

# CULTSENSE EDU

Sharing educational insights

Issue 2, March 2023

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[www.cultsense.com](http://www.cultsense.com)

# cult sense

SENSITIZING YOUNG TRAVELLERS  
FOR LOCAL CULTURES

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 WYSE TRAVEL  
CONFEDERATION

 **ATLAS**  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE TOURISM  
AND LEISURE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

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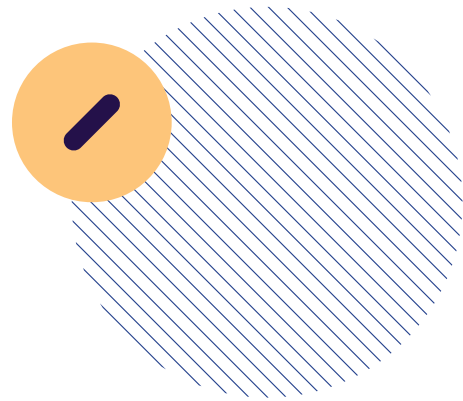
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## CULTSENSE, AN EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

Aimed in particular at Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), this is the second issue of the Edu bulletin of the project CultSense – Sensitizing Young Travellers for Local Cultures, a project funded by the Erasmus + programme, for the years 2020-2023. The partnership is composed by the following organisations: Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands (lead partner); University of Girona, Spain; NOVIA University of Applied Sciences, Finland; Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo, Portugal; Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania; together with associated partners WYSE Travel Confederation and the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education. More information can be found on the website: [www.cultsense.com](http://www.cultsense.com).

Along the last two years, collaborations with other organisations, both in education and the industry, have been developed, with different experiences being shared. The aim of the CultSense Edu bulletin is to share our activities, reflections and insights within the project team and beyond, with different collaborative partners along the way. We hope that other collaborations will arise and that our insights will be of use for many other HEI's across the globe.



## CULTSENSE EDU 2

CultSense Edu – Sharing Educational Insights aims at sharing CultSense project’s outputs, namely its activities and tools, and show how these can be used as educational resources.

Volume I described the CultSense Videos process, co-created with students from the participating organisations, and the Learning Modules. See the [full document](#) for further details.

This second volume of CultSense Edu explores our Case collection as an educational tool and Learning Modules. Updates on the next activities are also provided as final notes to this issue.

# 1. CREATING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH TRAVEL CultSense Case Collection

## 1. THE CASE COLLECTION AS EDUCATIONAL TOOL

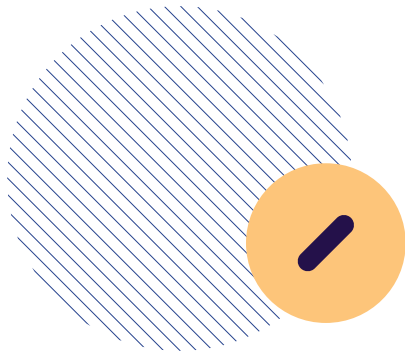
The case studies were thought of as a platform for reflection and discussion of different contexts, where cultural sensitivity and an understanding of local settings play a role in the visitors' and locals' experiences. A set of different topics are covered.

The first volume is divided into four sections: **The first section** (Emotions, Culture and Tourism) deals with various emotions in culture and tourism, namely going through Auschwitz, as an example of a war tourism site; and the issue of liveability in the Red Light District. **The second section** (Tastes of Culture) approaches gastronomy as an essential part of the cultural experience, both in Catalunya (Spain) and Minho (Portugal), exploring how it provides opportunities to improve the tourist attractiveness of the destination through grassroots, bottom-up approaches to regional development. **The third section** (Spirituality and Sacred Sites) discusses emotions of spirituality and sacredness, namely the process of commercializing the tradition of sauna to suit tourism and modern tourists in Finland, and visits to sacred places in Catalunya, considering their different tourism offerings and their functions as religious places. **The fourth and final section** (Engaging with Local Cultures) illustrates and debates explores how Erasmus mobility can be seen as a culture-led experience, and how Tourism generated by the cultural route Via Transilvanica in Romania, can impact economically and culturally on the local communities along the route.

These case studies are also part of the pedagogical toolkit, and are aligned with the learning modules aimed at Tourism, Leisure and Culture (TLC) students, focusing on how to integrate awareness into the tourism experience and on how to align such awareness with local cultures and values.



The case studies are a platform for reflection and discussion of cultural sensitivity in different contexts



## 2. METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

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The case studies have been co-created with and for students and teaching staff. In close co-operation with students, the teaching staff collected ideas through brainstorming and focus groups. The case studies were developed to be used in education and training programmes in TLC. The case studies are based on exploring examples of cultural aspects of each participating region (or country), likely to be misunderstood or likely to benefit from contextualisation, which would enable visitors' perception and enrich their experience. Best practices on how shifts in particular dimensions of awareness occur, and what kind of interventions or experiences lead to changes in awareness were identified.

The case studies were integrated as part of the learning modules (described below) and the chosen topics are in line with the topics of the videos which have also been developed for educational purposes and, together with other materials, can be found at [www.cultsense.com](http://www.cultsense.com). The cases are also focus of attention in the CultSense pedagogical toolkit (which will be described CultSense Edu – Issue III). The case studies start with a (fictional) story that illustrates some of the issues at hand, followed by questions to prompt reflection and discussion. Each case comes also with a suggestion of specific Learning Objectives that can be used to guide the reading and discussion.

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### 3. EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

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#### Student perspective

The process of co-creation of the case studies constitutes per se a major benefit for the students, as they were involved in the identification of the situations to be included as relevant cases in this collection. They were invited to position themselves as part of the local community, as visitors, and as future professionals at the same time. Although challenging, this approach has broadened their views about the problem of intercultural encounters, and the required sensitiveness to deal with it from the various standpoints.

Along the process, by actively participating in the identification, discussion and choice of the possible topics, and the type of interventions needed, students were already positively influenced, benefiting from changes in their own awareness.

As material to be used in class, these cases should preferably be used in small groups to make students aware of the vast range of underlying issues and multiple views on each topic, to reflect on possible solutions for them.

The students who have been exposed to this material, reacted in a very enthusiastic and attentive way, showing interest in the topics portrayed, and they were also pleased with the objectivity and ease of grasping the contents and learning objectives.





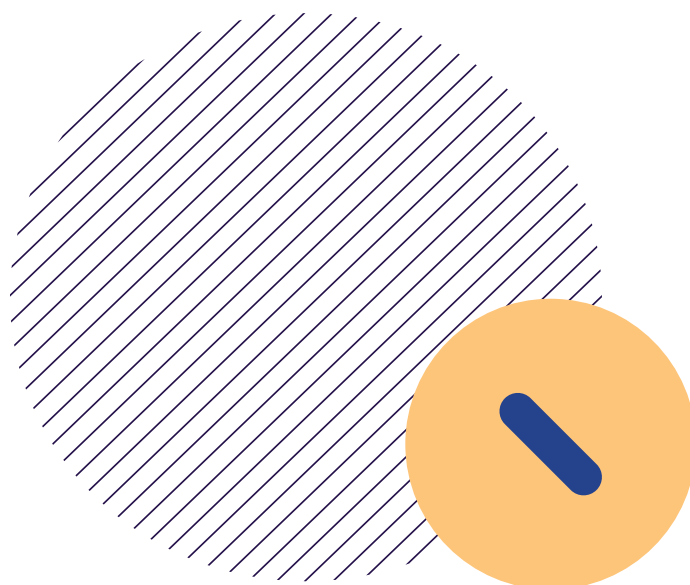
## Curricula and learning module perspective

Although developed with and for TLC students, the cases presented reflect realities that can be integrated in, or adapted to, the context of any higher education course.

The focus on the development of soft skills, also referred to as power skills due to their relevance, namely those related to, or intrinsically associated with, intercultural sensitivity, is a pressing and transversal need in all training areas. The focus of education, especially at higher education level, is on training and preparing students for their future as professionals and citizens. Travel, mobility and contact between people from very different cultural backgrounds are an increasingly present and unavoidable reality.

These cases present themselves as tools that can be incorporated into any training area, offering tools that are easy to understand and require no prior preparation on the part of the teachers who choose to use them.

The feedback from teachers participating in the project who have incorporated them into their classes has been very positive.



## 2. CREATING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH TRAVEL CULTSENSE LEARNING MODULES

### 1. THE LEARNING MODULE AS EDUCATIONAL TOOL

The CultSense Learning modules have been constructed with materials created within the project. These modules have the goal of providing teaching staff materials, activities and assessment that can be easily integrated in a classroom of programmes in Tourism, Culture and Leisure (TLC). Other support materials are provided to deepen the subject and relate it to the study of the Learning Module. A total of 5 learning modules were developed to cover as wide an area of interest as possible.

The first CultSense Learning Module - **Taste of Cultures** is focused on Gastronomy as bridge between cultures. In the second one, we address the topic of **Spirituality: The Everyday Presence of Sacred Sites, Rituals and Practices**. The third Learning Module - **Emotions and**

**Encounters in Tourism** contains material in which emotional encounters with people and places are central. In another one, **Living like a Local** is focused aspects such as understanding and respecting the culture, as well as everyday characteristics of the place you visit. The last Cultsense Learning Module - **Engaging with Local Culture** focuses on the benefits that may result from tourists engaging with the local cultures. More specifically, it discusses two types of interactions of tourists with the local culture: a cultural route and Erasmus mobility.

These Learning Modules focus overall on how to integrate awareness into the tourism experience and on how to align such awareness with local cultures and values.

*The Learning Modules focus on how to integrate awareness into the tourism experience and on how to align such awareness with local cultures and values.*

## 2. METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

All Learning Modules have a common structure, but any of them can be adjusted according to the specific needs of the one who uses them. They are resources that can be used by teachers, students and anyone who wants to explore these areas of interest. The common structure is composed by here the following elements: Learning Objectives, Contextualisation, CultSense Resources, Activities, Assessment, To explore. The Learning Module contains several case studies and videos, which were developed by the CultSense Team.

Each Learning Module begins with a general presentation, to highlight the learning objectives, and moves on to present the resources we can use for the respective module, the activities that can be developed and the assessment suggested at the end of the implementation of each objective. Assessment tools, such as assignments and grading rubrics are provided.

The CultSense platform, in the resources section, offers all the details and information necessary, as well as documentation, for each of those who want to use these resources.

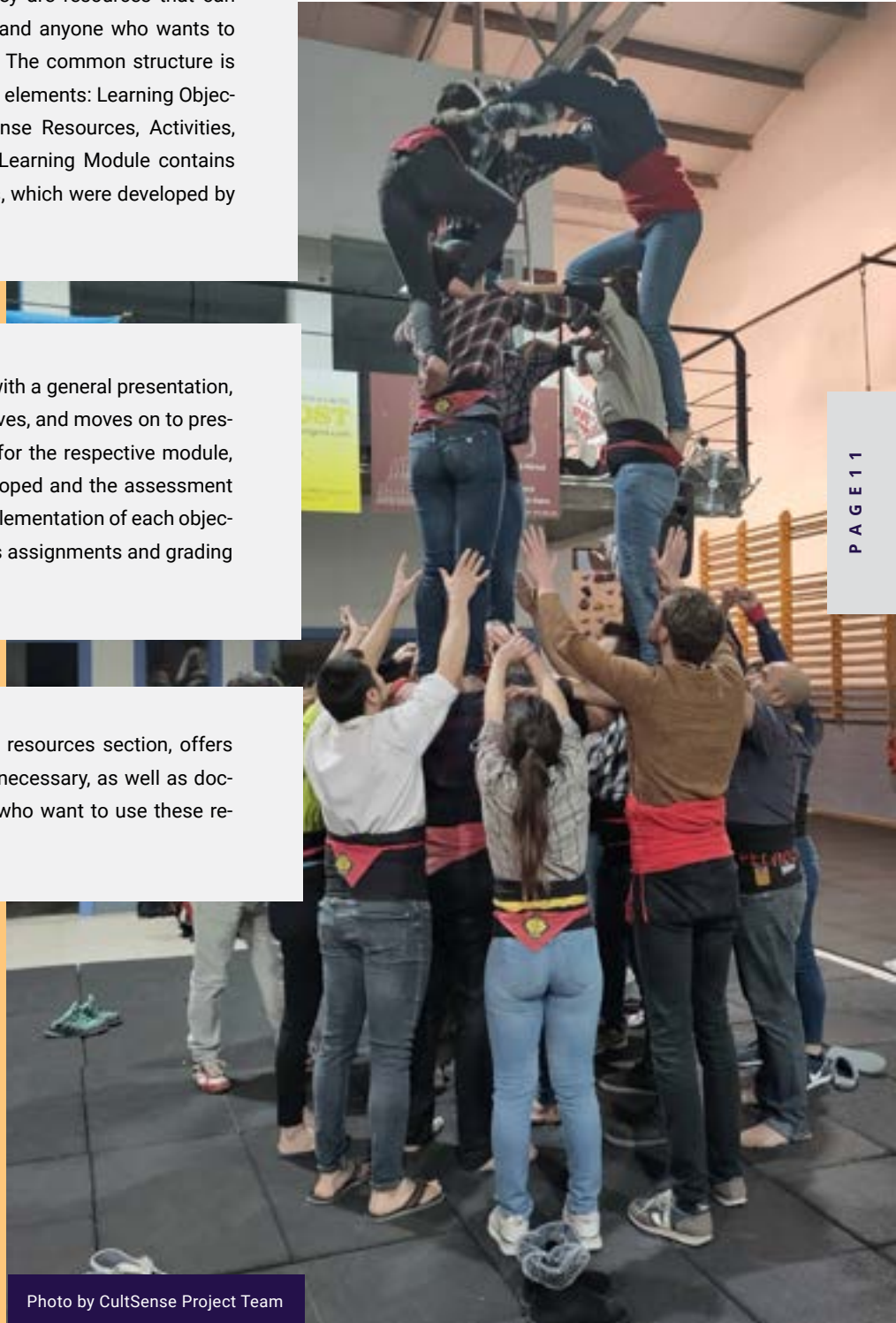


Photo by CultSense Project Team

### 3. EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

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The educational impact or output can be identified from both the students' perspectives and the curricula/ learning modules perspective:

#### **Student perspective**

The final target audience of the learning modules is the students as well as the teachers. This aspect is highlighted by the fact that the students, together with the teachers, were involved in the realization of these learning modules through case studies on the one hand, and through videos on the other. Therefore the students play two roles in this context: they are on the one hand co-producers of learning tools; and, on the other hand, direct beneficiaries of these learning modules.

Going through these learning modules, students can identify some concrete situations through which young travellers can be sensitized, but they can also discover learning methods that can be implemented when they themselves travel.

These learning modules can be used depending on what the students want to explore aligning it with their interest and with the topic taught in the course.

#### **Curricula and learning module perspective**

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The CultSense Learning Modules can be used by all those interested who want to develop their cultural sensitivity skills, based on the experience and insights of professionals and researchers in the field of cultural tourism. These learning tools can be used by anyone in a very useful and friendly way.

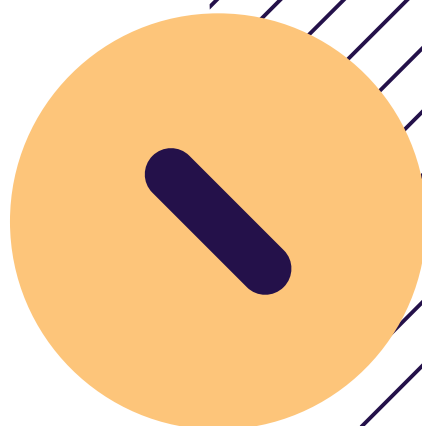




Photo by CultSense Project Team

If you feel inspired and would like to share your insights or experiences, or would like to know more details about this or other CultSense tools or resources, do not hesitate to contact the CultSense team ([cultsense@eshcc.eur.nl](mailto:cultsense@eshcc.eur.nl))

We will be happy to share and learn with you!

**CONTACT US**

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