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## **PROSPECTS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN LITHUANIA: A NATIONAL SURVEY**

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**ABSTRACT.** *This paper analyses the theoretical concept of sustainable development and different points of view to it. A generalized point of view based on ecological, social and economic groups is presented. Principles of sustainable development, forms of sustainability are discussed. Sustainable conception's influence on tourism is analyzed. Sustainable tourism is discussed as region's opportunity to create infrastructure of tourism where natural resources would be kept and market, similar to competition in tourism market, would be created at the same time. Sustainable tourism conception and principles, that highlight peculiarities of sustainable tourism conception as compared to general sustainable conception, are presented. Sustainable tourism conception is created considering the factors governing Lithuanian region's tourism competition.*

*The paper aims at representing sustainable conception and principles and applying them to tourism, discussing assumptions of adjusting competition and sustainable tourism development in Lithuanian tourism service.*

*Research tasks are as follows:*

- *to analyze progress of conception of sustainable development and forming consistency and to define the levels of sustainable development;*

- *to present basic forms of sustainable conception and to define them;*
- *to form sustainable tourism system and to highlight the basic principles of sustainable tourism development and the influence on tourism system;*
- *to present interactive relationship between sustainable tourism and tourism competition, and their influence on tourism;*
- *to evaluate the possibilities of applying sustainable tourism development in Lithuanian tourism service.*

**KEYWORDS:** tourism, sustainable development, sustainable tourism development, principles of sustainable tourism, Lithuania.

**JEL classification:** L83, Q01, Q56, P2.

## **Introduction**

The development of international tourism is influenced by the general process of world globalization. Tourism, promoting active euro integration process, is one of the most important priorities in Lithuania. Lithuania is in the area of intersection of trans-regional contacts (East – West and North – South) and in the spread of transitional routes, which allow developing tourism.

Tourism business is not only economically beneficial process. The system of tourism oriented towards mass development of tourism also has some negative influence on the environment. There are mass tourist centres due to tourist localities and concentration of separate organizations. This is not always beneficial for local people of the region because life in tourist regions becomes standardized, which might cause decline of cultural level.

Now, since Lithuania has an opportunity to use structural funds of the European Union to develop tourism, it is necessary to establish a system, which would help planners of tourism infrastructure, architects, and specialists of landscape protect region peculiarities and cultural identity. What is more, the system should help to reserve peculiarities of Lithuanian landscape and to avoid exclusion from other regions, in this way losing competition superiority similar to other tourist regions. According to the conception of tourism development, tourism means must be planned and controlled in order to be economically beneficial and to promote the development of tourism.

Sustainable development is considered to be the development which meets the needs of the present time and allows the coming generations to meet theirs. Traditionally, the concept of sustainable development includes economic, environmental, and social aspects of development, or economic, ecological, and social dimension of sustainability. The aim of sustainable development is not to create more economic benefits but to create better living conditions for the members of the society. Thus, the amount of economic growth is not as important as the distribution of the results.

Sustainable development is a possibility for a region to create the infrastructure of tourism, where natural resource base would be kept and the market for the future generations similar to the competition would be created.

Looking at the concept of the sustainable development from the practical and scientific point of view in different economic branches, it can be stated that all today's discussions about environment and development of economy in this aspect are not over yet. It is important to see how sustainable conception, its principles and subtleties can be included and developed in the context of tourism infrastructure, and what potential influence they might have in order to achieve harmony in economic, social, and ethical levels as well as in tourism.

A **scientific problem** is discussed in the paper: it is very important to see the circumstances and the factors which influence formation and development of the sustainable development. It is important to give criteria which allow applying sustainable tourism in tourism market. A question, what principles of sustainable tourism conception are important and which of them are problematic when applying the conception of sustainable development in Lithuanian tourism business, arises because of too little literature on sustainability in tourism infrastructure.

**The aim of the research** is to reveal the essence of sustainable conception, the principles and application for tourism, and to discuss the assumptions of competitive and sustainable development of tourism in Lithuanian tourism business.

**The research tasks** could be formulated as follows:

- to analyze progress of conception of sustainable development and forming consistency and to define the levels of sustainable development;
- to present basic forms of sustainable conception and to define them;
- to form sustainable tourism system and to highlight the basic principles of sustainable tourism development and the influence on tourism system;
- to present interactive relationship between sustainable tourism and tourism competition, and their influence on tourism;
- to evaluate the possibilities of applying sustainable tourism development in Lithuanian tourism service.

**Object of the research** is the conception of sustainable development.

**Methods of research:** analysis of systemic scientific literature, general and logical analysis, methods of comparison and generalization, primary data collection with the application of a structured questionnaire.

The **structure of the paper.** The first part of the paper overviews the conception and the process of sustainable development, and discusses different authors' point of view to sustainable development. The principles and forms of sustainable development, and their definitions are also given in this part. The second part overviews the history of Lithuanian tourism and the conception of tourism, which influences the formation of sustainable tourism system. The third part of the paper analyzes sustainable tourism development, its principles, and presents the system of sustainable tourism and the model of sustainable tourism. Lithuanian tourism system and possibilities to apply sustainable conception in Lithuanian tourism are discussed. This part also presents an overview of some countries' tourism strategies, which allows applying some priorities for the formation and application of development strategy in Lithuanian tourism.

## **1. Sustainability concept, regularities and levels of building sustainable development**

Concepts of development and sustainability, and problems about them have been known for a long time. The official concept 'sustainable development' was used for the first time in 1987 in the project "Our Common Future" (1991), which was prepared by the initiative of the United Nations. This project is very important for the changes in the control of environment control process. 'Sustainable development' in this project is defined as development which supplies the needs of present generation and at the same time pays attention to the possibilities to supply the needs for future generations. There are two important attitudes in this definition:

- *Needs.* (the law of growing needs shows that during all periods of society development needs have a tendency to grow faster than possibilities to supply them).
- *Limits of applying the needs.* (The possibility of applying the needs is associated with some limits that are specific for each period of the society development).

The term ‘sustainability’ began to be used in different contexts and became very popular when International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced its strategy on World’s conservation, which had a very practical aim ‘to promote a more concentrated point of view to management of live resources and to present political guidelines how to practice it’, in 1980. It was a new point of view that tried to include conservation of nature and its practice when uniting environment control and aims of development.

Although the term ‘sustainable development’ itself was not mentioned in the text, the headline of the strategy of World’s Conservation ‘Control of live natural resources necessary for the sustainable development’ emphasized the concept of sustainability (Ciegis, 2003).

The essence of the concept of special standard sustainability in the report “*Our Common Future*” (1991) by Brundtland commission is to honestly distribute natural resources among different generations, including present generation of the first, second, and third world inhabitants, and to find common consensus between development environment, social and economic dimensions.

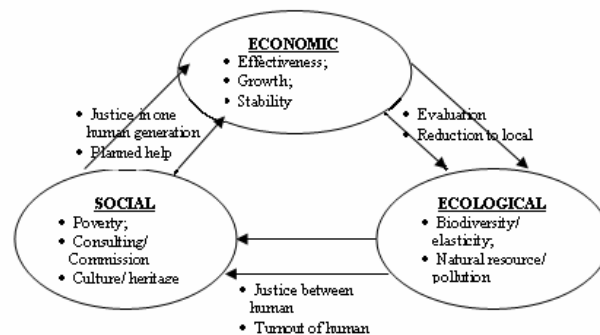
**Table 1. Defining sustainable development**

Authors	Description of sustainable development
Brundtland Commission, 1987	Sustainable development is the development which supplies today’s needs without any danger for future generations to supply theirs and sets out the limits for the resources of technologies and social organizing and gives possibilities to absorb the effects of actions.
Costanza, 1991b; 1991a	Sustainable development is a relationship between dynamic human system of economy and dynamic but slowly developing system of ecology, where development of society is independent effect of economic actions of society which does not damage variety and complexity of environment, and ecological system functions as the system supporting society.
Ciegis, 2002b	Development is sustainable if it assures the quality of living of the present generation and at the same time the opportunity for the future generations to decide on their quality of lives.
Cepinskas, Smilga, Zirgūtis, 2002	Sustainable development reflects a certain balance between supplying the needs of present generation environment users and the needs, which future generations will supply.
Tijunaitienė, Vekteryte, Staponkiene, 2003	Sustainable development is the development which supplies the needs of present period of time without any danger for future generations to supply theirs, including economic, social, organizational (institutional) and environmental parameters.
Hopeniėne and Kamicaityte, 2004	Sustainable development is development which includes and supplies the present needs of society does not reduce the possibility for the future generations to supply their future needs.
Streiminkienė and Vasiljeviene, 2004	Sustainable development is development, which supplies the needs of the present and does not make any danger for the future generations to supply theirs. Traditionally, the concept of sustainable development includes: a) economic, b) environmental, c) social aspects of development. The aim of sustainable development is better living conditions for the members of society but not creation of more economic benefits.
Campino, 2005	Sustainable development is associated with three closely connected problems, one of which is industrial. First, environment must be considered a part of complex economic processes. Second, it is necessary to solve the problem of justice. Third, sustainable development requires society, business and people to work in a different time than economy functions now.
Hughes and Johnston, 2005	The essence of sustainable development is to assure that natural and man-made resources are not depleted, users are provided with high quality products, and these products are integrated into a local region.

Source: compiled by the authors.

Although the conception of sustainable development is used widely for a long time, attempts to define it strictly are considered to be problematic. Scientists of Great Britain propose at least thirty different definitions of sustainable development in literature. However, it is thought that none of these definitions includes all aspects of this conception and does not represent a perfect conception of sustainable development.

Definitions of the conception of sustainable development by several authors are presented in *Table 1*. The essence of the sustainable development is rather clear. However, the specific definition of sustainable development began a lot of discussions among scientists. It is considered that difficulties of definition are in the nature of the concept of sustainable development which includes development and sustainability. Thus, all given definitions of the concept of sustainable development can be divided into three groups according to economic, ecological, and socio-cultural point of view. All the elements of development must be evaluated equally (Ciegis, 2003). In order to give one general definition of sustainable development, it is necessary to take out all inadequacies from most of the given examples, and to add them to the basis of the sustainable development; development is to supply the needs of present days without any danger for future generations to supply theirs, including economic, social, organizational (institutional) and environmental levels, to avoid use all natural and man-made resources.



Source: Ciegis, 2003, p. 19.

*Figure 1. Perception of sustainable development*

Looking at different authors', both Lithuanian and foreign, points of view to the definition of sustainable development, it can be noticed that all definitions reflect the relation between present and future generations, and distribution of sustainable resources. It is noticed that definitions of sustainable development offered by Lithuanian authors are based on foreign authors' definitions and are purposively translated. Other authors emphasize that these resources must be distributed according to the elements of the conception of sustainable development mentioned earlier, that is ecological, economic, and social point of views. One of the widest definitions is Costanza's (1991b) definition which includes all the spheres influencing sustainability and the main point that is conserving resources for the future.

According to Stabler (1997), Mowforth and Munt (1998), Harris (2000) and other scientists the concept of sustainable development is not new. Different nations and cultures understood necessity and importance of harmony between environment, society and economic development throughout the history. Stabler (1997) emphasizes that relevance and originality of this conception is its interpretation on global – industrial and society levels.

Tijunaitiene *et al.* (2003), similarly to other authors, claims that sustainable development is not a new idea on global level, it continues since revolution times. “*Agenda 21*” had a lot of influence on the European Union’s politics, which emphasized sustainable development. “*Agenda 21*” gives a way to get sustainable development. Practically it is:

- cooperation and partnership between sectors in the aim of sustainable development;
- system of information about the state of sustainable development, which includes information about natural, cultural, and human resources;
- program of sustainable development;
- the system of program’s management and control.

Trying to define the concept of sustainable development rationally it is necessary to see its context with the concepts of sustainability, sustainable growth, and sustainable society.

It is often emphasized that sustainability is one of the most effective assumptions of development, thus sustainable growth is another concept associated with sustainable development. It is noted that sustainable development might be treated as qualitative growth (Schaltegger and Sturm, 1998). Sustainable or qualitative growth is associated with the growth of stable welfare, evaluating it from the point of view of society and individual. There is qualitative growth when economy develops while not expanding the use of natural resources and reducing environment pollution.

Cepinskis *et al.* (2002) note some important points in the genesis of sustainable development, which influenced the process of sustainable development: the first project of Rome club “*Limits to Grow*” in 1972, the project of United Nations “*Our Common Future*” in 1987, Brundtland Report, “*Declaration of Sustainable Development*” announced in the conference of Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Our Common Future, 1991).

Analyzing the sustainable development for the second decade and trying to solve the problems of sustainability the concept that is most often used is ‘sustainable development’. According to Ciegis (1997) there are a lot of problems trying to translate the first word of this concept into other languages because there is no equal term for this word into any European language. “*Sustainable*” is offered to be translated into Lithuanian as “*darni*”, “*tolydi*”, “*stabili*”, “*harmoninga*”, “*subalansuota*”, “*tvari*”, “*tausojanti*”, “*besitęsianti*” (Table 2).

**Table 2. Translating ‘sustainable development’ into the Lithuanian Language**

Authors	The Lithuanian equivalents of „sustainable development“
Ciegis (2003)	<i>Subalansuota plėtra, darnus vystymasis, tolydi plėtra</i>
Cepinskis, Smilga, Zirgūtis (2002)	<i>Subalansuota plėtra</i>
Hopenienė, Kamicaityte (2004)	<i>Tolydi plėtra</i>
Streiminkiene and Vasiljeviene (2004)	<i>Darnus vystymasis</i>
Tijunaitiene, Vekteryte, Staponkiene (2003)	<i>Darnus vystymasis, tolydi plėtotė</i>

Source: compiled by the authors.

However, recently, it was offered to translate it into Lithuanian as “*darni koncepcija*”. The second word (*the concept*), when translated into other languages, does not cause so many problems. In Lithuanian, “*development*” is offered to be translated as “*vystymasis*”, “*plėtotė*”, “*plėtra*”.

Sustainable development was developing progressively and stimulated search of sustainability between different dimensions of environment. In different territories sustainable development of different periods is possible.

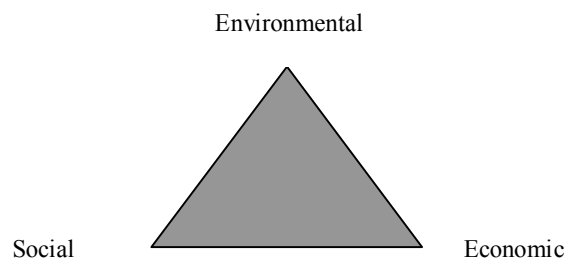
Trying to analyse the process of sustainable development Cepinskis (2001) and Ciegis (2004; 2002c) offer to have the amount of dimensions, which are coordinated by the sustainable development, as the main criteria of periods. According to this statement, there are three main stages (Table 3).

**Table 3. Dimensions of Sustainability**

<i>Two dimension sustainability</i>
<p>At the beginning of the concept of sustainable development, sustainability between business and natural environment was very important. It was emphasized that economy and environment must not to limit each other and must to help each other to find additional possibilities. A lot of attention was paid to eco-efficiency, which was understood as production and supply of competitive goods and services, which improved the quality of individual's living and environment, welfare of society and didn't limit the possibilities to supply the needs for future generations, while reducing the use of resources to regenerative limit.</p> <p>During the first stage of the formation of the concept of sustainable development navigational tasks were rather simple. The aim of the development was effectiveness, which led to the development with a balance between the two dimensions, economic and environmental. Then there was a necessity for the development to be based on renewable resources: financial, information, human, and some natural. All resources must be used rationally, applying modern and rational principles. An example can be integrated management of environment use and quality, which is based on Deming cycle ('Plan – Do – Check – Act'), procedural point of view, value development and increase of effectiveness.</p>
<i>Three dimension sustainability</i>
<p>One more dimension, social, was added to the two dimensions, economic and environmental. For some time there was sustainability between economic growth, ecological stability, and social growth. The concept of social effectiveness, which shows relation between value created by socium and influence of actions necessary for creating that value, comes into use.</p> <p>During the second stage, navigation had to shift the development to economy of social welfare, to promote planning adequate to ideological basis of development and effective means of control. A sudden qualitative improvement in information technologies, improving means of law, management and technical environment control, globalization of political structures and business, integration of institutes and markets were beneficial for social growth.</p>
<i>Four dimension sustainability</i>
<p>In some time it was noticed that the three dimensions do not include one more very important dimension, which is political. Therefore, political dimension is included into the structure of sustainable development in the modern works of science seeking its development. As safety and peace are important part of sustainable development, political dimension is understood as a uniting one. Continuing the third stage of the conception of sustainable development, navigation must help to identify changes and formulate tasks, coordinate methods of solutions and control effectiveness. On the grounds of empirical and theoretical investigations, it is stated that only democratic political system, which is strong enough to keep peace, is the basis for the development of further rational socio-cultural systems conserving natural environment and increasing welfare.</p> <p>It is noticed that means and aims of strategic control of sustainable development depend on the stage of sustainable development in concrete area.</p>

Source: compiled by the authors.

However, some differences are noticed. Streimikiene and Vasiljeviene (2004) points out three dimensions: economic, environmental, and social (*Figure 2*).

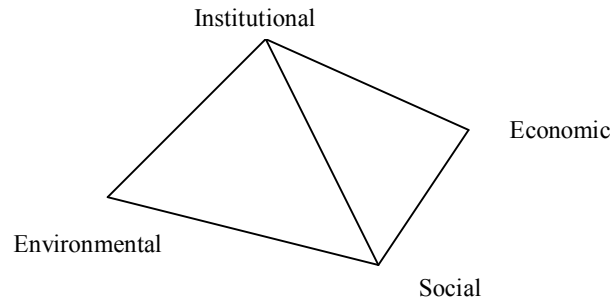


Source: made by authors based on Streimikiene and Vasiljeviene 2004, p.189.

**Figure 2. Dimensions of sustainability**



Opinion of other authors can be illustrated by tetrahedron, where institutional dimension is added to the three, economic, social, and environmental. It is stated that earlier dimensions can be practiced through this dimension.



Source: Ciegis, 2002a, p. 80.

Figure 3. Tetrahedron of sustainability categories

All dimensions of sustainability in tetrahedron must be cooperative and integrative. All four dimensions make a wider range of sustainability than the triangle of three dimensions. Therefore, sustainable development can be understood and practiced in a wider sense.

Ciegis (2003) and Grundey *et al.* (2007) state that each dimension must have its own aims:

- ecological must assure environment control;
- social must reinforce social sustainability and justice;
- economic must supply material needs;
- institutional must assure cooperation in decision making.

Moving from the dimensions of sustainable development to a wider understanding and practice of the concept, it is necessary to point out that the concept of sustainable development includes four main principles (Table 4).

Table 4. Principles of sustainable development

Principles	Description
<b>To understand environment limits</b>	Damaging and irretrievable effects on the surrounding environment and natural resources has a big danger for mankind. Therefore, it is necessary to set out the limits of usage of natural resources.
<b>To develop open and supportive system of economy</b>	Sustainable development needs global system of economy, which promotes economic growth. Conditions, which assure the effective use of resources and development of business in all countries in the world, are necessary.
<b>To fight against poverty and social inequality</b>	Sustainable development requires solving the problem of poverty. It is necessary to help the developing countries to fight against poverty and social inequality.
<b>To assure welfare of the people</b>	Welfare of the people is the main aim of sustainable development, people deserve to live in healthy and productive harmony with nature.

Source: compiled by the authors.

Hassan (2000) emphasizes that whatever region environment is, it must be preserved for the future generations. Thus, any action might destroy the environment if the main principles of the sustainable development are not applied.

More concrete limits of actions in the surrounding world can be set by the principles of sustainable development. However, attention must be paid to the sustainable development when there are different interactions. According to Sileika and Zickiene (2001), Kryk and

Zielińska (2007), sustainable development, as a miscellaneous and complicated phenomenon, can be in a number of different forms. Trying to analyze them and choose the most perspective ones and focusing attention to the resources, the following parameters of sustainable development can be distinguished (*Table 5*): strength, speed, level, field of action.

**Table 5. Parameters of sustainable development**

Parameters	Description
<i>Strength of sustainable development</i>	The possibilities of sustainable development to solve the problems effectively in a certain geographical area depend on the strength of sustainable development. There is weak sustainable development when general natural and economic capital is not reduced over time. The additional man-made capital compensates for the loss of natural capital.
<i>Speed of sustainable development</i>	Sustainable development can be defined as moving towards the maximum of dimensions in proportion and at the same time. Moving away from this course, development becomes more economic, more ecological or more oriented to other dimensions. Then there is misbalance. Optimal misbalance is marked by the point of balance which is equally distant from all dimensions in a graph. If this point of balance coincides with trajectory of the development course, it is possible to state that development is sustainable. There is high sustainable development if the point of balance moves equally from all dimensions. In other way there is weak sustainable development or unsustainable development.
<i>Levels of sustainable development</i>	Sustainable development, progressing from weak to strong development, undergoes several different levels. The following levels of sustainable development are offered: the lowest, in progress, dynamic, and the highest. These levels can be called different stages of the same process (Winter, 2003). The aim of each level is going to another level. The aim in the highest level is effective constant development. Actions in the lowest level are compared to the requirements of that level. Results of the actions in the higher levels must fulfill the requirements of that level, as well as the requirements in lower levels. It can be stated that progressing from the lowest to the highest levels of sustainable development, sustainable development progresses from weak to strong.
<i>Fields of sustainable development</i>	As sustainable development has become a universal phenomenon, two main fields, which are influenced by sustainable development, can be distinguished: private sector and public sector. Actions of sustainable development differ in these sectors. Society seeks aims of the environment control through influential groups influencing economic organizations of private sector, which work in free market, civil organizations of public sector, which function in a democratic political system. Comparing components in these fields of sustainable development, it is noticed that some of them are the same and some of them differ (Springett and Foster, 2005).

Source: compiled by the authors.

The focus of sustainable development should be on management of the processes by integrated point of view to environment use and quality, management of development progress from the lowest forms of sustainable development and weak sustainability to the highest forms of sustainable development and strong development trying to get the highest speed.

It is necessary to point out that most authors agree on the four criteria of sustainability:

- 1) justice in one generation and between different generations (as it is emphasized in Brundtland report: “*even the restricted sense of physical sustainable development means that it is necessary to equalize social structure of different generations; the same must be applied for people of the same generation*”);
- 2) international justice;
- 3) integration of social, economic, and ecological requirements;
- 4) involvement of all social groups in the formulation and realization of strategy.

Sustainable development is not only a clear vision; the concept of sustainability gives us more than just practical clues what to do.

Different instruments are necessary for sustainability in different spheres. The initiatives of sustainable development must be promoted in two ways:

- a) regulating damage of environment by laws;
- b) evaluating damage of environment and expenses (using economic instruments).

One of the most important instruments of sustainable development showing what to do under the conditions of sustainable development is “*Agenda 21*”, which emphasizes that (1992):

- sustainable development is not accidental; purposeful and planned work of institutions of different levels, from international to local, is necessary;
- talking about development, attention must be paid to the needs and opinion of all social groups, even the poorest ones;
- all groups of interest (business, education, the authorities, voluntary public organizations) must cooperate.

In fact, in the realization of “*Agenda 21*” (1992) different participants can act, but only cooperation can bring success.

Different processes of integration of management systems, environment, quality, control, and health, help to successfully apply sustainable development; these processes progress in Lithuanian companies. Economic situation is the factor limiting these processes. However, it is possible that the situation will become more positive as the processes of globalization and integration play a great role.

A lot of people think that there will not be sustainability in the world in the future, however, they hope to see sustainability in the society. Talking about sustainable development in the context of politics of general development, it is advisable to uphold the “warning point of view” and have in mind that some models of sustainable development might seem to be inappropriate; however, it is difficult to see the future without sustainability.

After considerations of the progress of sustainable development, definitions, dimensions, principles and parameters, it is possible to apply them in the tourism and to study shifts.

## 2. Concept of tourism and the history of Lithuanian tourism

In Lithuania, like in other post communist countries, the principles of sustainable development began to be applied only few years ago. In fact, the reason is that it is “in fashion” in the whole world. Quality and real purpose most often were not applied for strategic planning. Now the importance of sustainable development is rather clear and the principles are being applied. However, there are a lot of obscurities in the process.

**Table 6. Defining tourism**

Source	Description
The Law of Tourism of the Republic of Lithuania	<b>Tourism</b> is purposive actions of people, connected to travelling and temporal being outside permanent place of living not longer than a year, if these actions are not studies or paid job in a visited area.
Vainiene, 2001	<b>Tourism</b> is a trip, an excursion, etc., that is a leisure journey, one of the main ways of active holidays, which is popular in many countries.
Pender and Sharpley, 2005	<b>Tourism</b> is actions of people, connected to travelling and temporal being outside permanent place of living, if these actions are not studies or paid job in a visited area not longer than a year.
World Organization of Tourism, 2002	<b>Tourism</b> is all kinds of journeys, excursions, when a person leaves his/ her work and living place for longer than day and night and less than 12 months, and the aim of the journey is not paid work.

Source: compiled by the authors.

Preserving what is valuable, beautiful, necessary for us and future generations, it is important to integrate that “fashion” into the spheres, which would not be unique and valuable, if the concept of sustainable development is not applied. Therefore, it is important to evaluate objectively and develop sustainability in tourism services.

The concept of tourism in Lithuania was changing over time. So far, there is no one opinion of what tourism is (*Table 6*). The word “tourism” itself means travelling from one place to another and coming back to the first one.

Tourism is one of the most perspective and dynamic businesses in the world. It includes about 8 percent of overall investment, creates about 400 million work places, it is 7 percent of the world’s general national product, and 6 percent of tax return.

Lithuania, after rapid tourism development, joined tourism markets in Europe and the whole world in the years of independence. Tourism is a rather new business in Lithuania. Essential changes began in 1991; therefore, there are a lot of limitations and problems. Practice of tourism agencies is not fully developed in the markets of incoming and local tourism.

There were famous resorts of *Palanga, Druskininkai* even at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1909 there were 4000 people in *Palanga*; some of them were from *Germany, France, England, Russia, and Poland*.

Association of tourism, found on the 25 March in 1929 in *Kaunas*, did a lot in developing tourism in pre-war Lithuania. The association promoted excursions in Lithuania by trains, buses, canoes, bikes, and carriages. It organized excursions for Lithuanian and foreign tourists. There were places for tourists to stay, sleep and eat. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of March in 1926 on the initiative of *Petrauskas, Daukša* and others automobile club was founded, which entered the international association of automobile club in the same year. At that time there were 32 member countries. Thus, tourism was developing as a separate branch of economy in independent Lithuania during the pre-war period.

In 1934 the first steamship of excursions called “Stuttgart” came to *Klaipėda* harbour with tourists from America. Groups of tourists from neighbouring Latvia travelled in north Lithuania. In the same year the first tourists from *Czechoslovakia (now – the Czech Republic and Slovakia)* came. Promotional posters about Lithuanian resorts began to be created in Lithuanian, French, and English. Tourism information centres were built in *Kaunas, Klaipėda*; while hotels were opened in *Palanga, Alytus, and Švenčionys*.

The process, thanks to which Lithuania now would be traditional and competitive country in recreation and tourism, ended in 1940, when the Soviet occupation began. At the end of the fifties, tourism in Lithuania again got momentum. Architects, geographers, sociologists were highly involved to build a positive image for the Lithuanian tourism sector.

A lot of tourists from *Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Israel, Germany and Latvia* have been visiting Lithuania for at least three decades. The first scheme of tourism, the scheme of region planning recreational system, general plans of resorts were created in 1984. It was rather easy to make plans because of communal property; however, project realization was difficult because of depressed economy. There was limited entrance to Lithuania due to so called security.

Lithuania’s geographic and geopolitical situation is special and important for international relationships. Lithuania is in the centre of Europe, on the way to the East and West Europe. There is a straight way from *Germany to Russia*. “*Via Baltica*” motorway going through Lithuania joins Scandinavian countries with *Poland, Germany*, and other countries of the Middle Europe. This situation of Lithuania is very convenient developing international relationships, as well as tourism.

Lithuania’s nature and climate are beneficial for recreational tourism. Space and time are necessary for most holiday makers. Tourist journeys, especially on holidays, are a part of

this. Tourism is a form of recreational business, when holidaymakers leave their home and visit other countries, find out their historical and cultural values, landscape, have rest in resorts, take sports and other ways to spend their time, to strengthen their health.

Lithuania has natural resources necessary for recreational tourism; that is good climate, lakes, rivers, forests, parks. Recreational natural resources are not equally distributed in the territory of Lithuania. The most important recreational resource is coast of the Baltic Sea, which is 99 kilometre long. It is good for swimming, sunbathing, and water sports.

Landscape is one of the resources of recreational tourism, which is attractive for its hilly relief, river bends, and forests with different flora. Forests, especially pine forests by the water, are perfect for different kinds of activities, such as walking, swimming, going by boat, fishing, picking mushrooms and berries, skiing in winter. There are a lot of mineral springs and remedial mud. Tourists come to sanatoriums in *Druskininkai* and *Palanga* for different procedures. Lithuania has a number of interesting museums, historical and architectural monuments, and ethnographic objects. There are castles and mounds having historical value. In the old towns you can find buildings of different styles of architecture – the Renaissance, the Baroque, and the Classicism. Besides, there are a lot of cultural events and festivals in Lithuania.

It is noticed that very little attention is paid to auto-tourism in Lithuania. Special equipment, bigger car parks are necessary for its development. Therefore, Lithuania must improve tourism industry in order to attract more visitors. Airports are being reconstructed, new roads, hotels, motels, and other objects for tourists are being built in Lithuania. However, there is environment control. There are different information publications about interesting places and conditions of tourism in Lithuania.

*Tourism* is a complex branch of economy composed of different sectors, which provide or help to provide services of tourism. Although it is important to see tourism as a whole, it is necessary to know particularities of each structural segment, relationship between them, problems and possibilities. The structure of tourism is similar to the structure of any branch of economy; however, variety, integration, and multi-planning are important features of tourism. The structure of tourism is one of the most complex structures of spatial organizations.

A number of visitors depend on the development of tourism structure segments in a certain region. There is a higher possibility to have more local and foreign tourists, if places offered for visitors in certain region are prepared and better developed, the quality of companies that provide services for living and food is better, tourism and travel agencies organize tourism better. The development of the system of transport plays a big role in a region when organizing outgoing tourism (Grecevicus *et al*, 2002).

Thus, the development of different segments of tourism structure influences the attraction of tourists in the region. Income, which can be used for the development of tourism in a region, depends on the region and number of tourists.

Different branches of economy are influenced by the speed of tourism development and high income, the development of which influences tourism development. Tourism is very important in the economy of most countries in the world. Thus, increases income, creates new workplaces, and promotes development of towns.

### **3. The influence of sustainable tourism development on competitive ability and formation of sustainable tourism system**

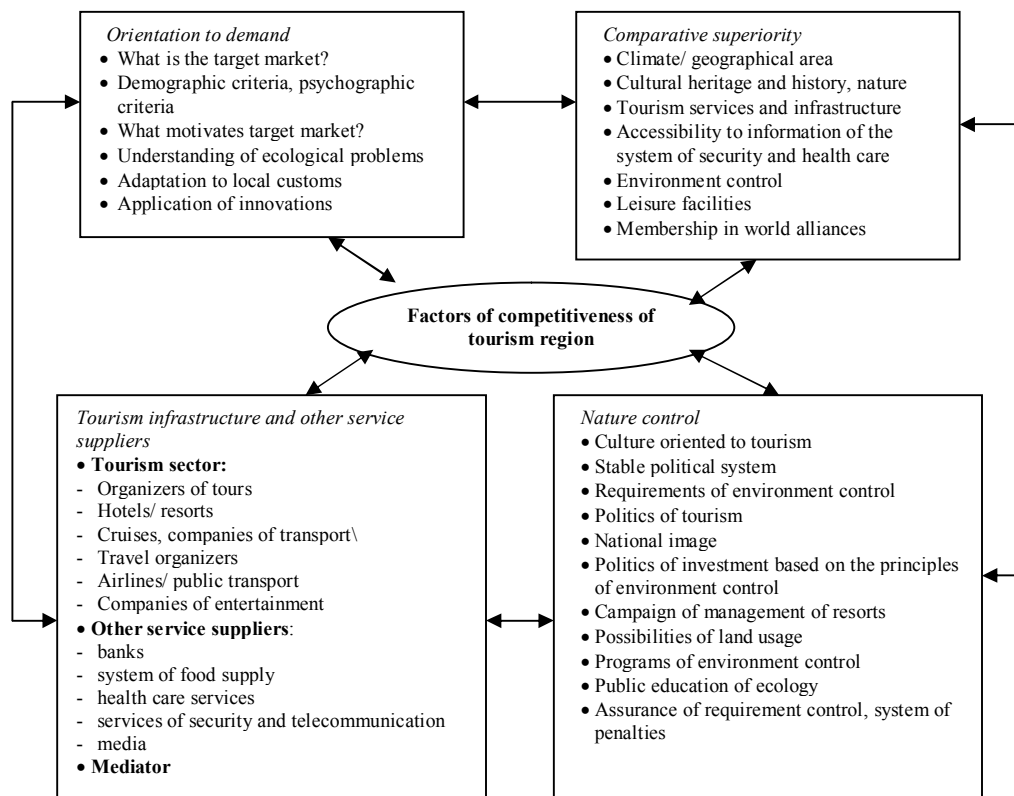
Today, as Lithuania has a chance to use structural funds of the European Union (EU) for tourism development, it is necessary to create the system, which would help planners, architects, landscape specialists of the development of tourism infrastructure to solve the

problems of Lithuanian region's peculiarity, cultural identity control, and the most important, to avoid the loss of peculiarities of Lithuanian landscape and exclusion from other regions, and in this way losing competitive superiority over similar tourist regions. It is necessary to plan and control present tourism resources in order to benefit economically and to promote the development of tourism business. Realization of such development would be an assumption of competition in Lithuanian tourism system.

The system of tourism includes a lot of elements that are a part of creation and realization of regions proper for tourism development. According to Hassan (2000), competition of tourism areas is a possibility for regions to create infrastructure which would preserve the base of natural resources and at the same time would be similar to the competitive market.

Trying to keep competition of tourism market, sustainable tourism development is very logical. When development of tourism business depends on unique of nature, environment must be preserved. The realization of sustainable tourism development allows preserving region's competitive superiority over other regions. In order to achieve aims of the sustainable tourism development, it is necessary to plan and create strategies, where private sector, cooperation of environment control and local community are necessary for their realization.

Planning and development of proper areas for tourism must be based on systematic analysis of natural resources in that area; this creates unique region and competitive superiority. Competitive superiority is created by climate, geographic situation, natural resources, understanding and toleration of tourism by local people, and local culture.



Source: Hopeniene and Kamicaityte, 2004, p. 51

Figure 4. The system of factors, influencing competitiveness of tourist region

Other features associated with tourism development and creating competitive superiority are location of the area, possibilities to use land and services, natural power, infrastructure and a number of workplaces. Therefore, the system (*Figure 4*), which combines four factors of competition, offered by Hassan (2000) is necessary.

The system of factors of competition for tourist region given in *Figure 4* illustrates the complexity of tourism sector and relations between factors of competition. Region tourism includes different elements of tourism infrastructure (hospitality, transport, entertainment, etc), which cooperate and create added value for competitive situation in the market of region. However, momentary success might worsen the situation of region if there are no natural resources and environment control.

According to Dredge (1998), this is the reason why sustainable competition of the market requires control of nature and environment, which would be acceptable to all business participants included into tourism infrastructure.

Local communities must be involved into all phases of tourism development in order to preserve the quality of natural environment and society's life. Hassan (2000) states that successful sustainable development of tourism requires that:

1. Natural resources, that are influential for the development of tourism, are preserved and included into the plans of long-term development.
2. Tourism would be understood as positive activity, proposing benefits for local society, area itself, and tourists.
3. Relationship between tourism and environment must preserve long-term vitality between surrounding environment and ecosystems. The development of tourism must not have any negative influence on natural resources.
4. Tourism practice and development must pay attention to nature and its features. Today's world is very dynamic and changes are inevitable; however, adaptation should not break the principles of sustainable tourism development.
5. Members of tourism, local government and environment control must obey these principles and work together in order to apply them in practice.

These principles show the relationship between sustainability of environment and tourism market.

According to Hopeniene and Kamicaityte (2004), uncontrolled tourism development formed more negative consequences, thus, there is a need for control and regulation of actions that is for qualitative development and control of infrastructure, not its quantitative development. Trying to meet the needs of tourists and to make less damage for environment and culture, it is necessary to adapt the concept of sustainable tourism development, which can be applied when planning tourism actions in different regions.

Aronson (1994) states that development of tourism requires to determine the limits, which would define the essence of sustainable development: if there are no limits, development would use all the resources. According to Lankford and Howard (1994), "*sustainable tourism development helps to reserve the resources*". Thus, two different points of view to sustainability of tourism development can be distinguished; one of them focuses on tourism development, the other is more oriented towards environment control.

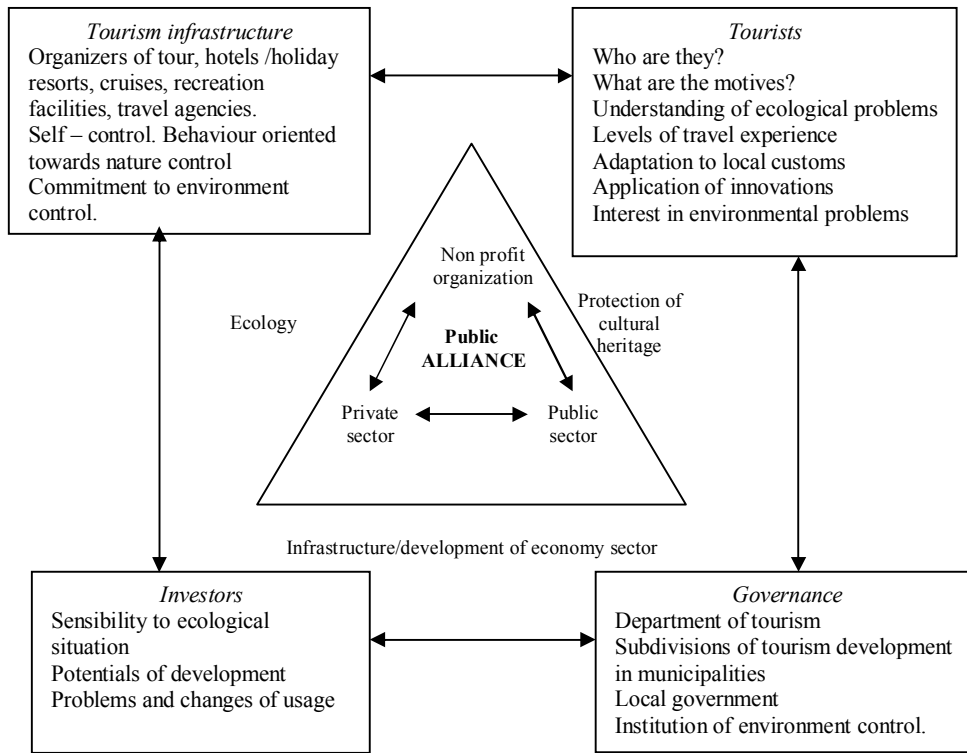
Focus only on factors of environment does not reveal sustainable development. The strategy of Canada tourism development Globe'90 defines sustainable tourism development as "*supplying the needs of tourists and local region people and conserving resources for the future*" (Burnam, 2002). Some authors think that economy and environment are concurrent.

Tourism must be beneficial for tourist areas and communities of local people; it must not damage environment and culture. Therefore, there is sustainable tourism development

when actions are possible and acceptable economically, necessary and perspective socially and ecologically.

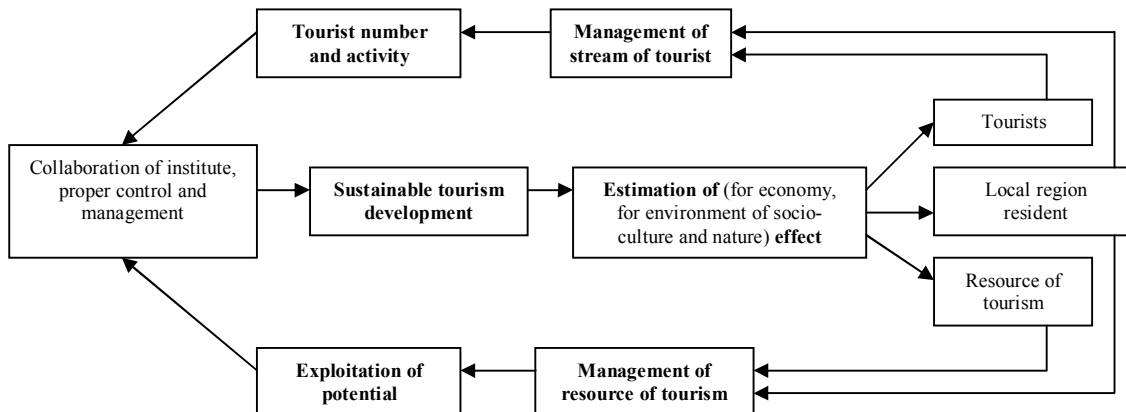
Development is not only physical process because it includes social, environmental and economic processes. Thus, tourism development should be defined as increment of qualitative level of local society and tourists.

In order to reserve environment and market in the area, it is necessary to assure cooperation between public institutions, private sector, not profit organizations, and informal public groups. *Figure 5* illustrates sustainable tourism system.



Source: proposed by authors based on Hassan, 2000.

Figure 5. The system of sustainable development



Source: Sharpley, 1997.

Figure 6. The model of sustainable tourism development



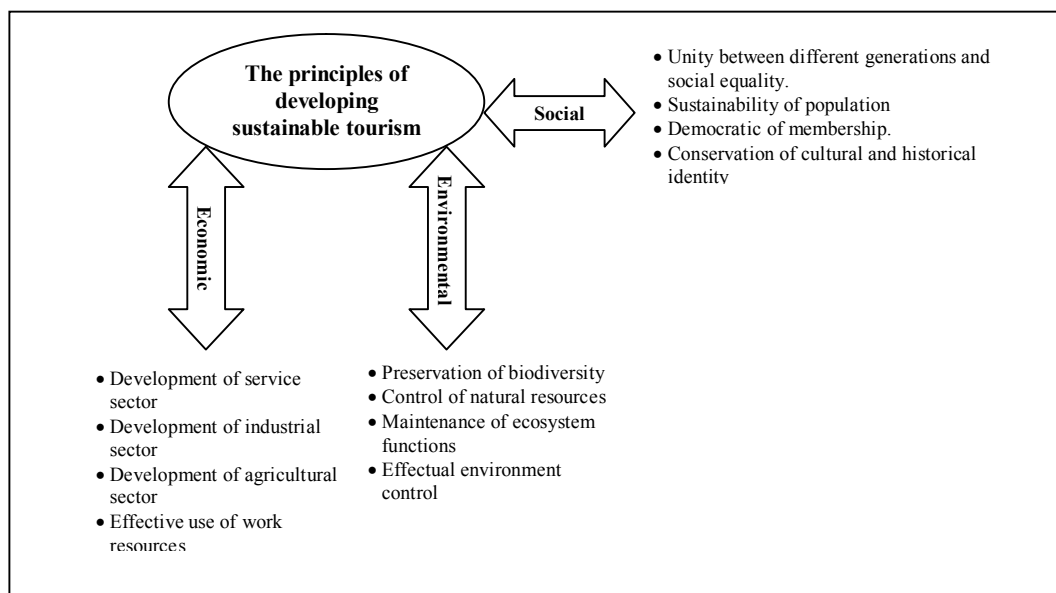
It is stated that tourism, first of all, must be beneficial for tourist areas and communities of local people, it should not damage environment and should reserve local culture. Therefore, there is sustainable tourism development when actions are possible and acceptable economically, necessary and perspective socially and ecologically.

When area changes physically local values also change. Development is not only physical process because it includes social, environmental and economic processes. Thus, *tourism development should be defined as increment of qualitative level of local society and tourists*. Now it is accepted that development of tourism services must be sustainable, effectively controlled, integrated and applied for the region. These attitudes are integrated into the model of sustainable tourism development suggested by Sharpley (1997) in *Figure 6*.

The model of sustainable tourism development suggested by Sharpley (1997) in *Figure 6* illustrates a part of sustainable tourism system (*Figure 5*), where focus is on relationships and cooperation between private and non profit organizations, public institutions and groups of society. Besides, this model shows the influence on macro environment, which gets positive and negative effect of tourism. When tourism has negative effect on macro environment, it is necessary to use tourism resources rationally, control number of tourists, use tourism infrastructure and other elements of tourism system.

The principles of sustainable tourism system, which are the basis of sustainable tourism development, support sustainable tourism system and effectiveness of the model (*Figure 7*). There are two different concepts of sustainable tourism development but each of them shows the balance of traditional tourism and the needs of future tourists; resources necessary for tourism, such as natural, cultural, and others, are reserved for future generations but they are beneficial for today's society. According to Straaten and Hens (2001a; 2001b), two following aspects differentiate sustainable tourism development from traditional tourism:

- sustainable development does not have negative effect on environment and cultural heritage;
- sustainable development must assure that bigger part of economic benefit stays in local tourism.



Source: proposed by authors based on Harris, 2000.

**Figure 7. Principles of sustainable tourism development**

In the context of sustainable tourism development, it is emphasized that the right use of natural resources helps to develop tourism product of higher quality. Distinctive environment of the region, unique landscape, culture of the region or climate attract most tourists. Therefore, McKercher (1993), Hassan (2000) emphasize that whatever environment of the region is, it must be cherished, changed and reserved for future generations. If the main principles of sustainable development and the right politics are not applied, tourism might damage the environment.

The concept of sustainable tourism development includes four main principles, which could be connected to the principles of sustainable development (*Table 7*).

**Table 7. Principles of sustainable development and sustainable tourism development**

Principles of sustainable development	Principles of sustainable tourism development
<b>To understand environment limits.</b> Damaging and irretrievable effects on the surrounding environment and natural resources has a big danger for mankind. Therefore, it is necessary to set out the limits of usage of natural resources.	<b>Ecological sustainability:</b> development must be combined to objective to reserve the main ecological systems, variety and unique of landscape and natural resources.
<b>To develop open and supportive system of economy.</b> Sustainable development needs global system of economy, which promotes economic growth. Conditions, which assure the effective use of resources and development of business in all countries in the world, are necessary.	<b>Economic sustainability:</b> development must be effective and beneficial economically, and all resources must be controlled in order to preserve them for the future generations.
<b>To fight against poverty and social inequality.</b> Sustainable development requires solving the problem of poverty. It is necessary to help the developing countries to fight against poverty and social inequality.	<b>Local sustainability:</b> development must be beneficial for local societies and must guarantee economic benefit for local regions.
<b>To assure welfare of the people.</b> Welfare of the people is the main aim of sustainable development, people deserve to live in healthy and productive harmony with nature.	<b>Cultural sustainability:</b> development must promote control in a person's life, it must be combined with local culture and cultural values; besides, it must help to reserve and strengthen cultural identity.

*Source:* compiled by the authors.

The essence of sustainable tourism development is reserving natural and man-made resources, provide tourism product of the highest quality and to integrate it into local region. The focus is on planning and control of tourism actions, in order to control tourism resources and to improve the existing product of region tourism.

Tourism development has direct influence on natural and man-made environment. Tourism actions are connected to different actions; therefore, there might be negative consequences for the environment. Most of them are associated with formation of tourism infrastructure, for example, development of connection network, building of hotels, restaurants, or camps. Progressing actions of tourism might destroy natural resources. On the other hand, actions of tourism which are planned, applied and controlled properly have positive effect. Issues of nature should be integrated into plans of tourism development. Mowforth and Munt (1998) state that tourism development must be progressing because it is easier to control influence on nature through a longer period of time; if there are problems, it is possible to change the development of actions for tourism, forms of tourism and infrastructure.

It is important to realize the problems so that tourists and people providing tourism services would not be neutral and would keep to certain norms of behaviour, rules of actions, would obey certain limitations of actions.

Sustainable tourism development is a positive point of view, the aim of which is to reserve qualitative product in a long-term period and to meet the needs of local and international market. This concept becomes more and more important in control of economic resources. Nature reserves, unique or man-made environment and cultural values will become more valuable and more preserved in time. Thus, in order to preserve historical and cultural heritage it is important to make it available to everyone. The development of tourism sector based on the principles of sustainable development will meet the needs of tourists, local people and organizations providing tourism services, and regions will be able to keep competitive superiority over others (*Table 8*).

**Table 8. The influence of tourism development on natural environment**

Negative effect on natural environment	Positive effect on natural environment
<i>Quality of natural resources</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Pollution of rivers, lakes and underground waters, if equipment of distillation is not properly used or is not used at all.</li> <li>✓ Pollution of air in the tourist regions, when more means of transport (cars, taxis, buses, etc.) are used.</li> <li>✓ Noise, as there are a lot of tourists and means of transport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Actions of tourism can promote cleaning of environment, air control, water and environment pollution control, can promote establishing different equipment and limiting use of transport.</li> </ul>
<i>Conservation of natural areas</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ecological damage of natural areas when developing actions of tourism improperly. All natural objects (beaches, villages, deserts) that attract tourists are easy to damage by improper actions of tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Justifies and promotes control of natural and unique areas, creation of different reservations and national parks because they attract a lot of tourists. This is especially important in the countries which do not get enough money for environment control from other economic sectors.</li> <li>✓ Cultural, archaeological and historical places are reserved as objects for tourists.</li> </ul>
<i>Aesthetic value of landscape</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Visual pollution, which lessens aesthetic potential of landscape, can be influenced by several factors: low quality architecture buildings of tourism infrastructure (hotel, restaurants), wrong place of the building, wrong distribution of buildings in the area, disharmony of buildings and landscape.</li> <li>✓ Problems of land use because of improper plans and distribution of buildings of tourism infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Helps to preserve quality of environment because tourists like areas which are visually attractive; therefore, the purpose is to control properly the processes of the use of land and urbanization.</li> <li>✓ This can help to realize the importance of surrounding environment, its economic value and to give more money to reservation of unique landscape.</li> </ul>

Source: compiled by the authors.

Development of tourism infrastructure is not competitive enough superiority of Lithuania as tourist region. It is necessary to discuss the issues of region individuality, control of cultural identity; the most important is to avoid losing unique Lithuanian landscape and exclusion from other regions. It is important to realize that tourism development is possible only when all levels of the structure of organization is sustainable and relations are coordinated. Realization and coordination of development should be based on the priorities of the program of national tourism development.

As theoretical principles of sustainable tourism development, system and general model are discussed, the possibilities of sustainable tourism development in Lithuania can be theoretically defined.

Tourism and strategy planning in levels are necessary for tourism development in Lithuania. Preparation and realization of tourism strategy are very important for Lithuania to compete in international tourism market. Planning of tourism and general tourism strategy must be on national, regional and institutional levels.

Strategy planning on national level is the basis of the strategy of tourism. This strategy shows guidelines for planning strategies of other levels. In this level attention must be paid on structural plans of Lithuanian region development, international and European Union's standards of tourism and legal documents of tourism (Kavaliauskas, 2008). Regional strategies of tourism include strategic plans of development of different towns, districts, and regions, regional tourism programs and other documents prepared by municipalities or local government. Strategies of tourism service development in institutional level are based on the strategies of this level (Rutkauskas, 2008).

Europe as a huge tourist region is unique in its differentiation of tourism objects and products, cultural and historical individuality of each country. Tourism development in Lithuania is not as good as in other European countries. The *Seimas* (Parliament) in Lithuania made decisions about the programs of national tourism development; the aim is to evaluate tendencies of tourism development in the country and to decide on the priorities of tourism development in Lithuania and investment in tourism on the basis of strategic documents in national, regional and others sectors<sup>1</sup>.

Different long-term and short-term marketing strategies of tourism have been applied in tourism market but the results are different from what was expected.

A review of strategies of Lithuanian tourism should begin of earlier period. Lithuanian government decided on the program of national tourism development from 2003 to 2006<sup>2</sup> where development of tourism strategy, aims, tasks, and results are presented. This document shows the limitations of the strategy creation and helps to avoid them creating a modern and clear strategy of tourism based on sustainable development.

Strategy of tourism development up to 2015 was prepared by the Institute of research of Lithuanian regions. This long-term strategy helps to evaluate future plans, to prepare and apply it. However, it is important to notice that not all principles of the strategy satisfy today's situation in tourism in Lithuania.

The department of national tourism of Lithuania also offered strategies of tourism. A contract of general strategy of marketing from 2005 to 2009<sup>3</sup> offered later information and point of view to the aims of the strategy and stages of formation. Earlier tourism is important for economy in Lithuania and perspectives of its development (Žabaliūnas, 2005).

It is also important to overview general document of programs that gives information on negative aspects and potentials, which can be used in development of tourism in Lithuania<sup>4</sup>.

A lot of information about creation of strategies of tourism in Lithuania and different research is offered by research "The plan of marketing means for tourism in Lithuania for the year 2004 (2005)" made by the Department of National Tourism in 2003 and 2004. Such

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<sup>1</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė. Nutarimas dėl nacionalinės turizmo plėtros 2003-2006 metų programos patvirtinimo Nr. 1637 [interaktyvus]. Priimtas 2003 12 18 d., refered: <[http://www.lrv.lt/teises\\_aktai/files/2003/12/1975.doc](http://www.lrv.lt/teises_aktai/files/2003/12/1975.doc)>, 2005 10 02.

<sup>2</sup> Lietuvos Valstybinis Turizmo Departamentas. Sutartis AM/451-LOT10 [interaktyvus]. Priimtas 2004 gegužės mėn. [žiūrėta 2005 spalio 2 d.] refered: <http://www.tourism.lt/nsv/LMSLT.doc>, 2005 10 02.

<sup>3</sup> Lietuvos Valstybinis Turizmo Departamentas. Bendrasis Programavimo Dokumentas. refered: <<http://www.tourism.lt/lt/dokumentai/BPDturizm.doc>>, 2005 10 01.

<sup>4</sup> Lietuvos Valstybinis Turizmo Departamentas. Lietuvos turizmo rinkodaros priemonių planas 2004 metams. refered: <<http://www.tourism.lt/lt/vtd/Rinkodaros%20planas%202004-1.doc>>, 2005 10 01.

researches evaluate the main tourism markets and means applied for them. This research also gives the data about the effectiveness of marketing means in tourism markets.

The European Commission's report on "Lithuania's marketing strategies and preparation of plans and marketing of national system of tourism information" in 2004 also gives a lot of information<sup>5</sup>. This document illustrates an important research when four seminars were organized in *Palanga, Druskininkai, Vilnius, and Kaunas*, in which representatives of Lithuanian tourism business and people responsible for the decisions discussed the following issues in groups: priorities of marketing formulated for the National Department of Tourism; the priorities of product of tourism in Lithuania and market development; image and identity of Lithuania as a country of international tourism.

It is worth to pay attention to the report of the Commission of European Associations, which analyzes means and situation of tourism in the countries of European Union. This helps to objectively evaluate potentials and possibilities of tourism markets in foreign countries<sup>6</sup>.

The review strategies and different means of tourism in Lithuania helps to evaluate consistently marketing means of tourism market in Lithuania, objects that are discussed, to identify priorities and to highlight potentials, which could be used for development of infrastructure and formulate strategy of sustainable tourism.

In order to evaluate present situation of tourism in Lithuania and strategies that are applied, it is important to overview the experience of other countries, assumptions of success applying their strategies of tourism, their aims and results, which were effective in the application and realization of these strategies. A lot of research has been done in Lithuania; however, there is no information about comparative analysis of the tourism strategies with other countries. This is a stimulus for results, which would evaluate the possibilities to apply modern strategies of tourism in Lithuania.

For the particularity of the research it is necessary to refer to the experience of other countries, to have comparative analysis of tourism strategies, and to point out similarities and differences. While choosing the countries and their tourism strategies attention must be paid to geographic features, economic situation and other criteria similar to Lithuania's. Tourism development plan in *Quebec, Canada*, pays a lot of attention to nature, control of unique cultural heritage, and tourist areas that are special in the region<sup>7</sup>. *Scotland*, like Lithuania, also has high potential of nature. According to the results of tourism strategy in Scotland, strategies of tourism development were successful; this allowed developing tourism successfully<sup>8</sup>.

*Ireland* has been a good example for Lithuania for a long time. Population, area, nature, religion, history of Ireland is similar to Lithuania. It is noticed that tourism strategies in Ireland paid attention to industrial heritage as an object of cultural tourism; that is, old industrial companies which are no longer in use can help to know cultural heritage and to stimulate cultural tourism. Ireland has rich heritage of gardens and landscape. A lot of gardens and parks are from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It is necessary to overview an example of World Tourism Strategy, which could be applied to our tourism; this document emphasizes tourism business, creates different means

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<sup>5</sup> Europos bendrijų komisija. Briuselis 2005 sausio 27 d. Antroji 2003–2006 m. vidaus rinkos strategijos įgyvendinimo ataskaita. referred: <<http://europa.eu.int/lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/lt/com/2005/com200500111t01.doc>>, 2005 10 04.

<sup>6</sup> Quebec. 2000 - 2005 Tourism Marketing Strategy. referred: < <http://www.bonjourquebec.com/mto/anglais/strategie05a.html>>, 2005 09 29.

<sup>7</sup> Cornell University. Marketing, tourism-strategy. [interaktyvi duomenų bazė], referred: <<http://www.hotelschool.cornell.edu/directories/dept/dept.html?id=61>>, 2005 10 03.

<sup>8</sup> Scotland Tourism marketing strategy. referred: <<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2004/10/12112658>>, 2005 09 29.

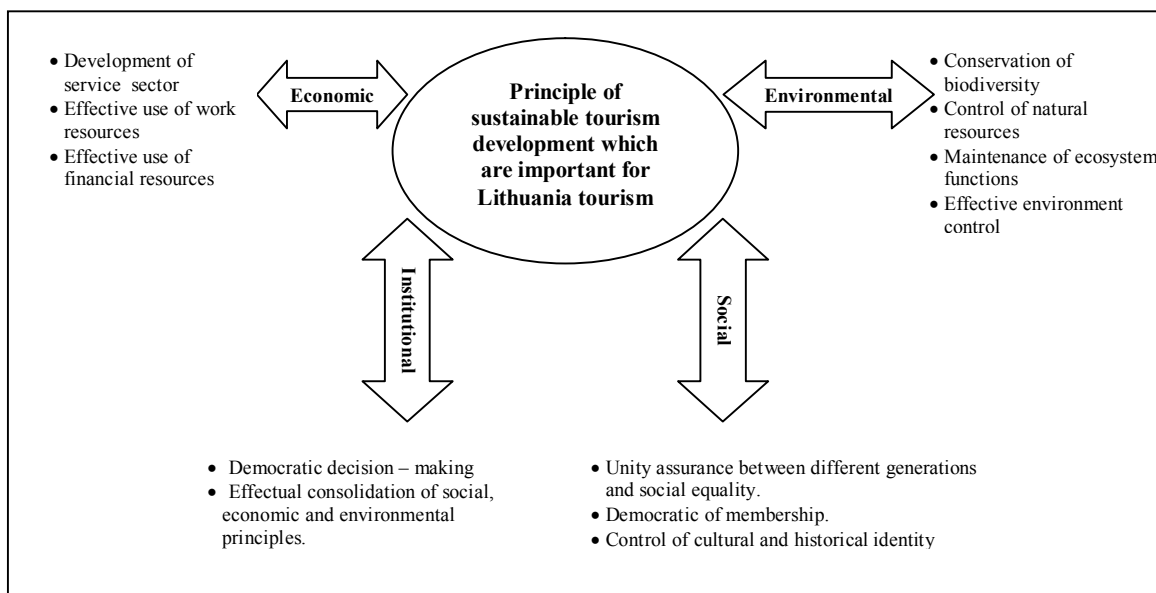
and gives priorities to potentials of nature and development of tourism infrastructure, and controls reservation of unique nature<sup>9, 10</sup>.

When positive and negative aspects of strategies of tourism development in Lithuania are evaluated, experience of other countries in application of tourism strategies are discussed, it is possible to offer to form a new strategy of tourism development based on the principles of sustainable development. The exceptional principles of sustainable tourism development, which are important in management of tourism in Lithuania, must be considered in application of the concept of sustainability in tourism in Lithuania. Some authors think that principles of sustainable tourism in Lithuania, given in *Table 9* and *Figure 8*, are the most important and influential for establishment of the system of sustainable tourism for present days and future generations.

**Table 9. Principles of sustainable tourism development relevant for the development of tourism in Lithuania**

<b>Ecological sustainability:</b> tourism development must be combined to objective to preserve the main ecological systems, variety and unique of landscape and natural resources.
<b>Economic sustainability:</b> tourism development must be effective and beneficial economically, and all resources must be controlled in order to preserve them for the future generations.
<b>Local sustainability:</b> tourism development must be beneficial for local societies and must guarantee economic benefit for local regions.
<b>Cultural sustainability:</b> tourism development must promote control in a person's life, it must be combined with local culture and cultural values; besides, it must help to preserve and strengthen cultural identity.

Source: proposed by the authors.



Source: proposed by the authors.

**Figure 8. Proposed main principles of sustainable tourism in Lithuania**

<sup>9</sup>Tourism Marketing Strategy. Joint marketing initiative summit 2001 referred: <<http://www.capetown.gov.za/econdev/downloads/tourism2.pdf>>, 2005 10 03.

<sup>10</sup> World tourism marketing strategy. referred: <<http://www.jurassiccoast.com/media/pdf2/h/JCWHS.pdf>>, 2005 10 02.

As we see from the examples of other countries, these principles are very important. However, there are difficulties with application of some principles, for example, distribution of resources, investments. This is caused by lack of experience in distribution of investment according to the priorities, also independence of people and their life style.

In order to be successful in sustainable tourism development in tourism market in Lithuania, it is necessary to evaluate and the following stages:

1. Tourism should be understood as positive activity, proposing benefits for local society, area itself, and tourists.
2. Natural resources, that are influential for the development of tourism, should be preserved and included into the plans of long-term development.
3. Relationship between tourism and environment must preserve long-term vitality between surrounding environment and ecosystems.
4. Tourism practice and development must pay attention to nature and its features. Today's world is very dynamic and changes are inevitable; however, adaptation should not break the principles of sustainable tourism development. The development of tourism must not have any negative influence on natural resources.
5. Members of tourism, local government and environment control must obey these principles and work together in order to apply them in practice.

When research and comparative analysis are made, Lithuania can be provided with offers about successful creation of sustainable tourism development applying the main principles of tourism development, experience of other countries, and priorities that are pointed out, and considering the main long-term strategies of tourism in Lithuania as the basis.

In this way natural, cultural and historical potentials can be reserved for the future generations and effectiveness of tourism development can be improved in different aspects.

#### **4. Findings of the National Survey on Sustainable Tourism in Lithuania**

Initial research was made to formulate the principles of sustainable tourism development applicable to the system of tourism in Lithuania. All 10 administrative counties (regions) were contacted in Lithuania to find out, whether they have a representative (or a department), related to the tourism development within the region. Eight Lithuanian administrative counties agreed to participate in the national survey alongside with the *Lithuanian State Department of Tourism*. The survey took place in March-April, 2007 in the form of questionnaire, detailing the sustainable tourism principles and forms.

*Data of the research shows* the opinion of the respondents most of whom think that tourism in Lithuania is developing and it is becoming a very important branch of business. Tourism in Lithuania is developed rather fast since it is influenced by a) accession to the European Union, b) rather a long beach, c) big tourism potential and d) distinctive culture. Development is especially important in country tourism. According to the *Lithuanian State Department of Tourism*, the development of tourism is influenced by:

- **extrinsic factors:** being a member of EU, interest in a new region of tourism, freedom to travel, image of safe environment, development of different international relations, support from EU structural funds;
- **intrinsic factors:** economic growth and higher income, re-structurisation of economy, good conditions (natural, cultural, economic) for business, appropriate national policy.

Evaluating answers of the respondents, the most beneficial fields for tourism development in Lithuania are presented (*Table 10*).

As indicated in *Table 10*, the most perspective fields of tourism in Lithuania are *countryside, resort and business tourism*. Also, a lot of attention should be paid to *entertainment, water and cognitive fields of tourism* to enhance their services and functions to the full.

Tourism development is influenced by natural and climatic conditions of the region and tourism potential. 67% of the respondents think that natural and climatic conditions of Lithuania and tourism potential are partly used for the development of tourism, 25% of the respondents say that the development of tourism is closely connected to natural and climatic conditions, and tourism potential.

**Table 10. Fields for tourism development in Lithuania**

Fields for development/ Regions	Vilnius region	Panevėžys region	Telšiai region	Alytus region	Šiauliai region	Utena region	Marijampolė region	Tauragė region	Lithuanian state department of tourism
Service tourism	X								
Entertainment tourism	X								
Countryside tourism		X	X			X	X	X	
Resort tourism				X			X		X
Business tourism				X				X	X
Water tourism						X			
Cognitive tourism								X	

Source: authors' survey data.

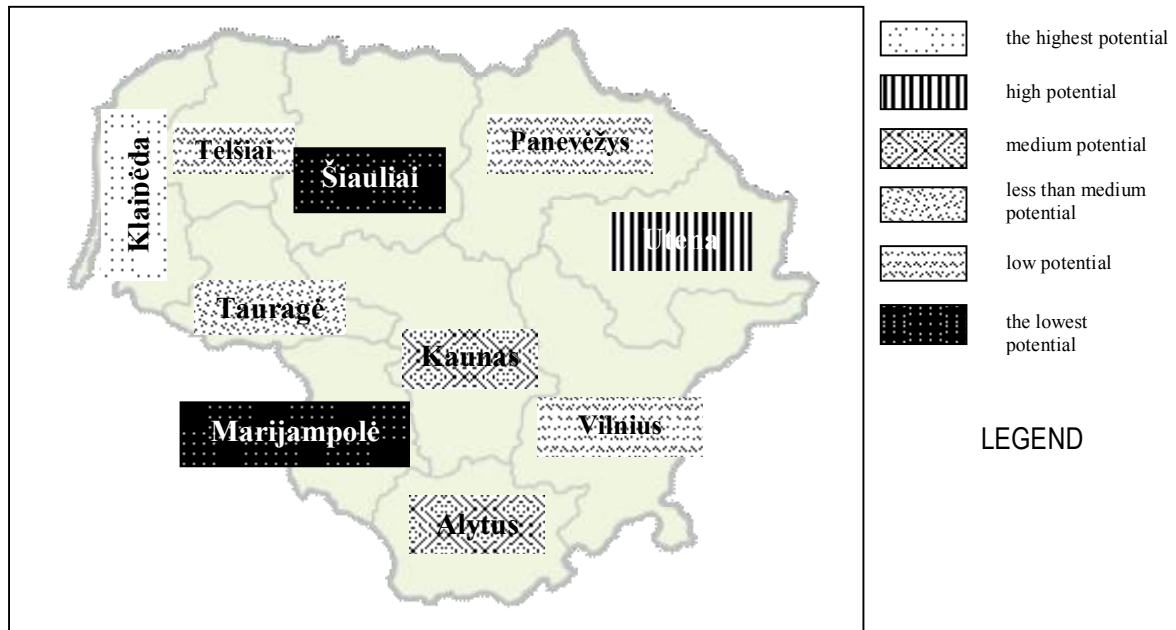
*Table 11* presents systemized tourism potentials of each region and superiority over other regions. Respondents gave the most important, in their opinion, aspects which are the most distinctive in their county.

**Table 11. Potentials and superiorities of surveyed Lithuanian counties**

	Potential, superiorities
<b>Vilnius county</b>	Tourism potential and superiority of Vilnius region is equal to other regions.
<b>Panevėžys county</b>	Some natural resources, ethno-cultural heritage, information system of the region, unique <i>Stumbrynas, Siaurukas</i> , estates, cultural centers of <i>Aukštaitija</i> , active cultural, sport, entertainment centers, a number of lakes and rivers, international cooperation and corporate projects of culture, tourism and other development make tourism of the region distinctive and superior over other regions in Lithuania.
<b>Telšiai county</b>	Culture, unique traditions, language, ethnicity of country houses. Natural and historical monuments.
<b>Alytus county</b>	A number of mounds and lakes, which are the centers of tourism.
<b>Šiauliai county</b>	<i>Hill of Crosses</i> is a very special object in Lithuania.
<b>Utena county</b>	It is a region having the biggest number of lakes in Lithuania, attractive houses of country tourism, routes of water tourism, the oldest national park in Lithuania, nuclear power station. The county of <i>Utena</i> is in the European network of culinary heritage.
<b>Marijampolė county</b>	Natural potential.
<b>Tauragė county</b>	A number of cultural heritage, natural resources suitable for tourism development (rivers: <i>Nemunas, Jura, Akmena</i> ), a lot of forests and protected territories. It is the least polluted region.

Source: authors' survey data.





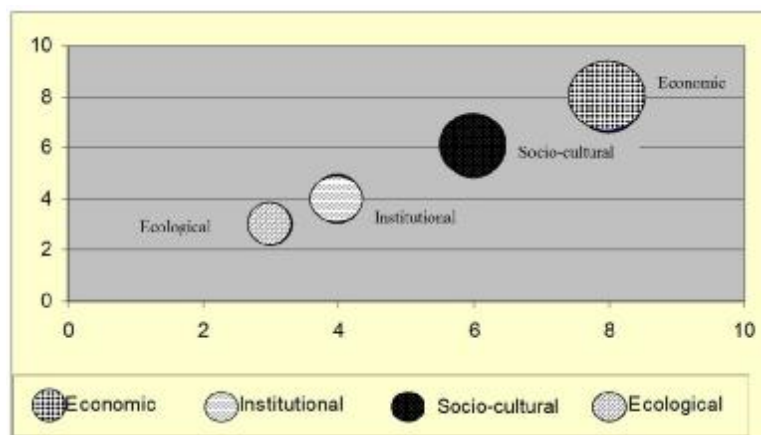
Source: authors' survey data.

Figure 9. Lithuanian regions according to tourism development potential

As seen in the map, most of the respondents state that the Klaipėda County has the **highest tourism potential** in Lithuania because it has a few resorts, 99 kilometers of the sandy beach, *Kuršių Nerija (The Curonian Split, Engl.)*, *Ventės ragas*, lighthouse of *Nida*, etc. However, according to the respondents, more effort can be put for the development of the county of *Klaipėda* and creation of tourism strategies.

Lithuania, being so small in the world, has a lot of resources and heritage in its territory. However, it must be protected and used appropriately by combining dimensions of sustainability in tourism to save it for future generations.

Different authors' point of view to dimensions of sustainability, which have to be evaluated equally, is emphasized in literature. The results of the research highlight the tendency with the importance of the principle of sustainable tourism development in the tourism system in Lithuania.



Source: authors' survey data.

Figure 10. Importance of the principles of sustainable tourism development for Lithuania

Figure 10 illustrates importance of each principle; the bigger the circle, the higher the importance of that principle of sustainable tourism development is in Lithuania. As seen in Figure 10, most of the respondents think that the most important principle of sustainable development is economic (size 8), then socio-cultural (size 6).

Harris (2000) theoretical model of the principles of sustainable tourism development presents basic principles: economic, environmental and social. The respondents suggested one more basic principle, *institutional*, which is considered to be more important than environmental. In order to achieve a full holistic picture of sustainable tourism, the principles should present an equal importance right through all sustainable policy making in tourism sector of Lithuania. So far, the *ecological principle* plays a considerable low-key role in Lithuanian sustainable tourism development.

To formulate effective principles of sustainable tourism development for Lithuania, attention was paid not only to the opinion of Lithuanian experts but also to the principles of sustainable tourism development of foreign countries and their experience in applying the principles of sustainable tourism development in practice. Two parts of Great Britain, Ireland and Scotland were chosen as examples of best practice for Lithuania.

When the essence of the conception of sustainability and its appliance to the tourism is presented the **aim of the paper** is to formulate the principles of the sustainable development in Lithuania. Formation of these principals has some steps provided in Figure 11.

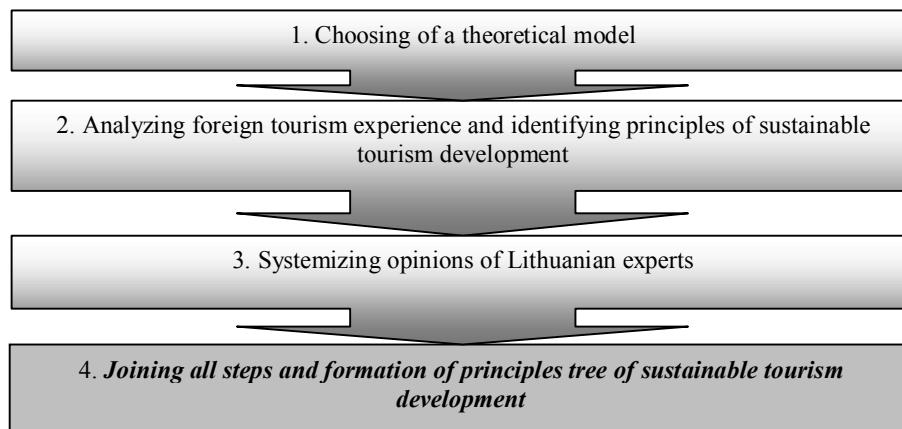


Figure 11. Proposed formation of principles of sustainable tourism development in Lithuania

The tree of sustainable tourism development in Lithuania, presented in Figure 11, was created by using secondary data, empirical analysis of Lithuanian national survey, performed by the authors and information, acquired from the Lithuanian State Department of Tourism. The theoretical model of sustainable tourism development by Harris (2000) was taken as the basis; principles of sustainable development in Ireland and Scotland served as an insight, while adapting the situation for the Lithuania's case.

As seen in Figure 12, the tree of sustainable tourism principles in Lithuania includes **four principles**: a) economic, b) ecological, c) socio-cultural and d) institutional. There is one more principle in Lithuania, as well as in Scotland – institutional, which guarantees democratic decisions. During the research Lithuanian experts offered this principle and they think that this principle is very important. Differently from the theoretical model by Harris (2000), social and cultural principals are joined together; although these principles are separated in the Irish case, they are joined together in the tree of principles of sustainable tourism development in the Lithuanian case because, in the opinion of experts, they are related and even inseparable in some aspects.

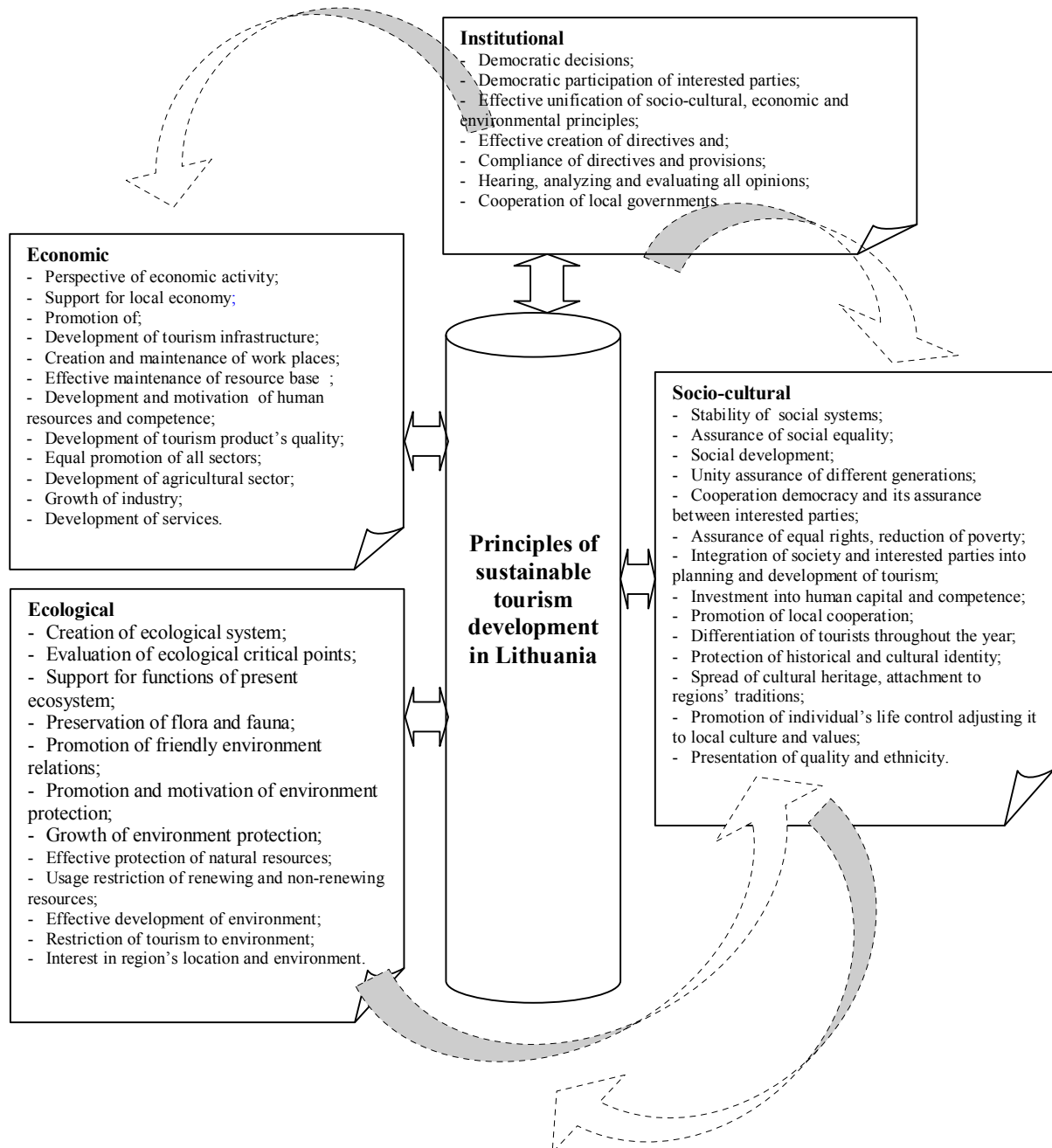


Figure 12. Proposed principles of sustainable tourism development in Lithuania

Elements of each principle are analyzed in detail, evaluated and adapted to the Lithuanian system for a better effect and integration into the system and model of sustainable tourism development.

Proposed principles of sustainable tourism development allow to effectively developing sustainable tourism in Lithuania, promoting a more intensive applicability of principles creating tourism strategies, plans, and local actions. Lithuanian tourism

development based on principles of sustainable tourism development will meet the needs of tourists, local citizens and tourism organizations and will give the possibility for tourism regions to maintain superiority. Proposition of these principles will guarantee maintenance of sustainable tourism development system and sustainable tourism development model and their effective appliance in practice; they could be successfully adapted to any other country as a methodological basis.

## **Conclusions**

1. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a necessity arose to coordinate the needs and the limits to supply the needs. It is associated with certain restrictions that are specific for each stage of the development of the society. This necessity raised the rise and development of the concept of sustainability. Sustainable development deals with the problems of supplying the needs and coordinates economic, social and environmental dimensions. Discussing the issues of sustainable development it is important to realize the conditions and reasons of this phenomenon and to give the context.
2. The main criteria for the stages of sustainable development are the number of dimensions, which are regulated by the concept of sustainability. There are three main stages: two dimension sustainability (economic and environmental), two dimension sustainability (social dimension is added), and four dimension sustainability (political dimension is evaluated as a unifying one). Sustainable development will develop further, will be more complex and will include more dimensions.
3. Sustainable development might have a lot of different forms as miscellaneous and universal phenomenon. Strength, speed, level and field are the parameters of sustainable development which define the form of sustainable development. The use of strategic means, aims and orientation of resources depend on the form of sustainable development. The focus of sustainable development should be on management of the development processes from the lowest forms of sustainable development and weak sustainability to the highest forms of sustainable development and strong development trying to get the highest speed.
4. Sustainable development includes and assures cooperation of public institutions, private sector, non profit organizations and different public groups, systematically evaluates and controls competitive actions in tourist region. Very important objects, such as tourism infrastructure, tourists, investors, and government, influence the system of sustainable development.
5. Actions of tourism in tourist region should be based on the principles of sustainable tourism development; these are ecological, cultural, economic, and local sustainability. These principles emphasize the control of resources in the way that economic, social and ecological needs would be supplied, cultural unity, main ecological processes and individuality of landscape would be reserved. The principles of sustainable tourism development, the influence of the relationship between elements of the system of tourism on the environment, competitive actions of tourist region help to form the strategy of sustainable tourism development, the realization of which would form competitive system of tourism.
6. A lot of elements, that are included into creation and reservation of regions proper tourism development, combine the system of tourism. The variety of these elements requires new methods, which would help competitive regions. These elements help to evaluate the importance of relationship between sustainable tourism and tourism competitiveness, when tourism development pays attention to the needs, as well as to the possibilities and restrictions.

7. Formation of the tree of sustainable tourism development principles in Lithuania is based on these steps: (1) choosing of a theoretical model; (2) analyzing foreign tourism experience and identifying principles of sustainable tourism development; (3) systemizing opinions of Lithuanian experts; (4) joining all steps and formation of principles tree of sustainable tourism development. This systemic formation allows to effectively choosing, distinguishing, adapting and evaluating each principle of sustainable development in tourism and their elements.
8. After evaluation of the steps for the principle tree of sustainable tourism development in Lithuania, the following sustainable tourism development principles are distinguished: economic, socio-cultural, ecological and institutional, which includes all principles and maintains sustainability between interaction of these principles and their applicability.
9. The tree of principles of the Lithuanian sustainable tourism development is different from the theoretical tourism development model in this aspect: a new, institutional, principle is included into a new model; it guarantees democratic decisions and united principles; social and cultural principles are joined together because, in the opinion of experts, they are related and even inseparable in some aspects. Also, when adding new principles to sustainable tourism development, more elements of each principle are distinguished, this allows revealing peculiarities and importance of Lithuanian tourism for sustainability.
10. The formed principles of sustainable tourism development in Lithuania are relevant in our lives and tourism industry; they allow effectively developing sustainable tourism in Lithuania, promoting a more intensive applicability of principles creating tourism strategies, plans, local actions; they also guarantee maintenance of a sustainable tourism development system and the sustainable tourism development model and their effective application in practice.

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### **TVARAUS TURIZMO PERSPEKTYVOS LIETUVOJE: NACIONALINIS TYRIMAS**

**Dainora Grundey, Miglė Sarvutytė, Jurgita Skirmantaitė**

#### **SANTRAUKA**

Šis straipsnis analizuoja, *visų pirma*, teorinius tvaraus vystymosi koncepcijos aspektus. *Antra*, tvaraus vystymosi principai yra teoriškai taikomi tvaraus turizmo principų generavimui, pateikiant unikalias schemas ir modelius. *Trečia*, straipsnyje pateikiami pirminių duomenų apibendrinimai, gauti struktūrizuotos apklausos metu, kurioje dalyvavo 8 iš 10 Lietuvos apskričių turizmo skyrių/ padalinių vadovai. Respondentai išreiškė nuostatą, kad institucinis tvaraus turizmo principas turi būti aktyviau įgyvendinamas Lietuvoje, o vietos savivaldybės gautų teisinę, vadybinę, ekologinę bei žinybinę paramą iš Lietuvos valstybinio turizmo departamento ir kitų susijusių institucijų.

*REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI*: turizmas, tvarus vystymasis, tvaraus turizmo vystymasis, tvaraus turizmo principai, Lietuva.