



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Europe

Sustainable Global Tourism and Events

**Leisure, Events, Tourism & International Travel &
Tourism Management**

(BMTP5023)

Lecturer's Name

Deborah Jenkins

Student Name

Jasmine Robinson

Student ID

2404492

Submission Date

05/12/25

Word Count: 2,000 Words

The assignment will critically evaluate sustainable tourism practices and policies in Europe. Its main focus will be on sustainability in Switzerland with case studies on overtourism in Venice, ski destinations and rail companies. It will cover topics such as sustainable transport and travel policies, cultural sensitivity and key sustainability and tourism modules such as Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle.

The EU is a world leader in climate policy and has initiatives like the European Green Deal and its making great progress in areas such as increasing renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (European Environment Agency, 2023). However, Europe does have some major issues with sustainability such as climate change, biodiversity loss, resource overconsumption, and pollution (European Environment Agency, 2023).

Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism which aim is to benefit communities, the local economy and the destination by creating jobs for locals, supporting local businesses, and respecting their culture whilst minimizing harm to the environment (Khan et al, 2021). The global importance of sustainable tourism is that it helps minimize the impact that tourism has on environment especially since its rapidly growing, by protecting natural environments, preserving cultural heritage and encouraging ethical and responsible behavior (Khan et al, 2021) (Arya, 2024). Destinations encourage this by using destination management strategies and sustainable development goals (Khan et al, 2021) (Arya, 2024).

Switzerland is a world leader in sustainability, especially in public transport, waste management and renewable energy. However, it has still got a high environmental footprint due to issues such as consumption and over tourism (Switzerland Tourism, 2025).

Switzerland sustainability goals are to combat climate change and biodiversity loss, achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and cut emissions by at least 65% by 2035. This will be achieved by investing in research, phasing out fossil fuels in buildings, promoting efficiency in agriculture and consumption, decarbonizing industries, and implementing laws like the Climate and Innovation Act which legally mandates the 2050 net zero goal and provides funding for climate protection

infrastructure (Climate Change Laws of The World, 2022) (European Environment Agency, 2025).

Overtourism in Venice is a major problem as there are around 30 million annual visitors, which cannot compete with Venice's population of less than 50,000 people. This creates problems such as overcrowding, depopulation as local shops and services are catering to tourists instead of locals. Strain on infrastructure and large cruise ships have damaged the lagoon marine ecosystem. The Venice government have put some precautions in place to minimize the effects such as a €5 entry fee to day trippers, banning large cruise ships to enter the city centre and banning large tourist groups and loudspeakers (Durbin, 2024).

Lucerne in Switzerland is similarly suffering from overtourism which is causing a strain on the residents and infrastructure. However, It is implementing measures to prevent this such as increasing its tourist tax in 2026, restricting Airbnb rentals and introducing a booking system for tour coaches which is all part of their Vision Tourism Luzern 2030 strategy to balance tourism with locals' needs (Wattanacharoensil and Stettler, 2025).

Venice focuses more on a reactive approach as the overtourism is so out of control that it needs to be stopped whereas Lucene focuses on a more preventative approach as it hasn't gotten to the extreme overtourism that Venice is facing. Venice displays what happens when overtourism is not handled at the time whereas Lucene has a closer eye on the problems that could approach if not handled appropriately. Lucene's approach may have better results as a lot more change has to happen for Venice's approach to be effective.

Doxey's Irridex Model describes the attitudes of locals as tourism grows. Euphoria (early stages of tourism when locals are excited about it), apathy (tourism is normal, locals tolerate it), irritation (locals are annoyed about tourism because of its negative effects) and antagonism (locals feel hostile towards tourists as the negatives outweighs the positives) (Doxey, 1975). Venice is at the antagonism stage as locals are hostile at the point of them leaving whereas Lucene is at the irritation stage as locals are annoyed but it can be combatted at Switzerland's strategies to prevent overtourism.

Climate change is a major issue for Switzerland as a ski destination as there will be reduced and unreliable snowfall and a shorter ski season due to warmer climates

leading to less natural snow (Gerretsen, 2023). With artificial snow being expensive Switzerland is forced to come up with alternatives such as focusing on non-weather-dependent activities, storing snow from summer months for the ski seasons and improving infrastructure (Barclays, 2022) (Butcher, 2024).

Butler's tourism area life cycle model describes the evolution of a tourist destination through six stages: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and either decline or rejuvenation (Butler, 1980). Switzerland is in the rejuvenation stage as it is working on rejuvenation methods to ensure Switzerland stays a popular ski destination.

Switzerland demonstrates strong commitment to sustainability in its transport sector through Swiss Federal Railways. Swiss Federal Railways is Switzerland's largest transport company. It generates all of its traction current from hydropower, and it aims to have all renewable energy for its buildings by the end of 2025 (Edelmann, 2024). This demonstrates how Switzerland integrates sustainability into its infrastructure and the country's alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals especially goal 7 which is affordable and clean energy and goal 13 which is climate action (United Nations, 2015).

France also promotes sustainable train transport through its train innovation and initiatives. It is electrifying its railways, introducing hydrogen-powered trains, reinventing stations to be energy efficient with rooftop gardens, teaching drivers to use minimal energy, investing in automatic controls and introducing TGV trains, which are 97% recyclable (Explore France, 2024) (FCM, 2023). Some of the initiatives that France is implementing are a ban on domestic flights, stations in city centers reducing the need for other transport and offering a discount on trains for reusable cups. This also benefits tourists as direct routes provide easy stress-free travel so they can enjoy the scenery and their travel more.

Switzerland focuses on infrastructure and clean energy integration whereas France focuses on technological innovation, policy regulation and cultural incentives. Switzerland shows strong measurable progress in renewable energy but less emphasis on passenger behaviour while France demonstrates innovation and lifestyle change but faces challenges in scaling and acceptance. Switzerland illustrates the power of embedding sustainability into infrastructure, while France shows how

innovation and policy can drive cultural change. Together, they highlight complementary pathways toward sustainable transport in Europe.

The European Green Deal is a deal to make train travel in Europe more sustainable and focuses on making rail more competitive and seamless through digital systems and cross-border ticketing, removing barriers to high-speed operators and encouraging research into new trains. This is to achieve goals of doubling high-speed rail and tripling freight by 2050 and reducing transport-related greenhouse gas emissions by 90% by 2050 (Parrondo, 2021).

Swisstainable was launched by Switzerland Tourism in 2021 as a nationwide sustainability programme (Switzerland Tourism, 2025). Tourism providers are classed onto three levels based on their sustainability practices, committed (basic sustainability – local sourcing, waste management), engaged (have sustainability practices in place – monitoring energy and water, using renewable energy sources) and leading (hold sustainability certifications eg Green Globe, Earthcheck) (Swiss Tourism Federation, 2025). It also aligns with Switzerland's Climate and Innovation Act and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015).

The strengths of swisstainable are that it has tangible progress in the tourism sector, strong alignment with global sustainability frameworks and tourists are happier when they engage with the local culture (EarthCheck, 2023). However, overtourism remains a challenge and ski tourism is highly vulnerable even with these measures applied. This is where they have the opportunity to strengthen their involvement with local communities and gain more research into the challenges that still remain.

Swiss Youth Hostels are recognised as Leading in the Swisstainable programme. They hold sustainability certifications such as the EU Ecolabel and ibex fairstay, they use renewable energy sources and eco-friendly building materials, and they make their accommodation affordable and accessible whilst encouraging guests to recycle and reduce their energy use (Swiss Youth Hostels, 2023).

The Triple Bottom Line is a sustainability framework that measures a company's success in three pillars. Profit, the economic impact on society and the company. People, the social impact it has on employees, customers, and the community. Planet, the environmental impact it has on the world and its overall sustainability (Elkington, 1994).

Switzerland applies this framework to its tourism through its Swisstainable strategy. It engages with profit as it encourages tourists to buy local products and support small businesses, and it promotes longer stays which means local businesses are in business longer. It engages with people as it aims to balance tourism with residents' needs as seen in Vision Tourism Luzern 2030 and it supports cultural preservation through policies such as the Cultural Promotional Act (Federal Office of Culture, 2012) (Wattanacharoensil and Stettler, 2025). Lastly, it engages with the planet as it shifts tourism away from overcrowded destinations to reduce environmental strain and encourages recycling and green urban planning (Earth Check, 2023) (Swiss Tourism Federation, 2025).

Cultural erosion could be a major issue in Switzerland due to tourism. Local traditions such as agriculture and festivals risk being commercialized, overcrowding in destinations such as Lauterbrunnen and Lucerne is causing locals to feel like "employees in an amusement park"; infrastructure developed to meet tourist demands is causing disruption to the natural landscape and certain cultural clashes such as tourists dressing inappropriately for local customs and being loud at times when they should be quiet is causing hostility from locals. Switzerland is trying to combat this by shifting tourism to less popular destinations and encouraging responsible travel from tourists (Perkins, n.d.).

Cultural Preservation is important in Switzerland and some of the cultural preservation efforts include promoting traditions, preserving heritage and supporting cultural activities through funding and legalisation such as the Culture Promotional Act (Bucher and Weckerle, 2022).

The people living in Switzerland have a strong connection to nature which is why they are dedicated to recycling, public transport and integrating green spaces into urban planning. Their values of reliability, precision, and long-term perspective contribute to effective and innovative environmental policies and technologies as seen in their renewable energy infrastructure (Galloway, 2024).

To conclude this essay has shown that Switzerland is an extremely sustainable destination and has measures and structures in place to maintain its sustainability and continue to improve the country towards its goals. The importance of sustainable tourism is illustrated in this assignment through the struggles Switzerland faces such

as global warming, overtourism and cultural erosion. However, through its Swisstainable strategy, it is becoming more sustainable. If Switzerland wants to keep on progressing with its sustainability it needs to get more community involvement so that the whole country works collaboratively towards these aims. Overall, sustainable development is crucial to the current tourism market and keeping countries tourism afloat because without it these struggles will continue to multiply and eventually topple these tourist destinations.

Bibliography

Arya, V. et al. (2024) 'Let us take a walk to the sustainable tourism practices: a qualitative study through the lens of tourism experts', *Environmental science and pollution research international*, 31(9), pp. 12892–12915. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-023-31503-7> (Accessed 27/11/25).

Bucher, C. and Weckerle, C. (2022). Switzerland Short cultural policy profile Prepared by. Available at: https://www.culturalpolicies.net/wp-content/uploads/pdf_short/switzerland/Switzerland-Short_2022.pdf [Accessed 4 Nov. 2023].

Butler, R. (1980). *The tourism area life cycle*. Clevedon ; Buffalo: Channel View Publications (Accessed 02/12/25).

Climate Change Laws of The World (2022). Federal Act on Climate Protection Goals, Innovation and Strengthening Energy Security - Climate Change Laws of the World. Available at: https://climate-laws.org/document/youfederal-act-on-climate-protection-goals-innovation-and-strengthening-energy-security_d8b9 [Accessed 2 Dec. 2025].

Doxey, G.V. (1975) A causation theory of visitor–resident irritants: Methodology and research inferences. *Proceedings of the 6th Annual Conference of the Travel Research Association*, San Diego, California, 8–11 September 1975, pp. 195–198 (Accessed 07/12/25)

Durbin, A. (2024). Venice Bans Large Tourist Groups and Loudspeakers. BBC News. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cyjy78n9zno> (Accessed 28/11/25)

European Environment Agency. Sustainability. www.eea.europa.eu. Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/topics/at-a-glance/sustainability> (Accessed 26/11/25).

Explore France (2024). Sustainable Train Travel Across Europe. Explore France
Available at: <https://www.france.fr/en/article/au-rail-europe-sustainable-train-travel/>
(Accessed 06/12/25).

EarthCheck (2023) Swisstainable: How Switzerland is setting the standard for sustainable tourism. Available at: <https://earthcheck.org/news/destination/swisstainable-switzerland-setting-standard-sustainable-tourism/> (Accessed 08/12/25).

Elkington, J. (1994) Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st century business. Oxford: Capstone Publishing (Accessed 07/12/25)

FCM (2023). FCM customers can benefit from SNCF's Planète Voyage sustainability programme. Available at: <https://www.fcmtravel.com/en-gb/resources/insights/fcm-customers-can-benefit-sncfs-planete-voyage-sustainability-programme> [Accessed 6 Dec. 2025].

Federal Office of Culture (2012) Federal Act on the Promotion of Culture (Culture Promotion Act, KFG). Bern: Swiss Confederation. Available at: https://www.culturalpolicies.net/country_profile/switzerland-1-1/ (Accessed 08/12/25)

Gerretsen, I. (2023). How climate change threatens to close ski resorts. BBC. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20230124-how-climate-change-threatens-to-close-ski-resorts> (Accessed 02/12/25).

Galloway, L. (2024). Why Switzerland is home to two of the world's most liveable cities. BBC. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20240808-why-switzerland-is-home-to-two-of-the-worlds-most-liveable-cities> (Accessed 04/12/25).

Khan, M.R. et al. (2021) 'Sustainable Tourism Policy, Destination Management and Sustainable Tourism Development: A Moderated-Mediation Model', Sustainability, 13(21), p. 12156. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132112156> (Accessed 27/11/25).

Perkins, R. (n.d.). Responsible tourism in Switzerland. www.responsibletravel.com. Available at: <https://www.responsibletravel.com/holidays/switzerland/travel-guide/responsible-tourism> (Accessed 06/12/25).

Switzerland Tourism (2025) Sustainability & environment. Switzerland Tourism. Available at: <https://www.myswitzerland.com/en/planning/about-switzerland/general-facts/facts-about-switzerland/sustainability-amp-environment/> (Accessed 01/12/25).

Swiss Tourism Federation (2025) Sustainability programme Swisstainable: Guidelines. Bern: STV FST. Available at: https://files.stv-fst.ch/staging/assets/downloads/swisstainable_leitfaden_e.pdf (Accessed 08/12/25)

Swiss Youth Hostels (2023) Sustainability at Swiss Youth Hostels – Swisstainable Level III Leading. Swiss Youth Hostels. Available at: <https://www.youthhostel.ch/en/sustainability> (Accessed 08/12/25)

United Nations (2015). The 17 sustainable development goals. United Nations. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> (Accessed 06/12/25).

Walanchalee Wattanacharoensil and Stettler, J. (2025). Residents' perceptions of tourism impacts and regulatory measures: the case of Lucerne's urban destination. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, pp.1–18.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/20565607.2025.2594166> (Accessed 03/12/25).