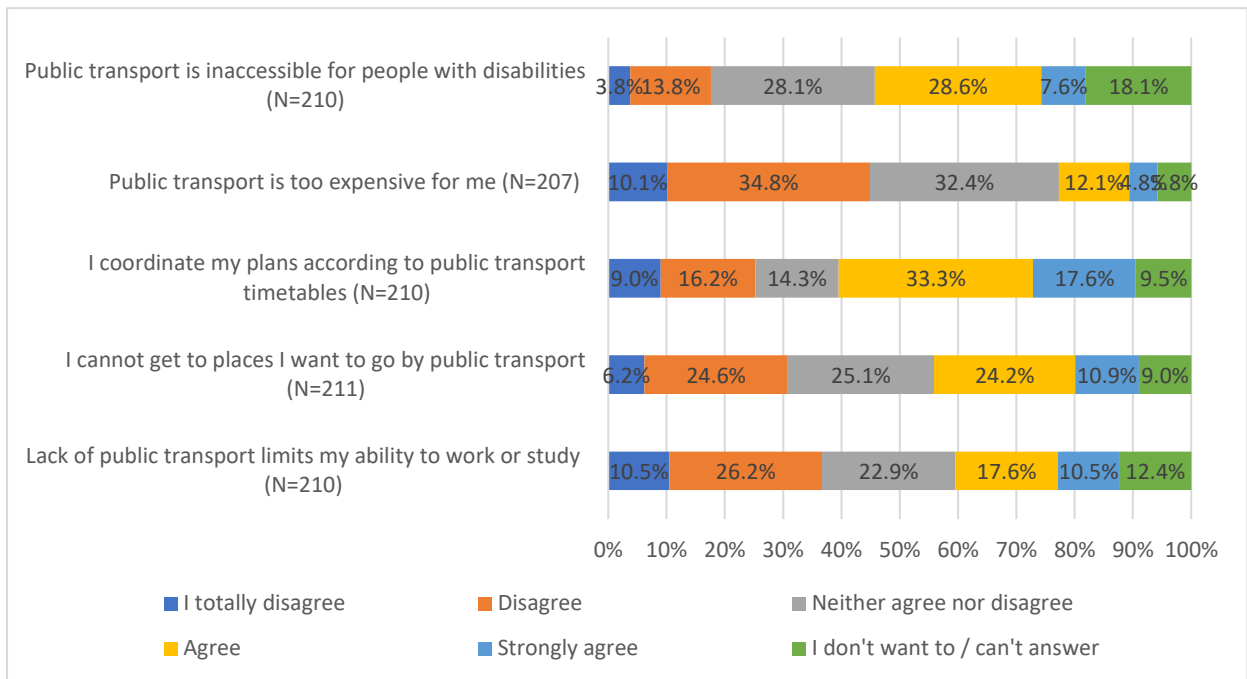


Overall results, N=472

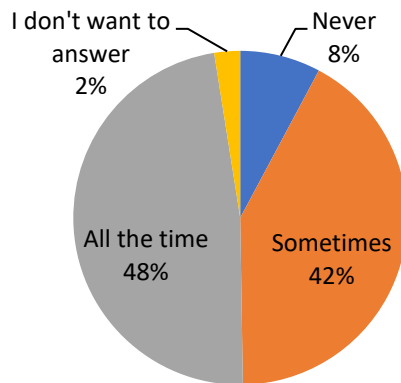


23. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the problems of public transport and their impact on your stay in Curonian Spit?

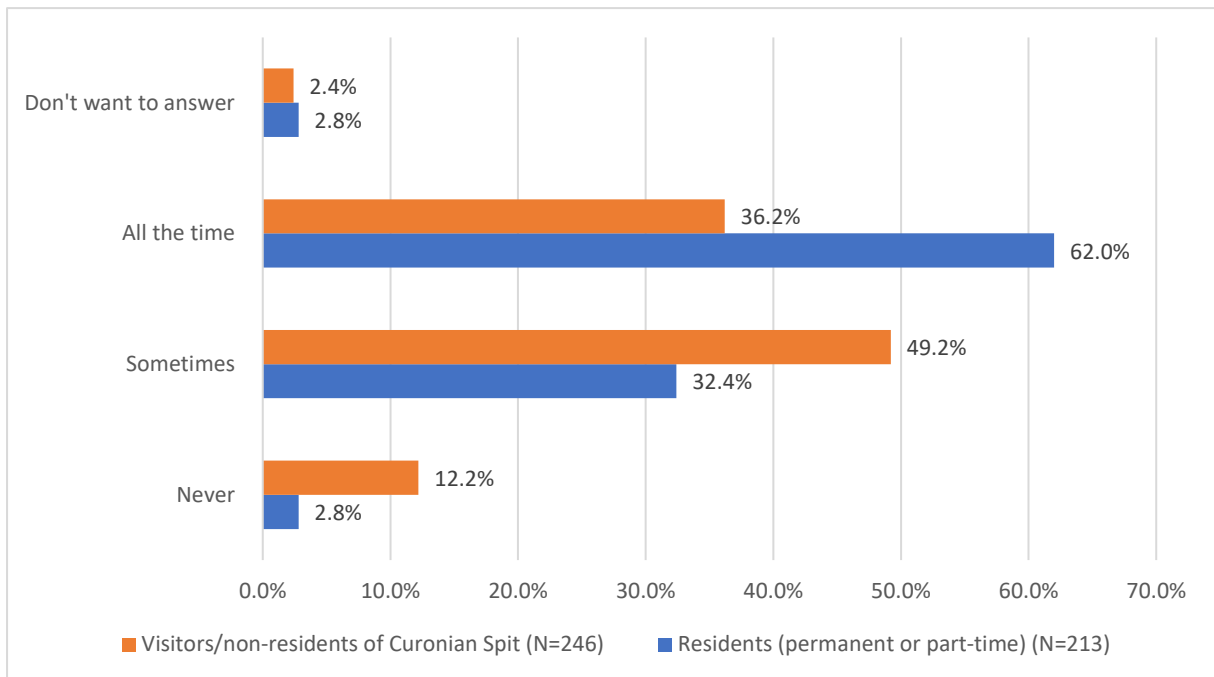
*The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents (both permanent and part of the year)



24. How often do you use a car in Curonian Spit?

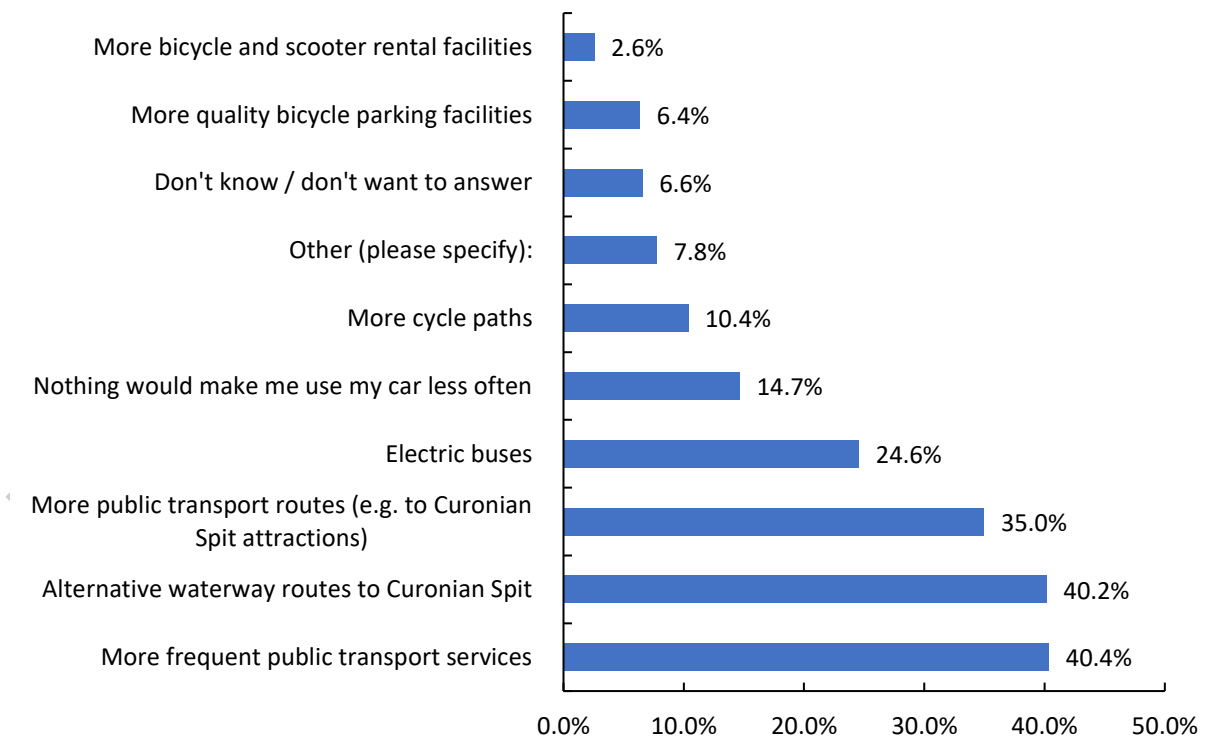


Overall results, N= 472



25. Which of the following would help you the most to use the car less often?

*This question was only shown to respondents who use a car in Curonian Spit



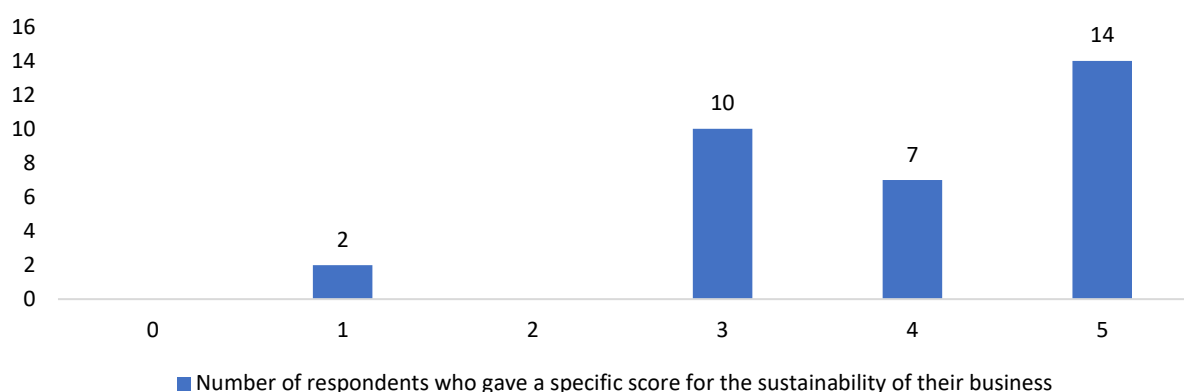
N=423

Sustainable business

14 out of 33 respondents (who have a business in the Curonian Spit) unequivocally consider their business to be sustainable and 10 consider their business to be moderately sustainable. Of the respondents, 2 do not see their business as sustainable. The vast majority of respondents believe that financial support (53.8%) and access to sustainable resources (46.2%) would help businesses to move towards more sustainable models.

26. How sustainable do you think your business is? Please rate from 1 to 5.

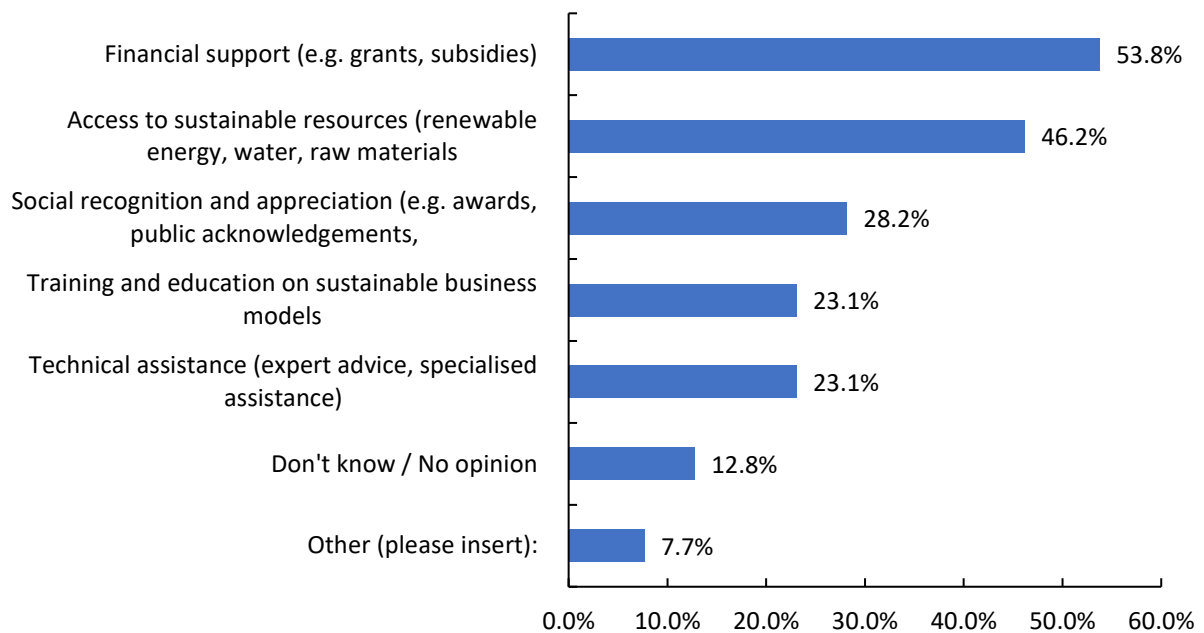
*The question was only shown to people with businesses in the Curonian Spit. Due to the very small sample size, it is not recommended to quote or use this data in a wider context.



N=33

27. What support do you think would be most needed for local businesses to move towards more sustainable business models?

The question was only shown to people with businesses in the Curonian Spit. Due to the very small sample size, it is not recommended to quote or use this data in a wider context.



N=39

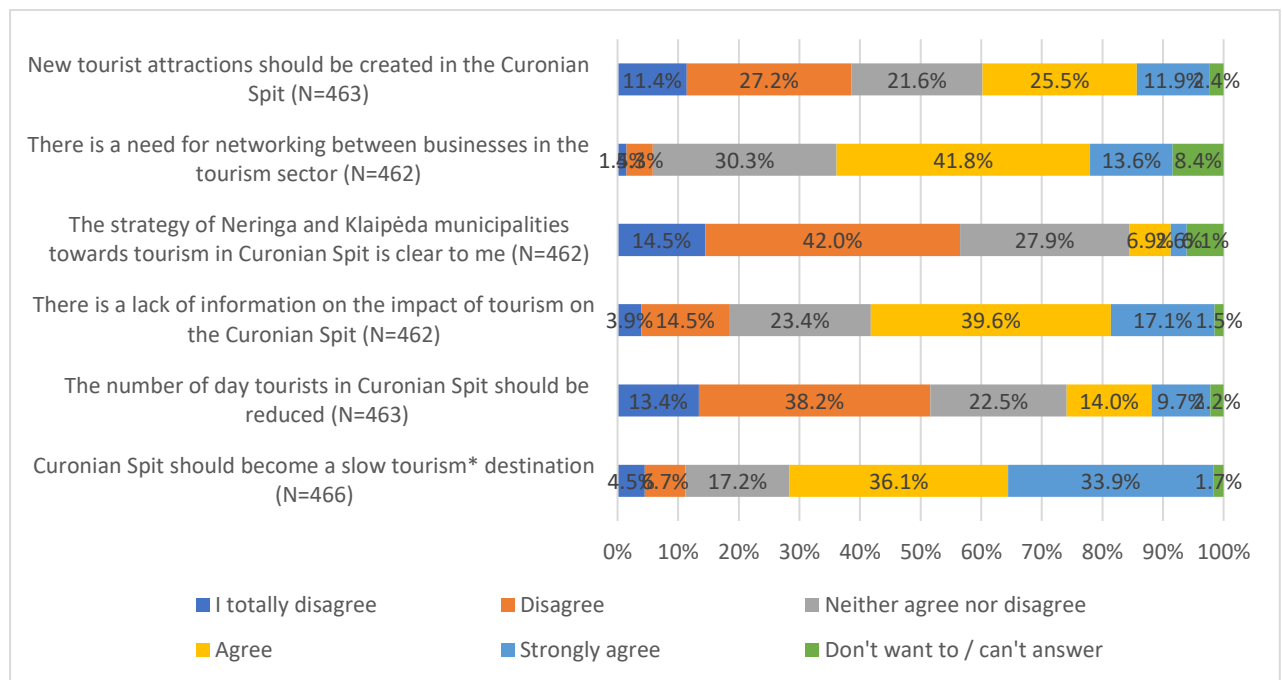
Tourism

In total, 70% of respondents think that the Curonian Spit should become a slow tourism destination. Among permanent residents 60.8% (N=125), among temporary residents 62.8% (N=86) and among those who do not live in Curonian Spit 77.3% (N=242) thought so. A higher proportion (51.6%) of all respondents would not support a reduction in the number of day-trippers, including 52.1% of those permanently residing in Curonian Spit, 48.8% of those temporarily or seasonally residing in Curonian Spit, and 53.6% of those who do not reside in the area. 56.7% of all respondents lack information about the impact of tourism, in which case the distribution between those living and not living in Curonian Spit is not significant.

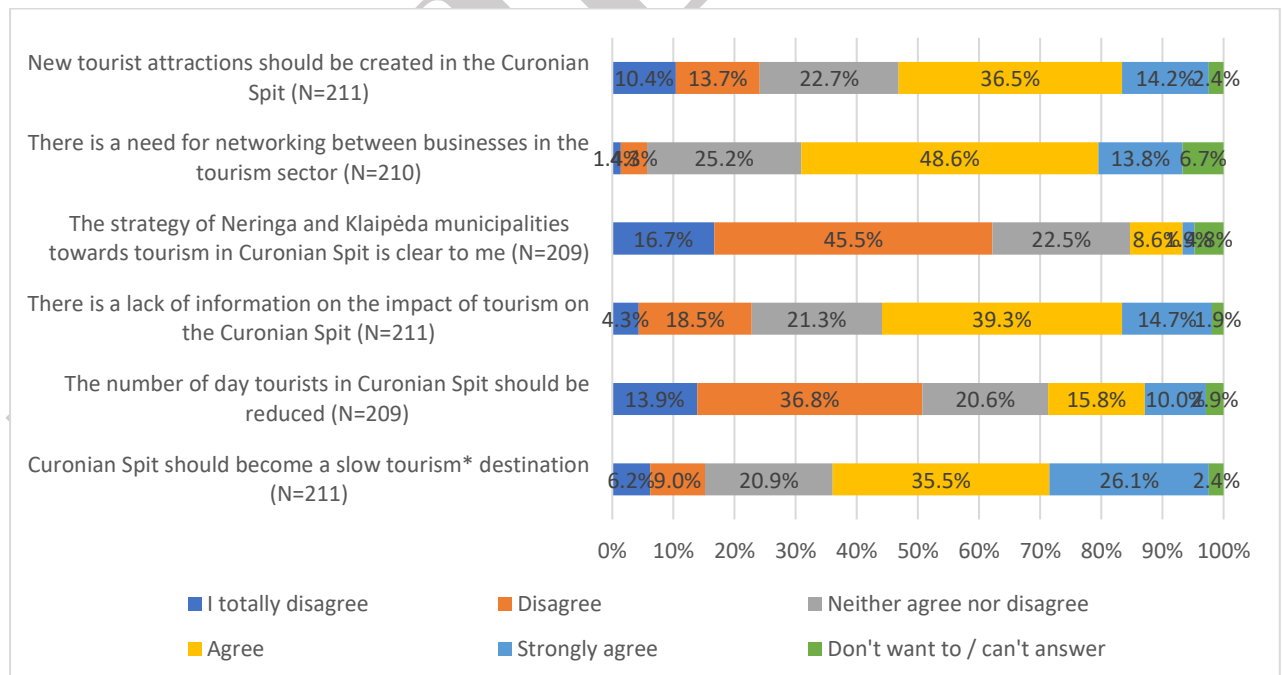
56.5% of all respondents miss a clear tourism strategy from the municipalities of Neringa and Klaipėda. 62.2% of those living in the Curonian Spit and 52.1% of those visiting the Curonian Spit think so. In total, 55.4% of respondents agree on the need for networking between businesses in the tourism sector.

There is a split opinion on the issue of new tourist attractions, with 38.6% believing that it is not necessary and 37.4% saying that it is necessary. There is a fairly large difference between respondents living in the Curonian Spit and visitors. 50.7% of residents think that new attractions are needed, while 26.3% of visitors to Curonian Spit would agree with this statement.

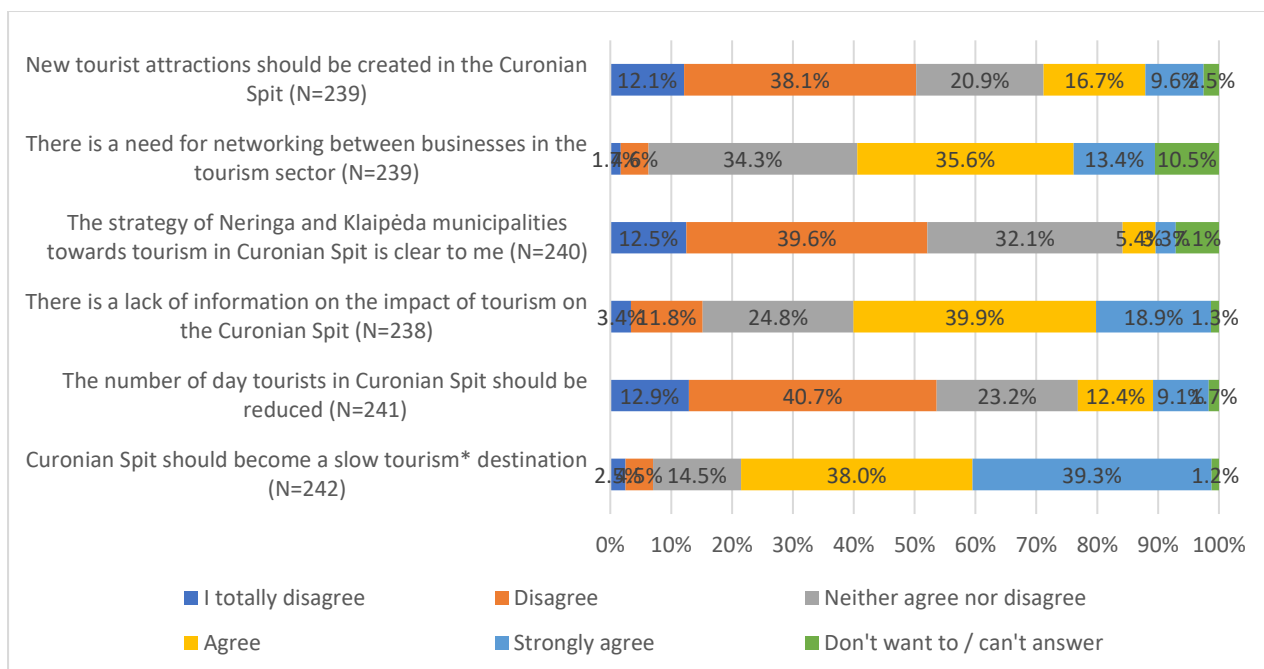
28. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about tourism:



All respondents



Living in Curonian Spit (permanently or part of the time)



Visitors/non-residents of Curonian Spit

Involvement in the community

Curonian Spit residents are not active in activities or initiatives related to Curonian Spit management. 33.5% of Curonian Spit residents participate once a year or less and 29.7% participate several times in discussions of public issues. A relatively small percentage of the population attends meetings once a month and once a week, and the issue is also more important for those who live here (7.3% and 7.3%) than for those who live here only temporarily (2.4% and 1.2%).

The vast majority of the responding local residents (51.2%) attend events in the Curonian Spit several times a year. Local residents are more likely to attend events. A large proportion of the population, 31.4%, never participate in non-formal education activities, but 18.8% of permanent residents responded, while 48.8% of temporary residents responded.

Community clean-ups are slightly more popular among residents, with 32.4% of all residents participating once a year or less and the same proportion participating several times a year. Permanent residents were most likely to say they participate several times a year (38.9%) and once a month or less (33.3%). Temporary residents

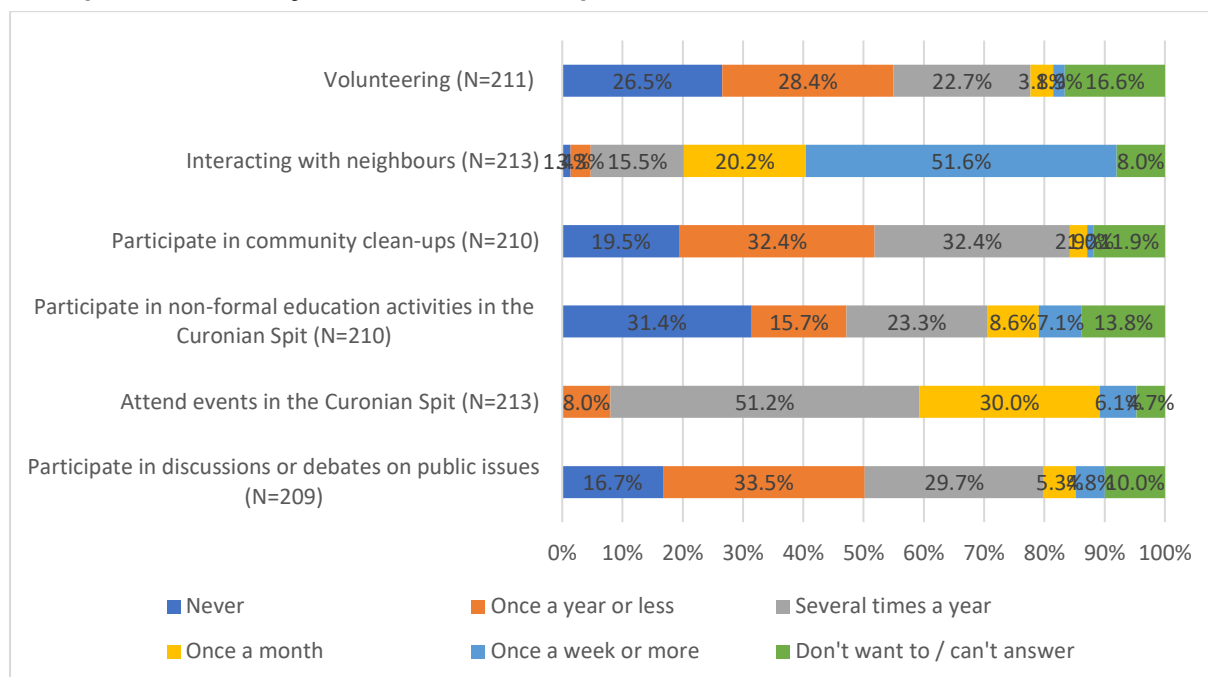
were most likely to say they do not participate at all (32.1%) or participate once a year or less (31%).

72.2% of the permanent residents of Curonian Spit communicate with their neighbours at least once a week, while 21.8% of the temporary residents also communicate once a week. The most frequent answer among the temporary residents is several times a year (33.3%), while only 3.2% of the permanent residents answered the same. Volunteering is not a very popular activity among respondents. 26.5% of all respondents never volunteer and both permanent and temporary residents volunteer once a year or less. Overall, the largest proportion of respondents rate their involvement in the community as not very active. The number of permanent residents who are actively involved (scoring 4 and 5) is 42 out of 121 respondents, temporary residents 4 out of 78 and visitors 9 out of 193.

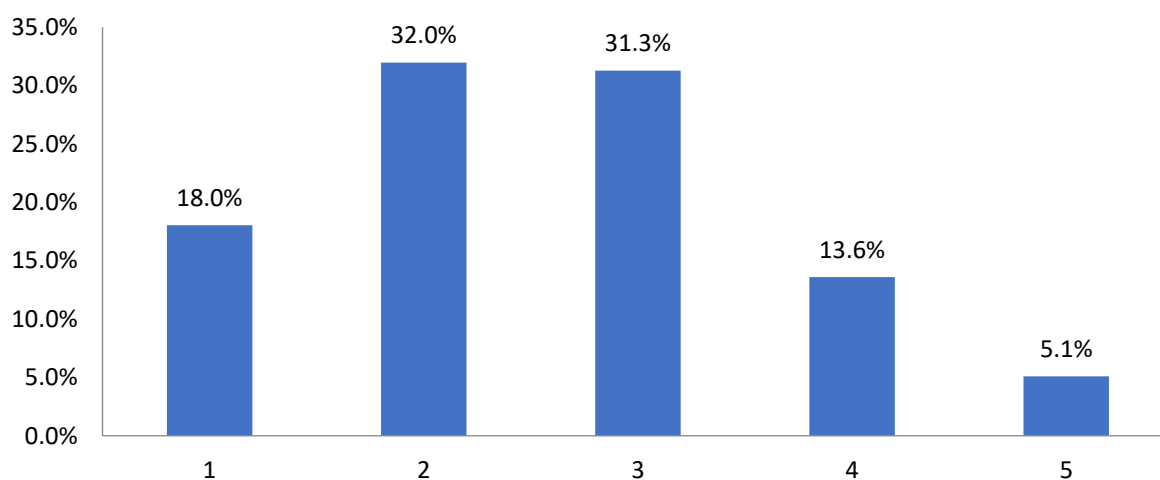
PROJEKT

29. How often do you...

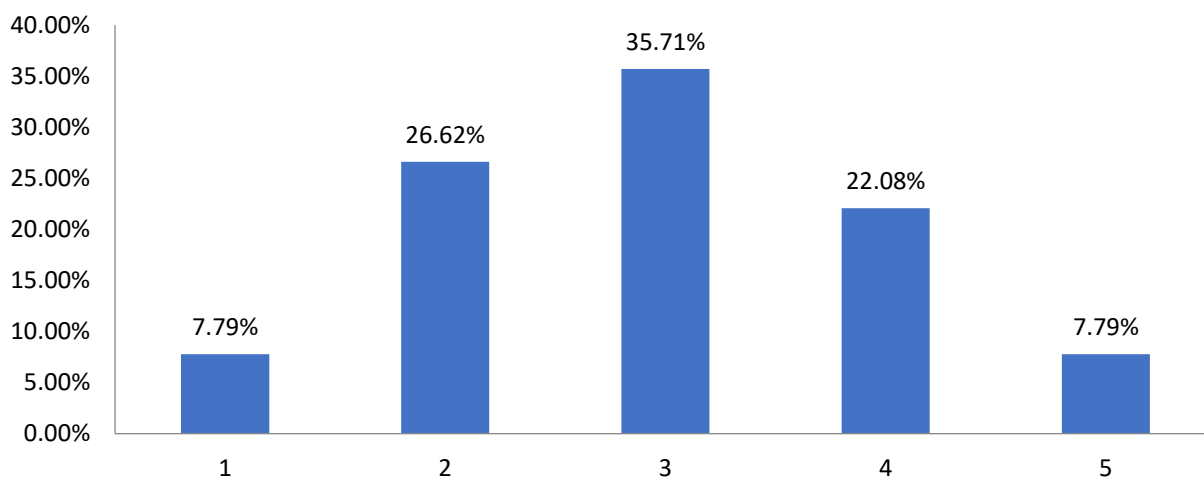
*The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents



30. In general, how involved do you feel in the local community?



All respondents, N=294



Living in Curonian Spit, N=154

Future of the Curonian Spit

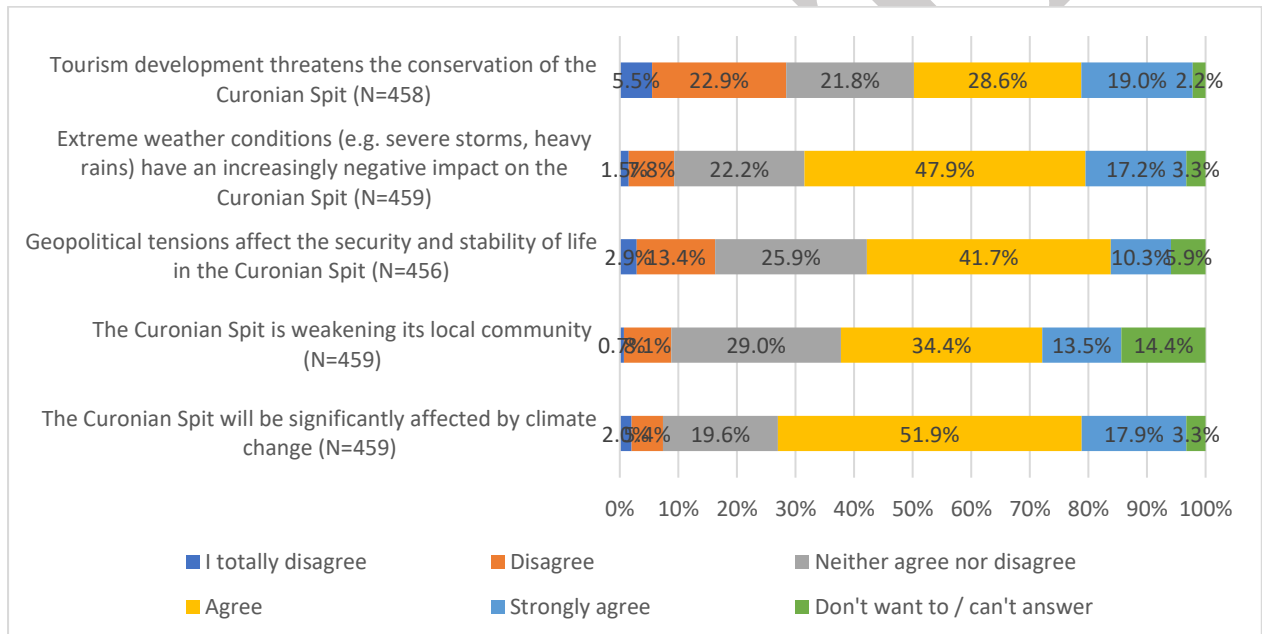
The Curonian Spit is sensitive to natural and political changes. Almost 70% of respondents believe that the area will be severely affected by climate change, such as extreme weather conditions, which are seen as a potential threat by the majority of respondents. 47.9% of respondents have the opinion that the local community is weakening. The majority - 52% - believe that geopolitical influences may have consequences for the future security of the Curonian Spit. The development of tourism is not seen unequivocally as a negative factor, with some respondents seeing it as a threat and others not.

The largest part of the respondents, however, plan to stay in Curonian Spit permanently, while a large part of the respondents do not know for how long they plan to stay here. The main reason for leaving is the high cost of living - more than half of the respondents answered. Other important factors mentioned by the majority were dependence on seasonality, lack of job opportunities and health care services. The high cost of living and health care are most relevant for the 55+ age group, for whom job opportunities are not relevant. On the other hand, job opportunities and limited educational opportunities are most relevant for the 18-34 age group. Respondents added, among the "other" options, that people are encouraged to move away from the Curonian Spit and turn it into an increasingly touristic destination.

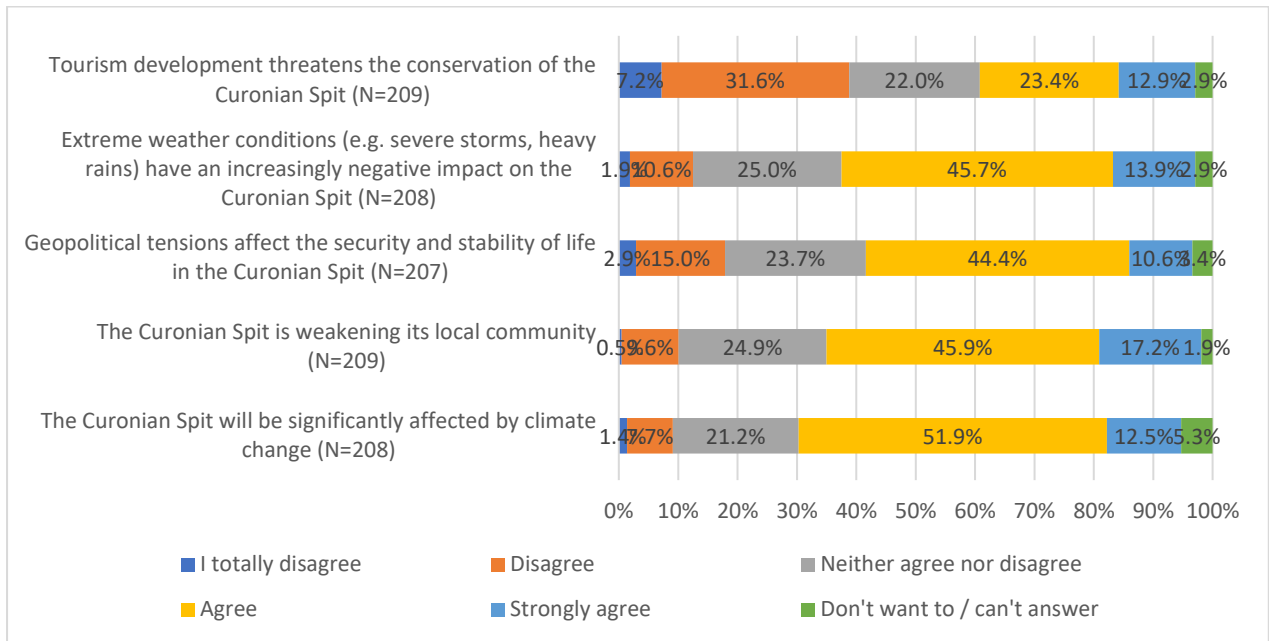
UNESCO World Heritage Site status is of particular interest to the vast majority, ie. 344 out of 402 respondents. The most recurrent reasons for the importance of the status were: a sense of responsibility; honour and international recognition; additional safeguards for the conservation of the Curonian Spit; additional funds; the consolidation of legislation; the development of nature-friendly tourism; the quality label; the authenticity of the site is appreciated - its cultural and natural significance, both nationally and globally, and its protection from biased municipal decisions, intensive business and real estate development.

The survey also provided comments and suggestions. Reducing/banning large-scale events and reducing recreational tourism were repeatedly mentioned. Suggestions related to the promotion of the authenticity of the Curonian Spit included: increasing the flow of information about the uniqueness of the Curonian Spit; more attention to Smiltynė; different forms of education about local culture, heritage and nature; strengthening local communities. On the other hand, the development of health, education, beauty and sports services was also repeatedly mentioned. Respondents to the survey also highlighted transparency in political decisions as a priority, with stricter control over new architecture and construction; more transparent and objective municipal activities; a longer perspective from different institutions and businesses; taking into account the suggestions of experts in decision-making; and listening to the voice of the public.

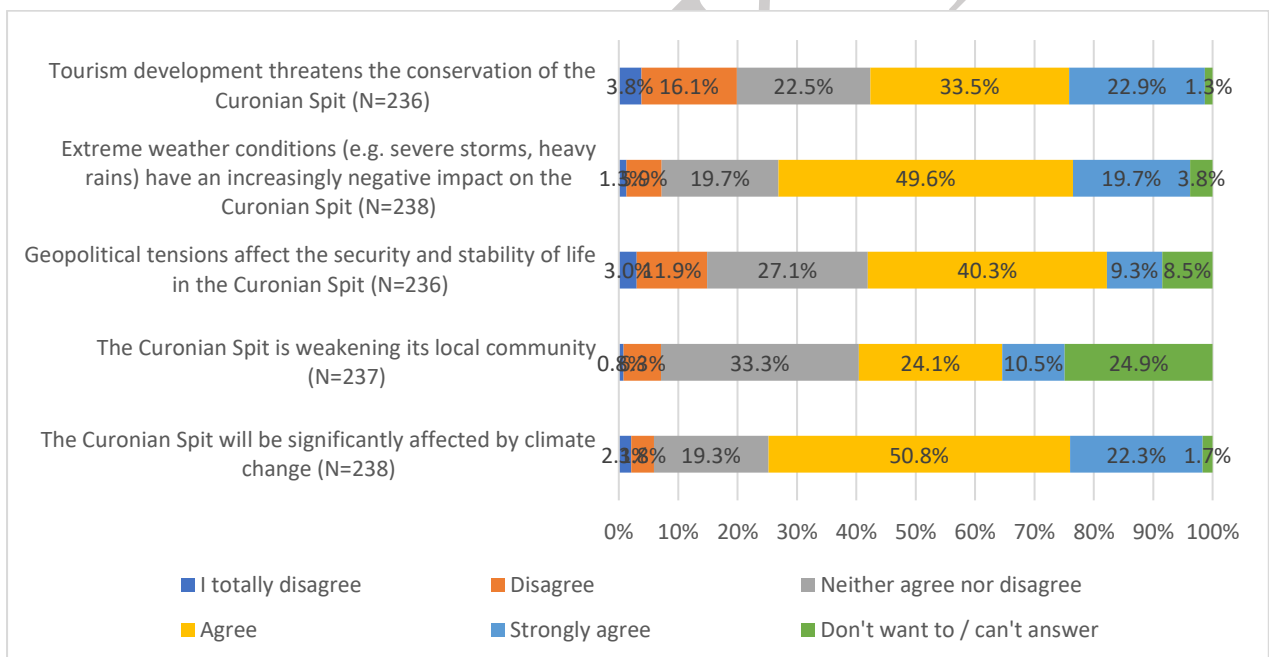
31. To what extent do you agree with these statements?



All respondents



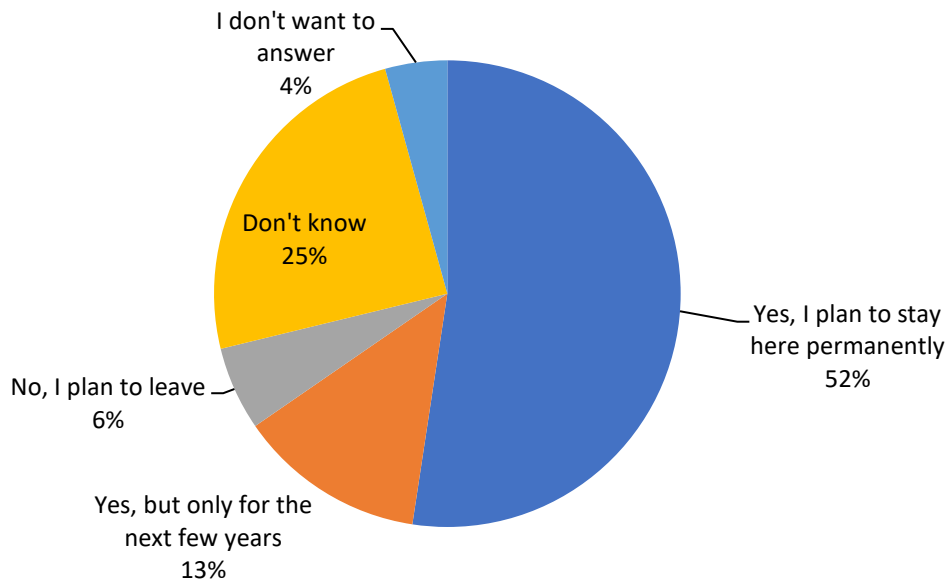
Residents (living permanently part of the time)



Visitors/non-residents of the Curonian Spit

32. Do you plan to stay in Curonian Spit in the long term?

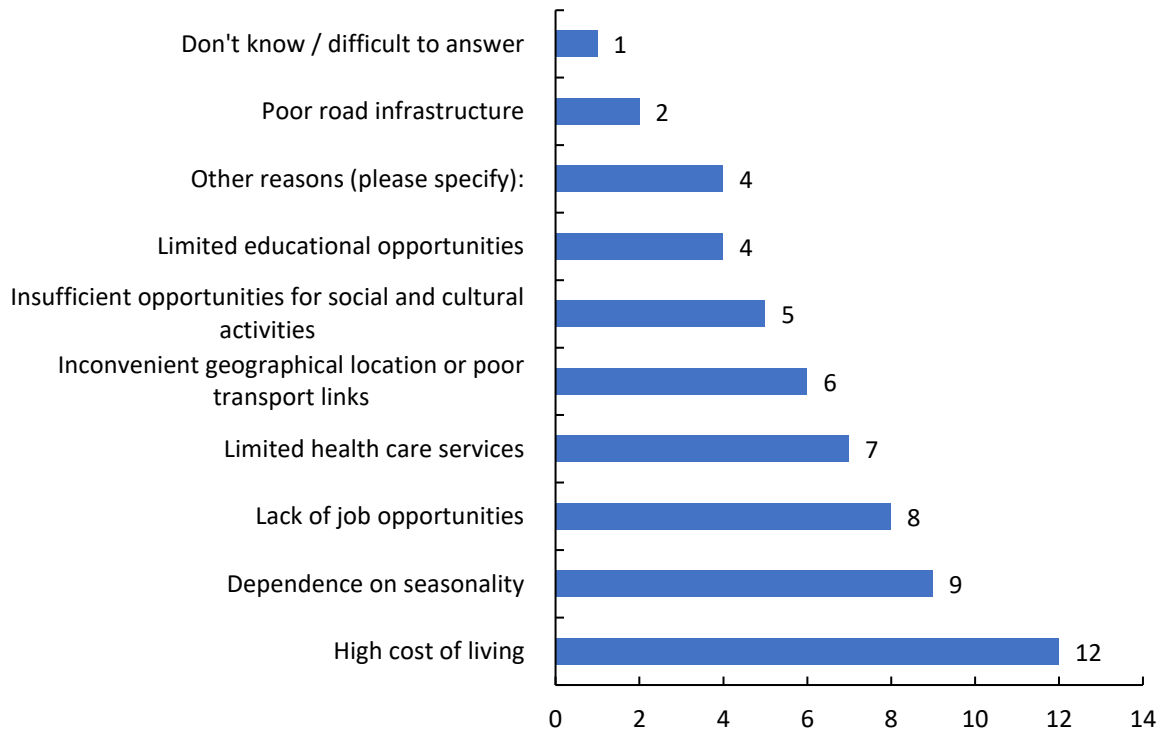
* Question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents



Curonian Spit residents, N=208

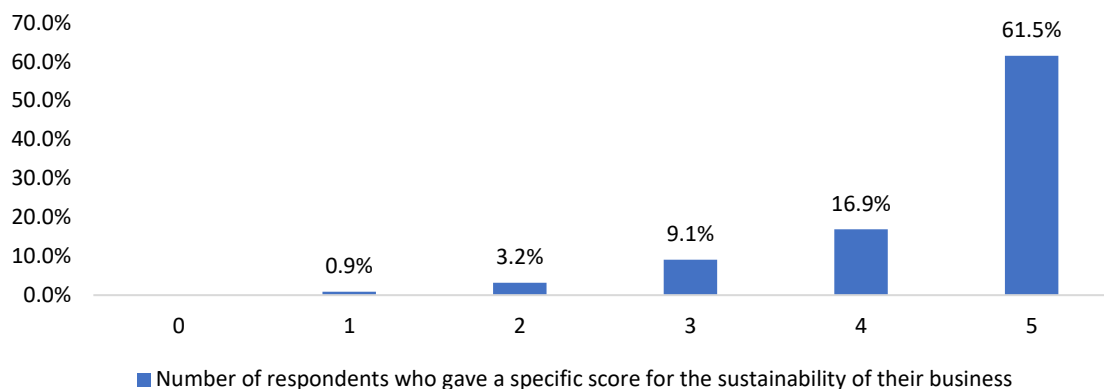
33. What are the main reasons why you plan to leave?

*The question was only shown to Curonian Spit residents who are not sure that they want to stay in Curonian Spit in the long term. Due to the very small sample size, it is not recommended to quote or use this data in a wider context.



N=23

34. How important is it to you that the Curonian Spit maintains its status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site? Please rate from 1 to 5



N=439

PROJEKTAS

Annex 7: Species protected in CSNP

Latin name	Lithuanian name
Mushrooms	
<i>Phallus hadriani</i>	Hadrian's beanstalk
<i>Psathyrella ammophila</i>	Lungwort
<i>Peziza ammophila</i>	Sand ears
Plants	
<i>Aira praecox</i>	Early coneflower
<i>Allium vineale</i>	Field garlic
<i>Alyssum gmelinii</i>	Sand verbena
<i>Anacamptis morio</i>	Lesser anacamptis
<i>Botrychium multifidum</i>	Multifilamentous bellwort
<i>Botrychium simplex</i>	little bellwort
<i>Centaurium littorale</i>	Centium Centaurium
<i>Dianthus arenarius</i>	Sandy carnation
<i>Epipactis atrorubens</i>	Dark-leaved shagbrush
<i>Erica tetralix</i>	Tyruline Erica
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Seaside damselfish
<i>Glaux maritima</i>	Seaside milkweed
<i>Juncus gerardi</i>	salt caterpillar
<i>Listera cordata</i>	Heart-leaved Fritillary
<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	Aquatic flamingo
<i>Radiola linoides</i>	Linnet
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Saltmarsh Salsola
<i>Salix repens</i>	Creeping willow
<i>Tripolium pannonicum</i>	Tri-coloured asters
<i>Vicia lathyroides</i>	Spring vetch
<i>Tragopogon heterospermus</i>	Baltic pimple*
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Baltic stalk*
<i>Linaria loeselii</i>	Baltic linseed*
Animals	
<i>Labidura riparia</i>	Beige daisy
<i>Polyphylla fullo</i>	Speckled Grampus
<i>Colletes caspicus</i>	Baltic silkworm
<i>Agrotis ripae</i>	Seaside damselfly
<i>Thaumetopoea pinivora</i>	Pine wanderer
<i>Cucullia balsamitae</i>	Seaside Cuculina
<i>Anthus campestris</i>	Soilwort
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Cave duck
<i>Epidalea calamita</i>	Reed toad

*Endemic to the south-eastern Baltic Sea

Source: compiled by CSNPA, data as of 26 December 2024.