

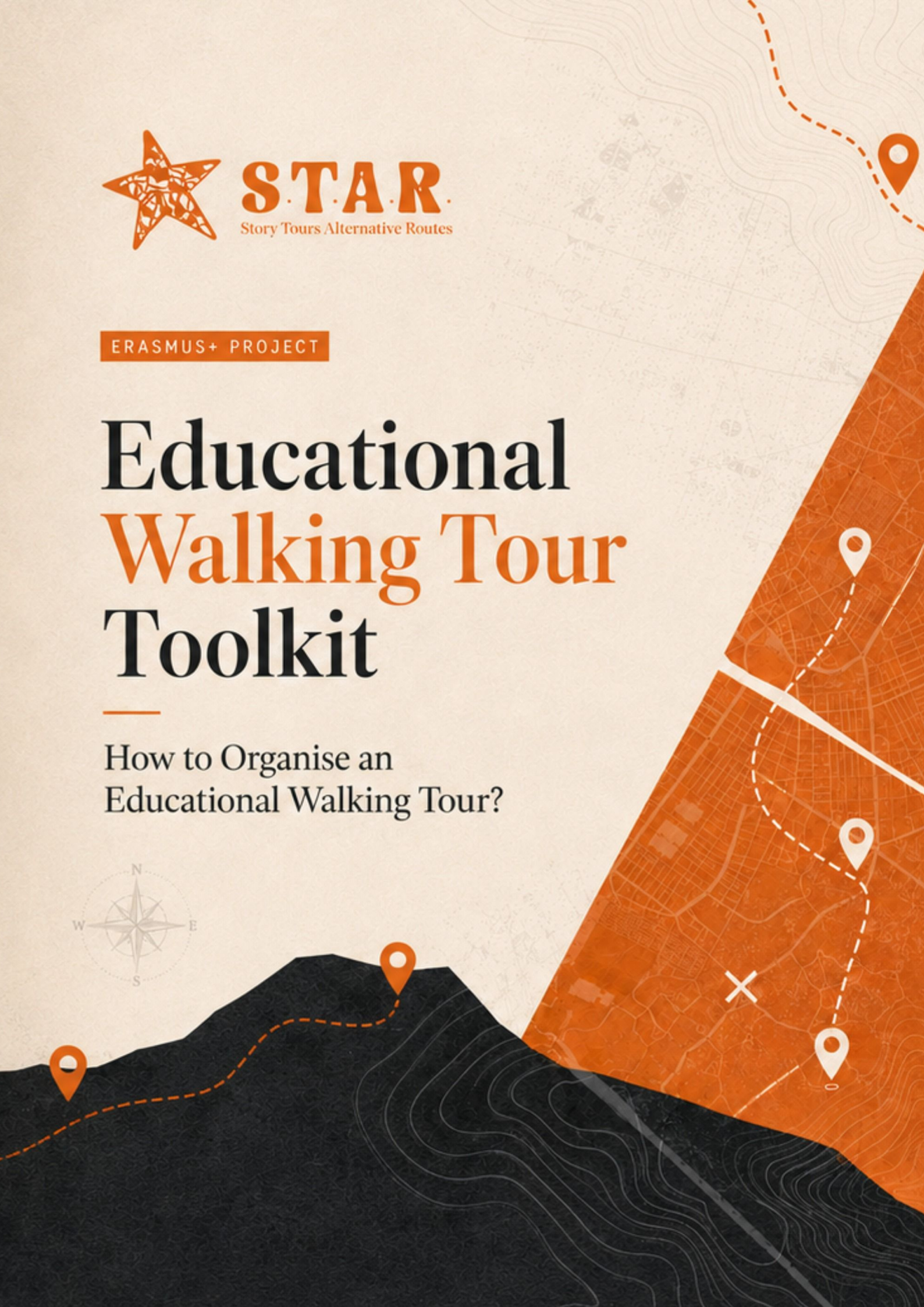


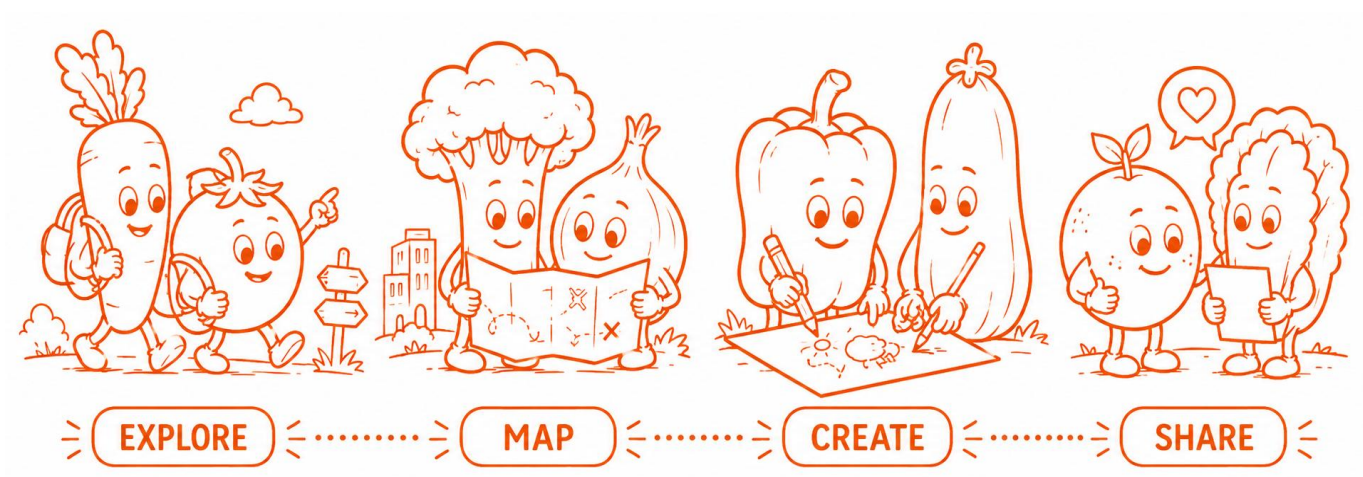
S.T.A.R.
Story Tours Alternative Routes

ERASMUS+ PROJECT

Educational Walking Tour Toolkit

How to Organise an
Educational Walking Tour?





★ **PURPOSE**
 A practical roadmap for young people, youth workers and educators to design inclusive, sustainable and story-based learning routes.

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About the toolkit

This toolkit was developed within the Erasmus+ KA220 Cooperation Partnership project **S.T.A.R: Story Tours Alternative Routes**, co-funded by the European Union with the support of the **Italian Youth Agency**. The project is implemented by Servizio Civile Internazionale APS (Italy), Space for Sustainable Development (Jordan), Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare (Albania), Center for Intercultural Dialogue Association (Macedonia), Volonterski Centar Vojvodine (Serbia) and Servei Civil Internacional de Catalunya (Spain).



The toolkit brings together the collective expertise of organisations working in non-formal education, alternative routes, youth work, leadership development, educational walking tours and sustainable programming. Its development drew from methodologies focused on intercultural competence, well-being, digital engagement, inclusion, equal opportunities, organisational capacity building and empowering educational resources.

The opinions and views expressed in this toolkit are solely those of the individual authors and contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the European Union, Erasmus+, or the Italian Youth Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

In this context, the STAR project strives to enhance collaboration among partner organizations across six countries-Italy, Spain, Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Jordan. It aims to strengthen NGOs' capacity to deliver impactful youth programs through a more digital, inclusive, and sustainable approach, while fostering youth engagement and promoting the values of inclusion through the educational tours methodology.



PROJECT IDENTITY

The project's logo beautifully encapsulates this mission, featuring a central star that symbolizes aspirational goals and positive change. Within the star, a drawn map of the city of Rome reflects skill development and urban exploration, while the orange color convey learning and dynamic experiences. Together, these elements visually represent the spirit and objectives of the STAR initiative.

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Introduction to the Topic and Main Concepts

Educational walking tours are a powerful tool for learning and engagement. As a concept and methodology, traveling to learn was prevalent even in the 17th to 19th centuries through the Grand Tour, which was undertaken by European aristocratic youth and included destinations such as Italy, France, and Germany to broaden the individual’s cultural horizons. Coming toward modern times, historical walking tours became more formalized in different settings- with the Western world, both North America and Europe have explored and played with this concept in a plethora of different ways. In Asia and Australia, this concept has been gaining more momentum relying on some traditional touristic formats like exploring India’s cricket tradition, or China’s technology, while in Africa it was present only in countries like Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria (that are, again heavily influenced by the touristic demand)¹.



Educational Walking Tour of the Monti Neighborhood (Rome, 17th May 2025)

Alternative Story Educational walking tours emerged as a response to traditional forms of tourism. To understand their significance, it is essential to grasp today’s economic and political realities. Economic factors such as globalization, technological advancements, and shifts in consumer behavior have transformed how people travel and engage with new places. In addition, policies related to sustainability,

¹ All of these have taken some form of traditional tourism that aims to popularize more immersive experiences that exploit the local nature, customs and entire communities.

cultural preservation, and urban development play crucial roles in shaping the tourism landscape and significantly vary from country to country across the globe.

Unlike traditional mass tourism, which often leads to environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and social disruption, **alternative tourism promotes responsible and conscious exploration**. It supports local economies, respects local cultures, and emphasizes the preservation of natural landscapes and heritage. It can even be said that educational walking tours offer unique experiences since the usual semantics or locations don't have to be closely tied to traditional tourist concepts and can explore, reinvent, and reshape any narratives from a perspective that can have more impact in terms of education and emotional impacts.



Walking Tour in a Canion (no date)

Educational walking tours not only incorporate the core principles of sustainable and responsible travel but also significantly enhance the travel experience by shifting the focus to the learner's perspective. Unlike traditional alternative tourism, which primarily emphasizes minimizing negative impacts and promoting responsible travel, **educational walking tours place the learner at the center of the experience**.

This unique approach calls upon individuals to explore, engage, and share in a communal learning journey. By immersing participants in local cultures, histories, and environments, educational walking tours foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the places visited.

The emphasis on learning and personal growth transforms the travel experience into a more enriching and meaningful one.

Innovative walking tours offer numerous benefits for youth education, starting with individual experiences. These tours enhance intercultural competence, foster environmental awareness, improve physical and mental well-being, and develop leadership skills. By integrating cultural visits, outdoor

activities, and social interactions with local communities, these tours provide participants with enriching and educational experiences.



Educational Walking Tour of the Rabal Neighborhood (Barcelona, 16th May 2025)

Creating communities that empower youth workers, educators, and enthusiasts can contribute by exploring, designing, and leading educational walking tours that can promote local culture and heritage. These initiatives can also encourage sustainable tourism practices and have a positive impact on participants and communities in many ways.

Educational Walking Tours

Educational walking tours are immersive learning experiences that combine the exploration of physical environments with structured educational content. These tours are designed to be both engaging and informative, allowing participants to learn about various topics—such as history, culture, architecture, and environmental science—while physically walking through relevant sites.

Educational walking tours are a powerful tool for non-formal education. They emphasize inclusivity and engagement, aiming to create immersive and interactive learning experiences that are accessible and welcoming to people from diverse backgrounds, abilities, identities, and needs.

Envisioned as a means to train youth workers and include sensitive groups, educational walking tours respond to traditional forms of tourism by shifting the focus to the learner's perspective. Such experiences encourage active participation and collaboration, bringing people together to share knowledge and experience. This communal aspect enhances the learning experience and strengthens the bonds between participants and the local communities they explore.

An inclusive walking tour, a type of educational walking tour, involves engaging with diverse groups and places, learning about their histories, cultures, and challenges, and creating a space for dialogue and mutual understanding. This methodology helps train youth leaders to design and lead engaging and educational tours, promote local communities and their cultural heritage, and encourage sustainable tourism practices.



Local culture: Kyoto's Statues (no date)

What You Can Learn

Educational walking tours offer a dynamic platform for youth workers, activists, and similar roles to develop a variety of skills. This methodology involves a range of activities designed to enhance the following:

- **Leadership and Soft Skills:** Participants are encouraged to spark change and tell compelling stories. The internal motivation that drives individuals to create a tour often transforms them into leaders and narrators of their own experiences.
- **Storytelling Abilities:** Participants learn to craft captivating narratives that educate and engage their audiences.
- **Advocacy Skills:** Individuals enhance their ability to raise awareness about important social, cultural, and environmental issues. This skill set effectively mobilizes support and fosters community involvement.

One of the remarkable aspects of this methodology is its **adaptability**. Educational walking tours can easily be tailored to fit the unique needs of the narrator, the storyteller, the community, and the public. This flexibility ensures that the tours remain relevant and impactful, allowing leaders to address specific topics and interests while fostering personal growth. Participants can also develop practical skills in promotion, research, and event management, further equipping them to make an impact in their communities.



Group hug during the training course “Empowering Youth through Advocacy and Research” (Berovo, North Macedonia, on 28th November 2024).

Educational walking tours have a profound impact on young people, significantly enhancing their understanding and appreciation of diversity. These tours not only promote physical health and overall happiness but also equip participants with essential skills and competencies for future opportunities. By engaging in these immersive experiences, young individuals enrich their perspectives and foster a sense of community, setting the stage for personal growth and lifelong learning. This transformative journey prepares them to navigate an increasingly interconnected world with confidence and empathy.



Creation process of EWT (Berovo, North Macedonia, on 28th November 2024).

How to Create an Educational Walking Tour?

Creating an educational walking tour involves a series of thoughtfully designed activities that guide the group through a structured yet flexible process. This toolkit is imagined as a practical roadmap for youth workers to lead their groups effectively while adapting to the unique needs and interests of their participants. The process begins with traditional icebreaker activities and the establishment of a group contract, laying a strong foundation for collaboration and mutual respect.

Pre-Activity. Icebreaker and Group Contract



OBJECTIVE

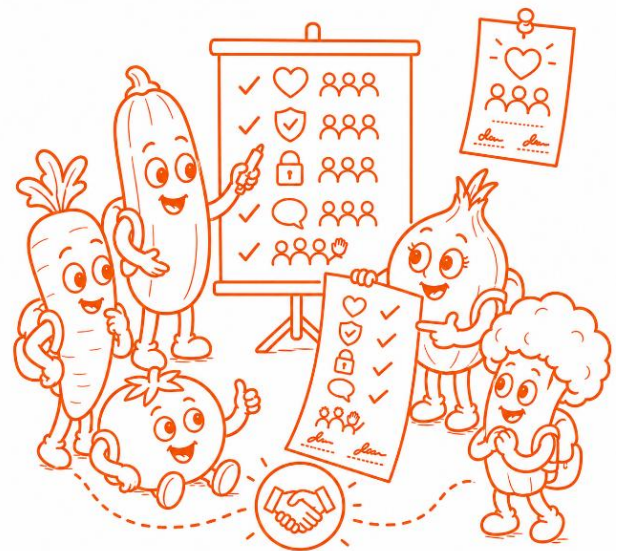
To help participants become acquainted with each other, build a sense of community, and establish ground rules for the group.


Instructions for Icebreakers

- **Name Game:** Participants stand in a circle. Each person says their name and shares one interesting fact about themselves. Optionally, use a softball or object to pass around, making it interactive.
- **Human Bingo (Optional):** Prepare bingo cards with prompts like “Has traveled to more than five countries” or “Speaks more than one language.” Participants mingle to find others who match the prompts. The first person to complete a row or full card shouts “Bingo!” and shares interesting facts about their peers.

Instructions for Group Contract




1. Discuss the importance of having a group contract. Invite participants to suggest rules they think are crucial for the group's success.
2. Creating the Group Contract: Give an example of a rule that is important to everyone. Example: *The space among us is a safe environment with mutual respect and tolerance, ensuring we respect each other's privacy.*
3. Write suggested rules on a flip chart or whiteboard. Discuss and agree on each rule as a group.
4. Finalize and write the contract, with all participants signing it as a show of commitment.
5. Display the signed contract in a visible location.



	<p>REFLECTION Encourage participants to share their thoughts and feelings about the activities.</p>
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With these preparatory activities, participants are more likely to feel engaged, respected, and ready to embark on the journey of creating an educational walking tour.

Activity 1. Understanding the foundation

	<p>OBJECTIVE The first activity aims to understand the stem of educational walking tours through the lens of tourism, alternative tourism, and sustainable tourism, while critically reflecting on their economic, ecological, and societal impacts to better appreciate their role in non-formal education.</p>
	<p>MATERIALS Flipchart paper, markers, and other colored pens.</p>
	<p>ESTIMATED TIME 45 minutes for small group work, 45 minutes for presentation (15 minutes each group)</p>

If we want to understand what we mean by educational walking tours and why we think they are an important tool of non-formal education, firstly, we need to understand the economic and political reality we live in. To do that, we can implement an activity where we would analyze the good and bad sides of:

1. Tourism
2. Alternative tourism
3. Sustainable tourism

TASK

Divide the group into 3 small groups (mixed partner countries). Give them the task to find at least 5 good and 5 bad things about each of the mentioned topics.



- Group 1. Should work on tourism
- Group 2. Should work on alternative tourism
- Group 3. Should work on sustainable tourism.

After group work, each group presents in the plenary.

Questions and remarks that could deepen the discussion:

- Why alternative and sustainable?
- What Impacts does each type of tourism have on the community/society?
- What are the economic and ecological implications?
- Reasons why it is popular or unpopular?
- How can we improve it or influence it (personal impact)?
- Reflect on your country!
- How can we strengthen solidarity and change the narrative?



REMEMBER

Keep in mind that this material is only an example. If there are other preferred sources to gather information about the topic, it is encouraged that the group exchange opinions and research on their own!

Theoretical Input to Reflect On

Tourism is defined as a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure.

It is a significant source of income for both the public and private sectors globally.² According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism contributes approximately 10% to the global GDP. However, traditional tourism often leans towards consumerism, driven primarily by the desire for rest and leisure. This trend is frequently encouraged by mass advertising campaigns that attract potential consumers to these experiences.

While the economic benefits of tourism are substantial, the environmental costs are also considerable. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) identified three primary negative environmental impacts of tourism: the depletion of natural resources, pollution, and physical degradation of ecosystems. Tourism activities often lead to overexploitation of water resources, generation of waste, and loss of biodiversity.

Popular tourist destinations frequently experience water shortages, waste management issues, and pressure on local wildlife. In addition, the construction of tourism infrastructure, such as hotels and resorts, can lead to deforestation and habitat destruction, while employing local low-income citizens who are often forced to work in harsh conditions where many labor rules and regulations are not met.

² Serbia around 2.2 Billion EUR, Italy around 22 Billion EUR, Catalonia around 10 Billion EUR, Albania around 2 Billion EUR, North Macedonia from 900 Million to 1 Billion EUR, Jordan around 3.7 Billion EUR per year.



Overtourism (no date)

“Is there a way toward solutions?”

Alternative tourism and sustainable tourism present pathways to mitigate these challenges and foster more responsible travel practices.

Alternative tourism refers to a type of travel that seeks to minimize the negative environmental, social, and cultural impacts of traditional mass tourism. It emphasizes a more responsible and conscious way of exploring the world, with a focus on reducing pollution, respecting local cultures, and supporting local economies. Unlike the conventional tourist model, which often leads to overcrowding, environmental degradation, and cultural commodification, alternative tourism presents a more sustainable and authentic way to travel.


Sustainable tourism seeks to minimize the negative impacts of tourism on nature, culture, and people while maximizing benefits for local communities. This includes respecting the environment, preserving cultural heritage, and ensuring fair economic opportunities for locals.

Alternative and sustainable tourism offer promising solutions, but their success relies on genuine commitment and ongoing vigilance. These approaches not only address the negative impacts of traditional tourism but also encourage positive interactions among travelers, communities, and the environment. By adopting these practices, we can create a more harmonious and sustainable world for both current and future generations.

Developing alternative tourist routes helps **educate** young people by exposing them to diverse cultures, histories, and environments. These routes often highlight lesser-known destinations, promoting sustainable travel practices and appreciation for local traditions, surroundings, and natural landscapes.



Exploring these alternatives, young travelers gain broader perspectives, fostering curiosity, environmental awareness, and a deeper understanding of global heritage. This approach encourages them to think critically about tourism's impact and the importance of preserving both cultural and ecological resources for future generations.

Activity 2. Definition of Educational Walking Tours

	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Participants will take part in three exercises intended to clarify how various elements of a story can be modified. They will examine the significance of emotions and intentions in crafting narratives. Ultimately, the goal is to cultivate an awareness of learning as a deliberate necessity and objective.</p>
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1. Exercise: Show and Tell with an Emotional Narrative

Aim: To introduce participants to the emotional power of storytelling by exploring personal connections to everyday objects, setting the tone for understanding narratives in educational walking tours.


	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Small objects (brought by participants), paper, and pens or phone(optional)</p>
	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>30 minutes</p>

1. **Preparation (5 minutes):** Ask participants to select a small object they have with them or one they can imagine holding significance (e.g., a book, keychain, or pen).
2. **Reflection and Story Crafting (10 minutes):** Participants think about their chosen object and write down or mentally organize 2-3 key sentences answering:
 - What is this object?
 - Why does it matter to you?
 - What memory, emotion, or story does it evoke?
3. **Sharing Stories (15 minutes):** Each participant shares their object and story briefly with the group (1-2 minutes per person, depending on group size).

Listeners can ask quick follow-up questions or share how the story resonated with them (time permitting).

2. Exercise: Follow the Objects and Craft a Story

Aim: To foster creativity, teamwork, and storytelling skills by creating a collaborative narrative inspired by objects, while moving through a space as a group.

	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>A selection of objects (e.g., a sculpture, bag, mug, etc.) provided by participants or the facilitator, paper, and pens (optional, for jotting down ideas).</p>
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**ESTIMATED TIME**

45-60 minutes

Instructions

1. **Scatter the Objects (10 minutes):** Ask participants to scatter the selected objects throughout the room or working site. Objects should be placed in accessible spots that encourage movement between them.
2. Once the objects are placed, **form small groups** (3-5 participants).
3. **Follow the Objects and Story Creation (20-25 minutes):** Each group will move sequentially between objects, following their "trail."
4. **Story Presentations and Discussion (15-20 minutes):** Each group presents their story to the entire group.

Object and Story Creation

At each object, the group collaborates to imagine its role in their evolving story. Encourage them to observe the details of the object (shape, texture, purpose). Encourage discussion of how it connects to the next object in the sequence.

Tip: Suggest to them to think about how to incorporate a Did You Know moment where it seems like a good fit and contributes to the entire story.

REMEMBER

Keep in mind that presentations should be engaging, including details of their journey and how they linked the objects together creatively. After each presentation, invite feedback or reflections from the audience, focusing on what made the story compelling.

Conclusion

Share the aims of the exercise:

- To encourage creativity and teamwork.
- To practice storytelling collaboratively.
- To understand the value of storytelling in engaging and educating others, as in the context of educational walking tours.

Facilitate a brief discussion:


- Ask participants how they found the exercise and what they learned about crafting narratives.
- Discuss how these skills apply to educational walking tours, particularly in making them more interactive and captivating.

3. Exercise: Defining Key Elements of an Educational Walking Tour

Aim: To explore and identify the key elements of educational walking tours by critically analyzing their definition and brainstorming collaboratively.


**MATERIALS**

Definitions are written in large letters on flipchart paper or displayed using a projector; flipchart paper and markers are used for each group.

	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>Reading and reflection: 60 minutes</p>
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Instructions

1. **Present the Definition (5 minutes):** Write or project the following definition on a flipchart or wall: *"A mix of Alternative and Sustainable tourism gets educational when learning becomes a conscious need and aim of the participant".*

	<p>Educational walking tours combine aspects of alternative and sustainable tourism. These tours become educational when learning becomes a conscious need and goal of the traveler. They aim to provide a deeper understanding of local cultures, histories, and environments by emphasizing education and interaction with the visited communities. This conscious approach fosters curiosity, environmental awareness, and cultural appreciation among participants.</p>
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Allow participants to read and reflect on the definition individually.

2. **Form Small Groups (30 minutes):**
 - o Divide participants into three small groups.
 - o Provide each group with flipchart paper and markers.
 - o Ask them to collaboratively brainstorm and answer the question: "What could be the key elements of an educational walking tour?"

	<p>REMEMBER</p> <p>Encourage groups to consider aspects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cultural immersion o Environmental responsibility o Community engagement <p>Storytelling and learning objectives</p>
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3. **Present Group Findings (15 minutes):** Each group presents their ideas using their flipchart paper (5 minutes per group). Presentations should be clear and concise, focusing on the most important elements they identified.
4. **Facilitate a Group Discussion (15 minutes):** Use the following questions and remarks to deepen the discussion:
 - o How can educational walking tours raise awareness?
 - o How can the local community be actively involved?
 - o How can tours ensure a fair share of benefits for all stakeholders?

Encourage participants to share additional insights or ask questions about other groups' findings.

Conclusion

- o Emphasize how this exercise connects to the practice of organizing and leading educational walking tours.
- o Highlight the importance of identifying these key elements to create meaningful, impactful, and sustainable learning experiences for participants.

Theory input

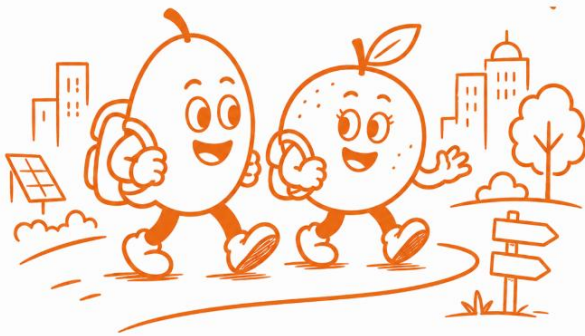
What makes an educational tour truly educational is the intention behind the learning process. It's not just about visiting a destination but about gaining knowledge and insight that challenges or expands the way we see the world.

In alternative and sustainable tourism, learning becomes a conscious need and aim when travelers/participants are encouraged to think critically about their impact on the places they visit. Tour participants are active learners, not just observers. They explore politics, history, sustainability, ecological conservation, cultural preservation, and responsible travel through hands-on experiences. The goal is to foster knowledge through active engagement with the destination.

For example, during an educational tour in a rural village, participants of the tour might learn about local farming practices, environmental sustainability, community leadership, and the community's efforts to preserve traditional methods that are often at risk of disappearing. Rather than simply visiting a museum or landmark, the tour might involve participating in farming activities or even watching a process of decision-making in a community, thus creating an experiential and interactive learning experience.

Activity 3. Let's Go Outside!

→	<p>TASK</p> <p>Organize a local educational walking tour to serve as a case study. It does not need to be highly detailed or fully developed but should demonstrate the concept of an educational walking tour. Participants will evaluate this example and provide feedback afterward.</p>
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Following the organized tour, participants will have free time to explore the area independently with the following tasks (instructions):

- Take care of themselves.
- Prepare a presentation about their findings for the morning session.

□	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Everything needed for a long walk (water, food, good shoes, passports, phone, notebook optional).</p>
🕒	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Walking Tour: 3 hours • Exploring Tour: Open-ended

!	<p>REMEMBER</p> <p>Ensure everyone knows how to return to the venue and encourage them to stay in small groups or pairs. Inform them about any local social codes they should be aware of to ensure a respectful and safe experience.</p>
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Encouragement for Exploring Tour: Participants are encouraged to observe the local environment, culture, and community dynamics during their exploration. They should try to conceptualize a specific topic they notice during their exploration, such as local sustainability practices, cultural heritage, community challenges, wildlife, or the interplay between tourism and the environment. This will enrich their presentations and foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the area.

Theory input

To make the most out of the exploring tour, participants should focus on observing and engaging with the local environment, culture, and community. Here are some key guidelines to help:

- **Observation:** Pay attention to the details of your surroundings. Look for unique cultural practices, community interactions, local flora and fauna, and any environmental efforts or challenges. Notice the architecture, street art, public spaces, and how locals use these spaces.
- **Engagement:** Interact with locals respectfully. Ask questions about their culture, traditions, and daily life. Show genuine interest and be open to learning from their perspectives.
- **Documentation:** Use any type of recording to capture your experiences:
 - Take photos of interesting sites, cultural symbols, and significant moments.
 - Record ambient sounds, local music, or conversations (with permission).
 - Capture short clips of events, activities, or places.
 - Collect informational materials about the area.
 - Use Google Maps to track your walking routes and save them.
- **Write down the most important elements** of your experiences, including thoughts, observations, and reflections.
- **Reflection:** Think about what you've observed and documented. Consider how these experiences connect to broader themes like sustainability, cultural preservation, or the impact of tourism.
- **Presentation Preparation:** Prepare a presentation for the next session, highlighting your findings and insights. Use the materials you've collected to illustrate your points. Share your reflections and suggest how these learnings could be applied to improve future tours.

This approach ensures that participants engage thoughtfully with their environment, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the area while developing practical insights for sustainable tourism practices.

Activity 4. Reporting, discussing, exchanging

◎	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To share experiences, discuss the educational walking tour, and reflect on their explorations.</p>
→	<p>TASK</p> <p>After a long day (and night) of exploring the area, the group is back, full of impressions, and probably tired. Consider starting later, with a relaxing exercise that puts them in focus.</p>

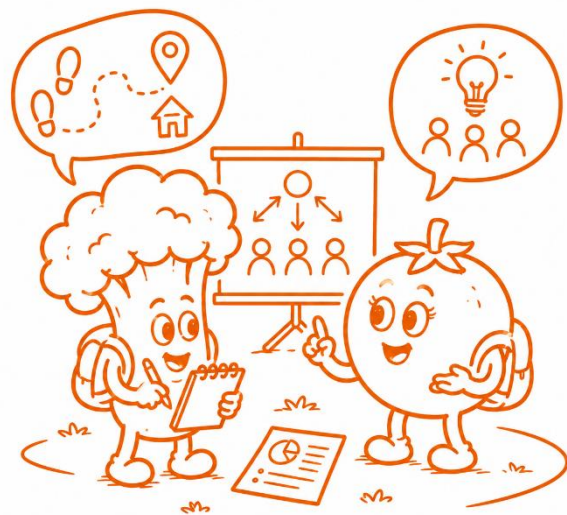
Start the session with a relaxing exercise to help participants focus. Provide time and space for everyone to express themselves as they share experiences and discuss insights from the educational walking tour and individual explorations.

End the discussion by sharing theoretical inputs on leadership styles and group decision-making processes (on a big screen and a handout).

	<p>MATERIALS none (notes by the facilitator)</p>
	<p>ESTIMATED TIME 10 minutes of exercise, 60 minutes of sharing and discussing in the plenary, 20 minutes of theoretical input</p>

Questions and remarks that could deepen the discussion:

- What was the most interesting thing you found?
- Was it during the tour, or did you find it by yourself?
- What was the educational walking tour about?
- What do you think about why we have chosen this topic?
- What was your general impression of this community?
- When exploring, were you alone or with a group? Why?
- What role have you taken?
- How did you decide where to go?



Theory input

Understanding various leadership styles can help participants become more effective both in creating and experiencing educational walking tours. Explore some of the most common leadership styles, including grassroots leadership:

- **Autocratic Leadership:** In this style, the leader makes decisions unilaterally, with little to no input from others. It is effective in situations requiring quick decisions but can stifle creativity and morale. For example, the leader might decide on all tour stops without consulting others. While this can ensure a well-organized and efficient tour, it may stifle creativity and discourage participants from sharing their ideas.
- **Democratic Leadership:** This style involves collaboration, where leaders encourage input from team members before making decisions. It promotes teamwork, innovation, and satisfaction but can be slow in decision-making. A tour leader with a democratic style encourages input from all participants in the planning process. The group might vote on which locations to visit or what themes to explore. This promotes teamwork and ensures everyone feels valued, but it can slow down decision-making if too many opinions are considered.
- **Transformational Leadership:** Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their team by creating a vision for the future and encouraging innovation. Focusing on personal development and creating positive change within the organization, they might encourage participants to think

of innovative ways to engage with the local culture, such as organizing interactive activities with the community. This style fosters personal development and creates a dynamic and inspiring tour experience.

- **Transactional Leadership:** Transactional leaders focus on routine, structure, and performance. They reward compliance and manage team members with clear guidelines and expectations, but they may miss opportunities for innovation. This approach ensures that the tour runs smoothly, but it might miss opportunities for spontaneous exploration or creative input from participants.
- **Servant Leadership:** Servant leaders prioritize the needs and well-being of their group. They might focus on ensuring everyone feels comfortable and supported during the tour, such as accommodating different learning styles or providing additional resources. This approach empowers participants and fosters a sense of community and trust.
- **Laissez-Faire Leadership:** Leaders using this style offer minimal guidance and allow team members to make decisions. It can foster innovation and independence but may lack direction or accountability. For example, the leader might provide a list of potential tour stops and let the group decide which to visit. This can foster independence and innovation but may lead to a lack of direction if participants need more guidance.
- **Grassroots Leadership:** This style involves leadership emerging from the community or organization, often from individuals who are not in formal leadership positions. Grassroots leaders typically drive change by organizing and mobilizing people at the local or community level. They emphasize collective action, community engagement, and empowering others, creating a bottom-up approach rather than top-down control. It is often used in social movements or community-based projects.


In grassroots leadership, individuals who are not formal leaders take the initiative to guide the tour. Participants might collectively decide on tour themes and stops, drawing on local knowledge and experiences. This bottom-up approach empowers the group and emphasizes community engagement and collective action.

Group decision-making processes (choose the theory that suits the best):

1. Voting	2. Consensus	3. Majority Rule
4. Delegation	5. Nominal Group Technique	6. Delphi Technique
7. Brainstorming	8. Voting with Feet	9. Autocratic Decision Making
10. Groupthink	11. Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA)	

Activity 5. Community mapping I (Where do I come from)

When planning an educational walking tour that is community-oriented and includes the resources of the local community, first, we need to know how to describe our community, to ourselves, and others. There are different methods of mapping a community. We can use a simple SWOT analysis to get a clearer picture of where we live and who our neighbors are. If we use this methodology, the groups are best shared by the country they are coming from, so they can discuss among themselves the different perspectives on each of the following questions.

	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To describe and understand one's community by using a SWOT analysis, identifying key characteristics and dynamics from various perspectives.</p>
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→	<p>TASK</p> <p>Participants will perform a SWOT analysis in groups based on their countries. This will help them gain a clearer picture of where they live and who their neighbors are. Each group will answer a series of questions, combining different resources and engaging in discussions.</p>
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SWOT has 4 core questions (divide a flipchart paper into 4), but there are 4 preparation questions and 2 additional questions to complete the task. Participants should have a lot of time for this task, as they can combine different resources and discuss as a small group. Each group gets a flipchart paper and one hour to answer the questions.

Intro questions:

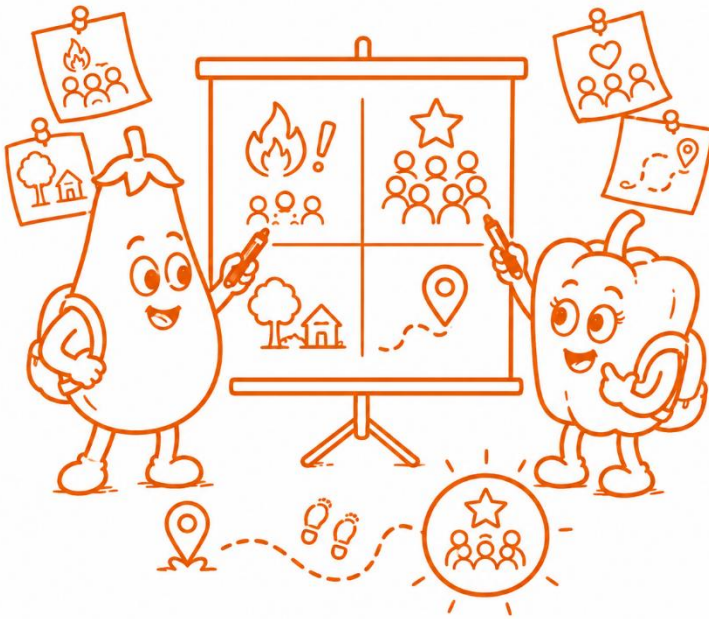
- Where do I come from? Encourage participants to share personal stories or historical facts about their hometowns or regions.
- Where do I live? Discuss the physical and social aspects of their current living environments.
- Who lives here? Identify different demographics, cultural groups, and key community members.
- How would I define my community? Explore the community's identity, values, and unique characteristics.
- SWOT ANALYSIS (Divide a flipchart paper into four sections for these questions)
- What are the strengths of my community? Examples: Strong local traditions, active community organizations, natural beauty, historical landmarks, etc.
- What are the weak points of my community? Examples: Lack of infrastructure, limited access to education, social inequality, environmental issues.
- What are the opportunities in my community? Examples: Potential for eco-tourism, community development projects, cultural festivals, local entrepreneurship.
- What are the threats in my community coming from outside? Examples: Industrial development, climate change, economic downturns, cultural erosion.

Closing questions:

- What are the things my community does not like to talk about? Explore sensitive topics or taboos within the community that are often avoided.
- The potential resources are there in the community that are not used well? Identify underused assets like public spaces, skilled individuals, or local knowledge.

	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Flipchart papers, markers, internet and devices</p>
	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>60 minutes to prepare the mapping, 20 minutes for presentation per small group.</p>

Theory Input




When planning an educational walking tour that is community-oriented and includes the resources of the local community, it is crucial to understand the dynamics of the community itself. By conducting a thorough community mapping exercise, participants can identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which are essential for creating impactful and sustainable tours.

Identify individuals within the community who possess valuable skills or knowledge that are not widely recognized. These can be local artisans, historians, storytellers, or environmentalists. Engaging these individuals can enrich the tour and provide an authentic local experience.


Understanding the community's dynamics, and its strengths, such as strong cultural traditions or active community organizations, can help leverage these assets during the tour. Conversely, recognizing weaknesses, like limited infrastructure or social inequality, can inform how to address these challenges sensitively.

Identifying opportunities for the community, such as the potential for eco-tourism or local entrepreneurship, can guide the development of the tour to support sustainable growth. Acknowledging external threats, like industrial development or cultural erosion, can help in advocating for the preservation of local heritage and environments.



Activity 6. Community mapping II (Choosing the topic- hot top or burning matter)

	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To identify and choose relevant topics for educational walking tours by analyzing community issues and distinguishing between popular topics and sensitive, pressing matters.</p>
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The closing question of the previous session ("What potential resources exist in the community that are not well utilized?") serves as the introduction to Community Mapping II. Participants will use their answers to define the topic for their educational walking tour. At this point, tour planning becomes an individual task unless participants have similar topics or locations, in which case they can work together.

	<p>TASK</p> <p>In their previous small groups, participants will review their SWOT analyses using two markers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red marker: Mark the burning topics or taboos in their communities. • Black marker: Mark the popular topics that people would be glad to hear about.
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Presentation and discussion in the plenary should result in choosing their topic for the educational walking tour. During the discussion, it is useful to refer to leadership styles and activism, as some of the participants would probably choose a popular topic and some would go deeper in analyses and include the members of sensitive groups.

	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>45 minutes for small group work, 10 minutes per small group to present, and 30 minutes of discussion.</p>
	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Red and black markers, old presentations on flipcharts.</p>

Suggestions for Enhancing the Activity

Encourage participants to revisit their SWOT analyses from Activity 5 for a comprehensive understanding of their community. They can use the insights gained from the previous activity to better identify and categorize topics.

Activity 7. Planning my Educational Walking Tour

	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To develop an educational walking tour that reflects the participant's chosen topic, and to present the plan to the larger group.</p>
	<p>TASK</p> <p>This is primarily a personal task unless participants decide to form pairs or small groups with the same location or idea. The task involves developing the tour and presenting it to the big group. Participants should follow a structured guideline to address all the key elements of the tour plan.</p>
	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>1 hour and 30 minutes for planning, 1 hour and 30 minutes for presentations.</p>
	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>However they would like to present, it can be flipchart or digital.</p>

Suggestions for Enhancing the Activity

Encourage participants to revisit their community mapping and SWOT analysis from Activities 5 and 6 to ensure their tour is well-informed and aligned with community insights.

Remind participants to consider ways to involve community members in the tour planning process to enhance authenticity and engagement.

Encourage reflections on how different leadership styles and approaches to activism can impact the development and delivery of their tours.



EWT South of Rome, 25th October 2026

Guideline for Planning the Educational Walking Tour

1. Define the Purpose, Theme, and Team

Determine the goal and theme of the tour. Think about who will be involved in the planning and execution.

Begin by determining the primary goal of your walking tour. What key concepts do you wish to convey or emphasize? Is it centered on political, historical, cultural, or environmental themes or a mix?

Setting up the team is a crucial moment when planning a tour. The members of the team can be storytellers, tech support, experts, activists, or other young people who take part in developing and organizing a tour.

2. Research and Gather Information

Collect detailed information about the chosen topic, location, and relevant history. Plan your research and present your plan:

- Local history books, archives, or museums.
- Interviews with local people, historians, or long-time residents.
- Walking the route yourself to observe key features and details.
- Visiting local libraries, government records, or online resources.

- Take notes on historical facts, anecdotes, or folklore that could engage participants. Contextualize landmarks or sites with the stories that make them unique.

3. Choose the Route

Map out the route for the tour. Consider the starting point, key stops, and the endpoint. Carefully map out the route to ensure that it is:

- Accessible: Ensure the path is walkable for a variety of participants, including those with limited mobility. If not, note that in the description.
- Safe: Avoid busy or dangerous roads; consider sidewalks, pedestrian paths, or parkland. If not, note that in the description.
- Diverse: Incorporate different types of locations that complement your theme-public squares, historic homes, parks, murals, or any location that reaches the aim and purpose of the educational walking tour.
- Scenic and Educational: Look for locations that offer audio-visual interest, political/historical importance, or a strong connection to nature.
- Time the Route: Walking tours can be hard for the tour guides and participants equally, taking into account the season, whether it will be too warm or too cold outside. Think about weather conditions, and how long you need between points. Plan a little break and keep time on each stop.

4. Write a Compelling Script- NOW

Create a detailed script or outline that guides the walk. Include key facts, stories, and visuals at each stop. Make sure to:

- Keep the language clear and accessible to a wide audience. Plan to translate the booklet if needed.
- Include engaging stories, local legends, or lesser-known facts that will capture interest.
- Maintain a logical flow from one stop to the next, ensuring there is a natural progression in the narrative.
- Offer interactive opportunities, like asking participants questions or ensuring conversation with local people, and give them audio-visual tools and stimulation.
- Provide context for the community's challenges and possible development and how each step relates to the bigger picture.
- Define the bigger picture- put the tour in a human, political, historical, or economic context.

5. Consider Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Think about the diversity of your participants, and plan for a range of ages, abilities, and interests:
- Use signs or printed materials for people with hearing impairments.
- Make sure that the route and pace of the walk cater to those with mobility challenges.
- Offer multi-lingual support if your community is diverse in terms of language.
- Ensure rest stops and shade are available for people who may need them.

6. Plan Engagement Activities (bring ideas to the plenary)

Incorporate activities that engage participants, such as Q&A sessions, hands-on experiences, or interactive games. Depending on your theme, incorporate activities that increase participant involvement:

- Quizzes or Challenges
- Local Art or Music

- Treasure Hunts


7. Prepare Materials and Resources

- Maps or Guides: Provide printed or digital materials that participants can use as they walk.
- Visual Aids: Use photos, old postcards, video, or audio clips at key stops to illustrate changes over time or to show what historical landmarks once looked like.
- Audio: Consider offering a self-guided audio tour with downloadable apps or QR codes, which participants can scan to hear more information.
- Other

8. Promote the Tour (present it in the plenary in 2 minutes)

Once your walking tour is ready, get the word out! Use local media, social media, flyers, or partnerships with local NGOs and schools to raise awareness. Be sure to:

- Clearly explain the tour's theme and highlights.
- Include information on how to register, if needed, and any associated costs or free events.
- Offer different times or days for flexibility, and provide group rates or discounts for schools, organizations, or large groups.
- You can use the following script as presentation guidelines.

	<p>PRESENTATION SCRIPT (2 MINUTES)</p> <p><i>"Good morning, everyone! Today, I am thrilled to introduce our new walking tour designed to showcase [Insert Tour Theme]. This tour highlights [Key Highlights], providing a unique and immersive experience for all participants"</i></p>
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Here's what you need to know:

- What: A guided walking tour focusing on [Tour Theme]
- Who: Open to everyone, perfect for families, schools, and local organizations
- When: Available on multiple dates and times for your convenience
- Where: Starting point at [Starting Location], covering key spots such as [Highlights]
- Why: To promote awareness about [Tour Theme], foster community connections, and provide an engaging learning experience

CTA- engine in a strong call to action, calling the auditorium to book, visit the website, scan a QR code link, watch an old tour, etc.

9. Test the Tour

Before launching the walking tour to the public, do a "test run" with a small group of friends or volunteers. This will help you:

- Ensure the route is logical and easy to follow.
- Fine-tune the timing and pacing.
- Adjust any details in your script that might be confusing or difficult to understand.

10. Evaluate the Tour

- Plan out the evaluation of the tour, what kind of tools it is best to use, and when.
- Use pre-tour and post-tour questionnaires to gauge participants' expectations and experiences. Pre-tour questionnaires can help understand initial knowledge and interests, while post-tour questionnaires assess what they learned and their overall satisfaction.

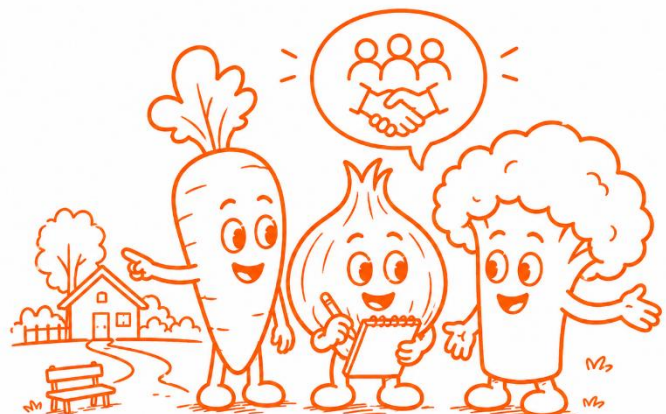
- Include simple 1-out-of-5 rating scales for elements like message clarity, tour guide performance, and duration.
- Allow space for additional comments.
- Ensure data collection is secure by offering anonymous surveys that are not mandatory. This approach encourages honest feedback while respecting participants' privacy.

Activity 8. Including the local community

◎	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To include the local community in the planning and/or implementation phases of educational walking tours, ensuring their needs and perspectives are considered throughout the process. This can happen in a formal (institutions, NGOs) or in a non-formal way (people we know, members of the community who are not reached by any institution, friends of friends).</p>
→	<p>TASK</p> <p>Revisit the community mapping analyses from Activity 5. Next to the strengths of the community, add a column for HUMAN RESOURCES. This phase of planning can either be directly connected to the tour being planned or can help determine the direction based on the people identified in this column. This task is individual but can be done in small groups for discussion purposes.</p>



Tips for Identifying Human Resources:

- Cultural organizers, activists, youth workers
- Pub owners, factory workers, artists
- Educators or professionals (historians, sociologists)
- Migrants, representatives of sensitive groups
- Local historians, witnesses of significant events



🕒	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>30 minutes, 30 minutes presentation in the plenary</p>
📦	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Old SWOT analysis</p>
!	<p>REMEMBER</p> <p>It is important to know the community that we are approaching and the relationships among different groups and individuals. Our primary goal is to include the members of the community in the planning and/or implementation phase and to communicate about the needs of the community all the way.</p>

Activity 9. Working with sensitive groups



	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To understand and effectively work with sensitive groups, recognizing their specific needs and challenges, and ensuring an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment.</p>
	<p>TASK</p> <p>Watch an educational movie Tour around the Reception center for migrants in Subotica, followed by a plenary discussion and a theoretical input session.</p>

Theoretical Input

Sensitive groups refer to individuals or populations that are particularly vulnerable or at higher risk due to specific characteristics, conditions, or circumstances. These groups may be more susceptible to harm, adverse effects, or challenges due to factors such as age, health status, socio-economic conditions, or environmental factors.

Key considerations when working with sensitive groups:

- **Listen Actively:** Be attentive, non-judgmental, and validate their feelings.
- **Respect Diversity:** Understand cultural, social, and individual differences; avoid assumptions.
- **Ensure Confidentiality:** Protect their privacy and respect boundaries.
- **Use Inclusive Language:** Be mindful of terminology and address people according to their preferences.
- **Provide Emotional Support:** Show empathy, acknowledge their strength, and offer helpful resources.
- **Be Patient and Flexible:** Adapt to their pace and be understanding of their needs.
- **Foster Safety and Inclusivity:** Create an environment where everyone feels comfortable and respected.
- **Offer Accessibility:** Consider physical, mental, and logistical needs to ensure full participation.
- **Be Honest and Transparent:** Build trust through clear and open communication.
- **Empower:** Educate and support self-advocacy.



	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>Movie 15 minutes, discussion 15 minutes, theoretical input 15 minutes.</p>
	<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Movie (can be reached by contacting vcvoffice@gmail.com), theoretical input prepared for projection or on flipchart.</p>

Suggestions for Enhancing the Activity

After the movie, prompt participants to share their thoughts and feelings about the film, fostering a deeper understanding of the experiences of sensitive groups.

Incorporate role-playing to help participants practice using inclusive language, provide emotional support, ensure confidentiality, and/or consider inviting speakers who work with sensitive groups to share their insights and experiences.

Activity 10. Use Storytelling!

	<p>OBJECTIVE</p> <p>To understand the importance of storytelling in educational walking tours and to develop a compelling narrative</p>
	<p>TASK</p> <p>Start by analyzing the approach to storytelling in the movie from Activity 9. Ask the group to bring up examples of storytelling in various mediums, such as movies, books, documentaries, and public talks. Define storytelling and then let participants put together the idea, the local people involved, the story, and the media they will use to conduct the educational walking tour. This is an individual task and takes more time to complete.</p>

Theoretical Input

Storytelling is the art of conveying a narrative or message through words, images, sounds, or other mediums. It involves creating and sharing a story that engages an audience, often with characters, events, and emotions. Storytelling can serve to educate, inform, or inspire and is used in various forms such as books, films, speeches, and oral tradition

Why Storytelling Matters in Walking Tours


Open discussion points:

- Engagement: Stories capture attention and make information memorable if structured with this intention.
- Connection: This creates a bridge between the participants and the subject of the tour, especially if the tour allows interaction with people who share their individual and live stories.
- Different perspectives: Provides more context and diversity in voices on any important topic that an educational tour can portray.
- Motivation to act: Designed to inspire learning and/or taking action.

Main Elements of Effective Storytelling

Reflect on Activity 4, where you created a script. After choosing and preparing a story, consider the following:

- Who drives the narrative? Is it a historical figure, local residents, migrants, organization representatives, etc.? Each approach can emphasize different elements of a story more efficiently.
- What challenges or questions are explored? Does the route explore local segregation and portray class and race differences that grew through politics and misinformation? Or does it explore local nature, such as habitats of endangered animals, being destroyed to build more urban living complexes?
- What is the resolution of the tour? Talk about specific insights and experiential learning, explaining the motivation and intent of the specific tour design.

	<p>ESTIMATED TIME</p> <p>Intro discussion 10 minutes, definition 10 minutes Individual Task: 1 hour and 30 minutes Presentation of Ideas in Plenary: 1 hour and 30 minutes</p>
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MATERIALS

Papers, internet, devices, camera-whatever they want to use.

Suggestions for Enhancing the Activity

- Encourage participants to share their own experiences and examples of effective storytelling.
- Have participants practice creating short narratives and sharing them with the group for feedback.

Backcheck: 12 Questions to Answer When Planning an EduTour

Use this checklist before testing or promoting the route. Each question should have a clear answer, even if the answer is still provisional.

<p>1. What is this tour about? Define the main theme, focus, and objectives of your educational walking tour.</p>	<p>2. Why is this tour offering something new, educational, and alternative? Highlight what makes your tour unique, informative, and different from existing tours.</p>
<p>3. How does it make a change in my society? Consider the social impact of your tour. How does it address community issues or promote positive change?</p>	<p>4. How do I include the community? Identify ways to involve local community members in planning, executing, and narrating the tour.</p>
<p>5. Do they benefit from it? Evaluate the potential benefits for the community, such as increased awareness, economic opportunities, or cultural preservation.</p>	<p>6. How do I make it interactive? Plan engagement activities, interactive elements, or hands-on experiences that actively involve participants.</p>
<p>7. What media will I use? Decide on the types of media (audio, visual, digital) to enhance the tour experience.</p>	<p>8. Who will guide and who will be guided? Determine the tour guide(s), their roles, and the target audience for the tour. Consider involving local experts or community representatives.</p>
<p>9. Where is it happening? Specify the location(s) and route of the tour, including key stops and attractions.</p>	<p>10. When? Schedule the tour to maximise participation and impact.</p>
<p>11. How will I promote my tour? Develop a promotion strategy using local media, social media, flyers, and partnerships with NGOs, schools, and other organizations.</p>	<p>12. Who benefits from my tour? Identify the tour's target audience and beneficiaries, ensuring it meets their needs and interests.</p>



S.T.A.R.
Story Tours Alternative Routes

A practical resource for youth workers, educators and young people to design inclusive, sustainable and story-based educational walking tours.

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