

Entering the European market for SAVE travel products

Dominated by young travellers, SAVE tourism is attracting increasing numbers of Europeans who want to have a meaningful travel experience. The market demands responsible and ethical tourism practices, particularly when working with vulnerable children and wildlife. As a growing niche, there are numerous opportunities to develop positive relationships with specialist voluntourism tour operators and OTAs (online travel agencies) that serve the market.

Contents of this page

1. [What requirements must SAVE travel products comply with to be allowed on the European market?](#)
2. [Through what channels can you get SAVE travel products on the European market?](#)
3. [What competition will you face on the European SAVE tourism market?](#)
4. [What are the prices for SAVE tourism travel products on the European market?](#)

1. What requirements must SAVE travel products comply with to be allowed on the European market?

SAVE tourism is an important sub-segment of the broader adventure travel niche, and volunteering is the activity that transcends all the profiles of Scientific, Academic, Volunteering and Educational. European tourism tour operators that specialise in providing SAVE travel products are bound by strict regulations to ensure the safety of their travellers while travelling overseas and to protect them financially. This means that they expect their foreign suppliers to adhere to their codes of conduct and/or terms and conditions. As you will be selling your SAVE travel product to them, it is important that you understand what these are.

What are the mandatory and additional requirements that buyers have?

The mandatory and additional requirements for SAVE tourism travel products are common across the adventure tourism sector. As a first step, you should read the CBI's [What requirements must tourism services comply with to be allowed on the European market](#) and familiarise yourself with comprehensive details of legal, non-legal and common requirements.

They cover the following:

- The European Package Travel Directive
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Liability Insurance and Insolvency Protection
- Sustainability

What are the requirements for niche markets?

Establishing Standards and Managing Risk

European tour operators consider SAVE tourism part of the adventure travel segment. Therefore, it is of great importance to them that volunteer projects are well-managed and safe. They will conduct regular risk assessments and safety checks on accommodation and any equipment used. For many operators, this will be the number one consideration for establishing partnerships with suppliers.

To help mitigate against risk, they commonly comply with standards for adventure tourism management as issued by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) or, for UK tour operators, the British Standards Institution (BSI). The two important standards that you should consider complying with are:

- Adventure tourism — Safety management systems — Requirements - [ISO 21101:2014](#)
- British Standard for adventurous activities outside of the United Kingdom - [BS8848:2014](#)

A further ISO standard for consideration provides guidelines for the involvement of spontaneous volunteers in the case of volunteer projects related to disaster relief. You can find out more about this standard, [ISO 22319:2017](#), on the ISO website.

Tip:

You should establish policies and procedures to identify and manage risk. Read more about managing risk and standards for adventure tourism in the [CBI's Entering the European Market for Adventure Tourism](#).

Responsible Tourism and Ethical Volunteering

Volunteer tourism has been the subject of negative press in Europe in recent years. Badly conceived and/or poorly managed projects that do little to help the benefiting community, and in some incidences are deemed harmful, have caused the European SAVE tourist to be warier of how they choose to volunteer. Working with children and irresponsible interaction with wildlife have been especially criticised, along with projects that use international volunteers instead of employing local people.

Orphanage tourism has been particularly criticised for exploiting orphans as 'attractions' for tourists and 'projects' for volunteers. A number of orphanages have been found to prey on vulnerable families by offering places for their children. In others, children have been found living in squalid conditions, severely neglected and/or poorly treated. As a result, many European tour operators no longer support orphanages or offer voluntary positions in such institutions. Other operators do not place volunteers on short-term placements working with children, arguing that vulnerable children quickly form attachments to the volunteer, who then leaves.

Exploiting wildlife through excessive human interaction is another issue to have affected volunteer tourism, such as those that offer elephant rides or cuddling chimpanzees. Today, it is important that wildlife projects conform to best practices and that activities do not detract from the welfare of the animals.

Before developing a volunteer project, you should consider the following responsible and ethical guidelines when constructing your Code of Conduct and other policies:

- Projects should involve and benefit local people where possible – to begin with, you must employ local people and not replace full-time jobs with volunteers. Your European partners will not supply you with volunteers where there is a clear need for a full-time job.
- Volunteers should be a benefit to the project, not a burden – you should be clear about the skills you require from your volunteers. You should ensure that your buyer has the appropriate interviewing systems in place to find the right volunteers for you.
- Responsibility and sustainability – projects should fit in with the local way of life and have minimal impact on the environment, culture or economy. This means that wherever possible, local food and supplies should be sourced.
- Volunteering with children and wildlife – you should have firm policies in place that clearly state your code of conduct.
- Code of Conduct for Volunteers – it is important that the volunteers who work on your projects follow your own Code of Conduct. It should include topics like working hard with a positive attitude; respecting the culture and people of the host community; being responsible and professional; respecting the environment; using resources wisely; not littering; picking up litter, and so on. Take the time to read VSO's [Global Code of Conduct](#), which is very detailed and applies to a wide range of people involved with the organisation, including volunteers.

Tips:

Read the policies and philosophies of some leading volunteering operators, such as global operator [Volunteering Solutions](#) and German operator [Natucate](#).

The organisation [ReThink Orphanages](#) has some useful research and publications about volunteering in orphanages on its website.

Many European tour operators publish their policies detailing child protection. You can read this example of a [Child Protection Policy](#) from UK operator Oyster Worldwide.

[Working Abroad](#) has published guidelines about its practices for ethical volunteering with wildlife.

Establish a code of conduct that you expect volunteers to adhere to. [Nactuate's Code of Conduct](#) provides a helpful checklist.

Establishing SAVE Projects

Volunteer projects should meet a genuine social need and/or have a positive impact on protecting the environment. When creating your project, you must be clear about what it will achieve.

They should have a measurable positive impact on volunteers. Measurements could include a post-placement questionnaire that indicates the level of satisfaction, successful completion of the placement, completed tasks, such as number of lessonssessions held, completed scientific assessment, and so on.

Projects must also have a measurable positive impact on the destination, such as on the environment or on the community. Measurements could include that the building was constructed on time and within budget, required number of classes successfully held, immunisation programme successfully completed, and so on. Chart 1 below highlights the key impacts of volunteer tourism projects conducted by one operator, Projects Abroad. You can read the whole [Global Impact Report 2018](#) for more detail on how they measure the impact of their work.

Chart 1: Impact of Volunteering in 2018, Projects Abroad

Highlights

Thank you to all of our volunteers who joined us on our incredible journey in 2018. Together, you helped us:

Plant over **57,700 trees**, including over 37,600 mangroves



Clean up **15 tonnes** of litter

Build, renovate and improve the learning environment for over **7,400 students**



Run holidays camps for more than **400 children**

Teach over **3,500 students** about protecting the environment



Rescue and release over **100,000 turtle hatchlings**

Feed **6,000 community members** who are homeless or come from low-income communities



Do health screenings for over **24,250 community members** at medical outreaches

Create the first ever **carbon-neutral resort** in Fiji



Discover **38 species** never before reported in the Amazon rainforest

Conduct more than **800 malaria tests** and **1,800 HIV tests**



Provide **370 patients** with physiotherapy, occupational therapy or speech therapy

Support the education and development of over **14,000 children**



Provide focused literacy programmes to **100 children**

Ensure access to clean water for **3,000 community members**



Ran hygiene workshops for more than **9,000 community members**

Awarded interest-free loans to **210 beneficiaries** to grow their business



Finalise **370 human rights cases** in South Africa

Source: Global Impact Report 2018, Projects Abroad

Scientific and Academic projects are typically more focused on specific research requirements. If your project is for a more rigorous scientific or academic purpose, you should consider whether it may be suitable as a project for a study as part of a university degree course. There are many subjects such projects could be aligned to, such as anthropology, biodiversity, conservation, ecology or other humanities subjects. See this example of a research project being undertaken by Earthwatch to [tackle climate change through the planting of mangroves in Kenya](#), with a team of volunteers from Edinburgh University to help.

Tips:

Make a database of the relevant universities and other educational institutions offering tertiary educational qualifications both in your country and in Europe

Make contact with the person responsible for coordinating fieldwork itineraries for each department to see how you can apply to add your projects to the relevant departments for consideration

Research companies that specialise in organising and sending educational groups and research students to your country. One example is [Opwall](#), which arranges undergraduate and secondary school sixth form trips to several destinations including Madagascar, Guyana and Malawi.

2. Through what channels can you get SAVE travel products on

the European market?

How is the end-market segmented?

The market of volunteer travellers (which is the common thread between all four SAVE profiles) is dominated by young people who want to make a difference other people's lives, learn new skills, meet new people or take time off from education or employment. There is also a growing market of older travellers who are interested in volunteering overseas. The main groups of SAVE travellers and the SAVE activities they commonly undertake are categorised as follows:

Table 1: SAVE Tourist Market Segmentation

Segment	Scientific	Academic	Volunteering	Educational
Gap Year Students			✓	✓
Students on School Trips			✓	✓
University Students	✓	✓	✓	
Young Professionals/Career Breakers			✓	
50+/Post Family Market	✓		✓	

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

- Gap year students – this is the largest group of SAVE travellers. The 'gap year' originated in the UK during the 1960s as young people started taking a year out of education between leaving school and starting university. It has grown to encompass young adults aged between 18 and 25 and is popular among young people in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. In other European countries such as Norway, Denmark and Turkey, it is becoming more common for students to take a year off between school and university. Volunteering overseas during this period continues to be a popular activity for this group and there have been numerous studies that demonstrate the personal benefits that volunteering creates.
- Students on School Trips – this is a large group of SAVE travellers, and Europe is a major market. They are usually aged 16-18 and travel to a wide number of countries to study as part of their national educational curriculum. Destinations are more commonly European cities for the purposes of education and cultural development. Trips to developing countries are usually to volunteer in community projects, similar to Gap Year students.
- University students – this is a small, distinct group of SAVE travellers, who take part in Scientific, Academic or Educational projects that are focused on specific subjects as part of their degree courses.
- Young professionals and career breakers – young Europeans take a career break for many reasons, such as to change career, develop new skills or as a result of redundancy. Sometimes employers will offer young professionals longer periods of unpaid absence, known as sabbaticals. This group of volunteers is more likely to have specific skills such as medical or teaching qualifications that they can utilise while on a volunteering project abroad. Therefore, they are more likely to choose a programme that enables them to use and further develop these skills.
- 50+ post-family market – this is a growing market of people who have more time and money to travel and are also interested in making a difference and having an authentic, immersive experience. European tour operators are recognising the potential of this group of SAVE tourists, and are creating targeted experiences

for them. For example, [Projects Abroad](#) has a dedicated section on its website aimed at adults over the age of 50.

Through what channels do SAVE tourism travel products end up on the end-market?

The channels for the SAVE market are specialist SAVE tour operators and specialist SAVE and volunteer tourism OTAs (online travel agencies). The market is dominated by companies from the UK, Australia/New Zealand and the US. However, these major businesses operate in the global marketplace and sell to a global market, including Europeans.

European SAVE Tour Operators – usually operate in several countries and host many projects in each country. They are also likely to have at least three long-term projects underway in each country. They have invested significantly in their operations at the destination and have permanent staff on the ground. Examples of well-established tour operators are:

France

- [Routes du Monde ATC](#)
- [Eco-Volontaire](#)

Germany

- [Natucate](#)
- [Lernen & Helfen Sprachreisen](#)
- [Freiwilligenarbeit](#)

UK

- [Camps International](#)
- [Frontier](#)
- [Gapforce](#)
- [GVI \(Global Vision International\)](#)
- [Latitude Global Volunteering](#)
- [Projects Abroad](#)
- [Raleigh International](#)
- [VSO](#)

Volunteer Tourism OTAs – these are companies that sell volunteer tourism trips that are either put together by SAVE tour operators (the above group) or projects established by local operators or communities in destinations. Examples of this specialist group of OTAs are:

- [Abroadly](#)
- [Guidisto Volontariat](#)
- [GoAbroad](#)
- [Go Overseas](#)
- [One World 365](#)
- [Responsible Travel](#)
- [Volunteer World](#)
- [WWOOF International](#)
- [Working Abroad](#)

Schools and universities that arrange SAVE trips for their students usually deal directly with a network of specialist operators based in their own country (including those listed above), which then arrange bespoke trips based on the educational establishment's needs.

Tips:

Consult the [Year Out Group](#), the association of approved gap-year-providing organisations in the UK, for more information about businesses working in the sector, and to identify more tour operators well known for best practices in the SAVE market.

The [WYSE Travel Confederation](#) publishes research about the youth travel market that you could take the time to read. WYSE also holds annual conferences for members that enable volunteer projects to network with potential buyers.

What is the most interesting channel for you?

You should consider establishing partnerships with both SAVE tour operators and OTAs.

The most straightforward route to market is via the OTAs, as you can usually register your projects online. However, they all have certain standards that they expect volunteer projects to comply with to ensure that they are environmentally and ethically sound and will benefit both the tourist and host country.

Getting projects adopted by tour operators has many benefits as the operator will use their resources and marketing skills to promote the projects. The key questions a voluntourism tour operator will need positive answers to before moving into a destination are:

- Will travellers want to visit the destination – is it appealing?
- Are volunteers likely to want to do the work you need them to do?
- Can safety and security be assured?
- Is there a sufficient stock of appropriate accommodation?
- If they don't already work there, is there scope for at least three separate projects in the destination to make the investment worthwhile?

Tip:

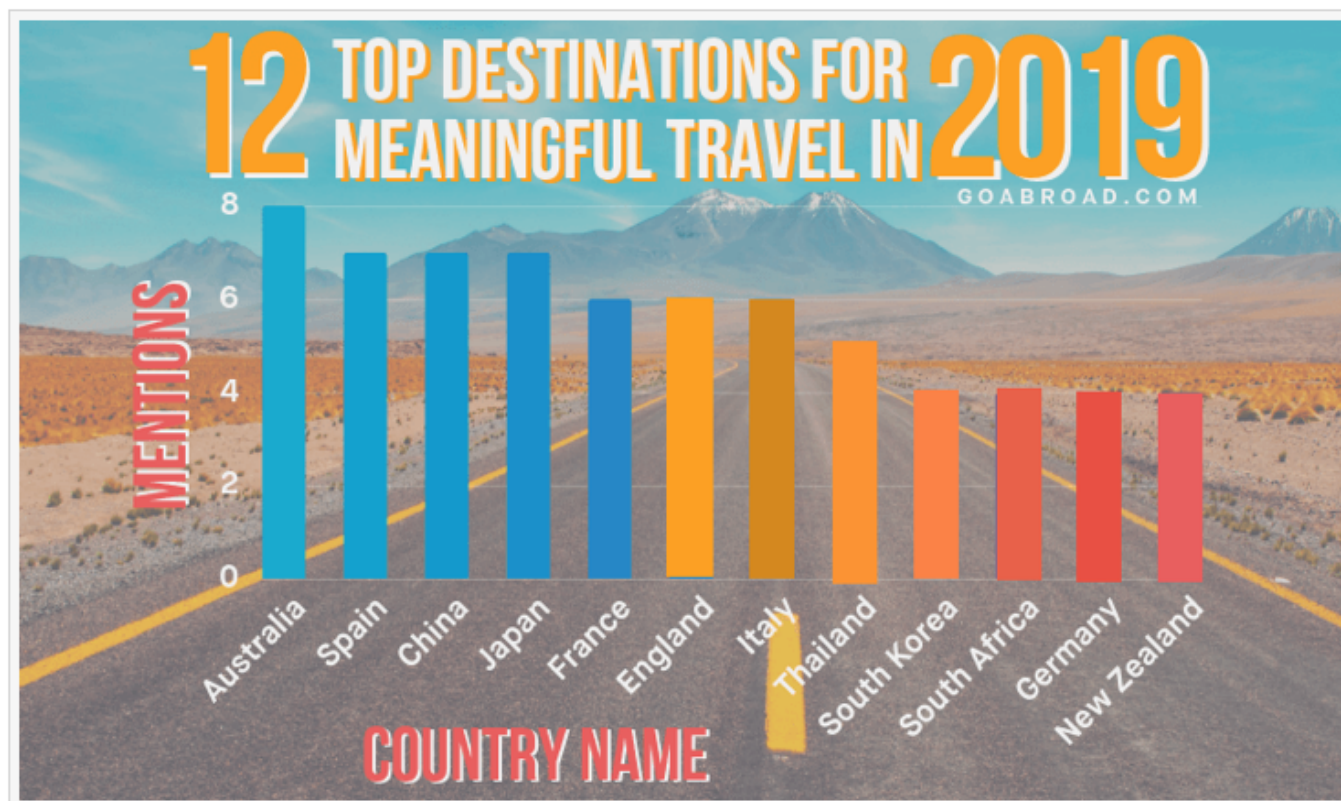
Identify which questions you can answer 'Yes' to and work out what you need to do to have a positive answer to the rest.

3. What competition will you face on the European SAVE tourism market?

Which countries are you competing with?

SAVE experiences are found in countries all over the world. The most popular destinations are diverse, and projects are well represented in developed, developing and emerging countries, as the following infographic demonstrates. Three of the top 12 destinations listed are developing countries – China, Thailand and South Africa.

Chart 2: 12 Top Destinations for Meaningful Travel in 2019



Source: [GoAbroad](https://goabroad.com)

Combining a range of factors that includes the most commonly offered destinations by specialist tour operators and OTAs, the leading destinations in developing countries for SAVE tourism are identified as:

- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- India
- Nepal
- Peru

South Africa

Africa's leading destination for SAVE tourism, typical activities include volunteer placements, internships, teaching English and sports coaching. It is a popular destination for sports trips for schools as part of their educational curriculum. In spite of rapid development over the last 20 years, many conservation, social and community development issues persist, offering a number of opportunities for SAVE tourism. Cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town have many opportunities. Programmes in rural locations promote cultural immersion through the learning of local traditions, languages and customs. Other opportunities include conservation, childcare, teaching and healthcare.

Tanzania

Typical programmes for SAVE tourists involve supporting the preservation of the native ecosystems, protecting wildlife habitat and empowering local communities. Getting involved in rigorous scientific research projects to improve conservation practices is typical. Volunteering on the Tanzanian islands of Zanzibar and Mafia in the Indian Ocean are also extremely popular options. Mafia is home to an internationally recognised marine park with several ongoing programmes, including a whale shark conservation internship project.

Thailand

Volunteering in Thailand is extremely diverse, and ranges from working with tigers or at elephant sanctuaries, volunteering in local communities teaching English or working with children. There are also many conservation programmes in the highland regions or coastal areas.

India

Volunteer programmes in India include education and healthcare, female empowerment and animal welfare. As a huge country of 29 different states and 26 official languages, experiences are incredibly varied, from the fast pace of India's capital city in Delhi, to the more relaxed region around Kerala in southern India.

Nepal

Nepal has long been a destination for volunteering on projects ranging from construction, healthcare, gender equality, special needs and teaching and, following the devastating earthquake in 2015 that killed almost 9,000 people, disaster relief to help rebuild holy sites and construct schools.

Peru

Following widespread flooding in 2017, there are still a wide range of disaster relief projects to help rebuild communities. Data collection and surveying for environmental and conservation projects are widespread and may be done as part of academic or scientific projects, while working to help keep children off the streets in Lima is a popular choice for volunteers.

Which companies are you competing with?

SAVE tourism is well established at a local level throughout the main competing countries and elsewhere. Destination Management Companies (DMCs) that manage SAVE experiences on behalf of local communities are also common. By partnering with a local DMC, a community/project benefits from the DMC's expertise in reaching an international volunteer and educational market that they would otherwise struggle to reach.

Companies in South Africa

[Volunteer South Africa](#) has established partnerships with various responsible and ethical animal conservation and social development programmes across South Africa over the past 10 years. Its tours focus on the areas of Wildlife Rehabilitation and Care, Wildlife Conservation, and Horseback Safari Riding. It also has a zero-tolerance policy for canned lion hunting. To help potential volunteers raise funds to join a programme, it has joined with online fundraising platform [FundMyTravel](#) to help participants organise and gather funds via social media. The organisation also partners with Care for Wild, the largest rhino orphanage in the world.

[African Impact](#) prides itself on being a sustainable volunteer travel organisation that operates and manages its own projects with experienced staff, but never uses volunteers as replacements for local people. It has been awarded Top Volunteer Abroad Organisation by [GoAbroad](#) for three consecutive years. It also offers internships and opportunities to study abroad. Volunteering is in the fields of community and conservation, and it also caters to groups and expeditions. African Impact has projects in several African destinations including Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia.

[SAVE Foundation](#) is an NGO that helps communities to set up community and conservation development projects in South Africa and Tanzania along with other Africa countries (Ghana, Uganda, Malawi, Namibia and Kenya). It offers a wide range of programmes such as teaching children how to surf, building schools, teaching business skills to adult and working with sharks along the Garden Route. It is a Volunteer World Trusted Partner and recommended by Go Overseas.

Companies in Tanzania

[United Planet Tanzania](#) is a non-profit organisation that provides unique and immersive volunteer opportunities aimed at bridging the cultural gap between Tanzania and other nations. It offers volunteer programmes, internships and volunteer with travel programmes in the areas of education, healthcare and community. It is a small, locally managed organisation, and its long-term objectives include increasing the number of local Tanzanian volunteers. It also aims to develop a United Planet Tanzania project in collaboration with the Tanzanian government. Based in Dar-es-Salaam, participants must be age 18 or older and have a good knowledge of spoken and written English. Volunteers usually stay in a homestay with a local family, and it also offers additional activities such as cooking classes and learning Swahili.

Based in Moshi near Mount Kilimanjaro, [Tanzania Volunteers](#) organises the placement of volunteers and interns in the local area throughout several establishments including schools, hospitals, day centres, centres for disabled children and conservation programmes. The organisation provides accommodation for its volunteers in Moshi and arranges trips during free time.

Companies in Thailand

There are many community organisations that offer direct volunteering opportunities and [Volunteer Work Thailand](#) provides listings of local organisations that can be contacted directly. [Daughters Rising](#) works to empower vulnerable, at-risk girls to end trafficking and exploitation and is based in northern Thailand. The organisation encourages volunteers with skills in human rights, health and hygiene, and women's health, along with Chinese, Spanish and English speakers.

The [Mangrove Action Project](#) works with mangrove forest communities, NGOs, researchers and local governments to conserve and restore mangrove forests and related coastal ecosystems. It also promotes community-based, sustainable management of coastal resources. Volunteers in the Thailand branch in Phuket have supported the organisation's work since 2007 and a commitment of 3 months is preferred.

[Lanta Animal Welfare \(LAW\)](#) is based on the island of Koh Lanta in southwest Thailand that works to relieve the suffering of cats and dogs on the island, provides medical care and actively reduces the population through sterilisation. It looks for committed volunteers who can work for at least one month and provides free on-site accommodation on a first come, first served basis.

Companies in India

Based in Rajasthan, [Volunteering With India](#) offers a combination of volunteering projects and adventure travel experiences in the areas of helping disadvantaged women, childcare, health programmes for sick and terminal patients, and teaching projects, along with theatre workshops and elephant care. The organisation supports local NGOs in both urban and rural areas. It also offers 'add-on tour packages' ranging from 2 nights/3 days to 6 nights/7 days. The company is actively seeking SAVE tour operators for new partnerships and is currently affiliated with OTAs OneWorld 365 and GoAbroad. Its website is available in several languages other than English, including German, French, Spanish and Italian.

[Ecosphere Spiti](#) in Himachal Pradesh is a social enterprise with a focus on creating sustainable livelihoods linked to nature and cultural conservation. It offers opportunities to help local communities living in the high-altitude Himalayan region. SAVE tourists can get involved in projects that include building greenhouses and/or volunteering in local villages, getting fully immersed in their daily routines. Volunteering is usually between May and October, as it is the best time to visit the region, and accommodation is provided with local families.

Companies in Nepal

[Volunteer Society Nepal](#) is a local organisation that offers volunteering opportunities and internships in the fields of childcare, special needs, women's groups, teaching, medical care and construction. Its projects are located country-wide, in Kathmandu and throughout the Himalayas, and it directly targets international volunteers. It

also offers volunteers activities beyond volunteering, such as yoga and treks to Mount Everest base camp. The organisation has a [transparent pricing system](#), which explains exactly how volunteers' fees are allocated.

[Volunteers Initiative Nepal](#) is an NGO based in Kathmandu that works with rural communities and is committed to the empowerment of marginalised communities. Its development approach focuses on six major programmes: women's empowerment, children's development, youth empowerment, public health and medical care, environmental conservation and disaster risk reduction. These all align with the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). The application process is a simple three-stage process, and volunteers apply online. There is a €100 programme booking fee, which covers processing the application and is not deductible from the programme fees. Leading travel publication Lonely Planet recommends this organisation.

Companies in Peru

Based in Cusco, [Peru Volunteer](#) offers volunteers the opportunity to learn Spanish with formal classes while on a volunteering trip. Its trips are typically 4, 8 or 12 weeks and accommodations are a choice of a homestay or in a volunteer house. All volunteer projects are in and around Cusco, accessible via public transport, and in the fields of teaching English, sports, pre-school, special needs and animal welfare. Volunteers can get involved in different projects across their two daily sessions. The company has established partnerships with German operator [Friewilligenarbeit](#) and OTA [GoAbroad](#), and its website is available multiple languages.

Tip:

See if any of these local operators offer similar experiences to you and identify some key points you can learn from them.

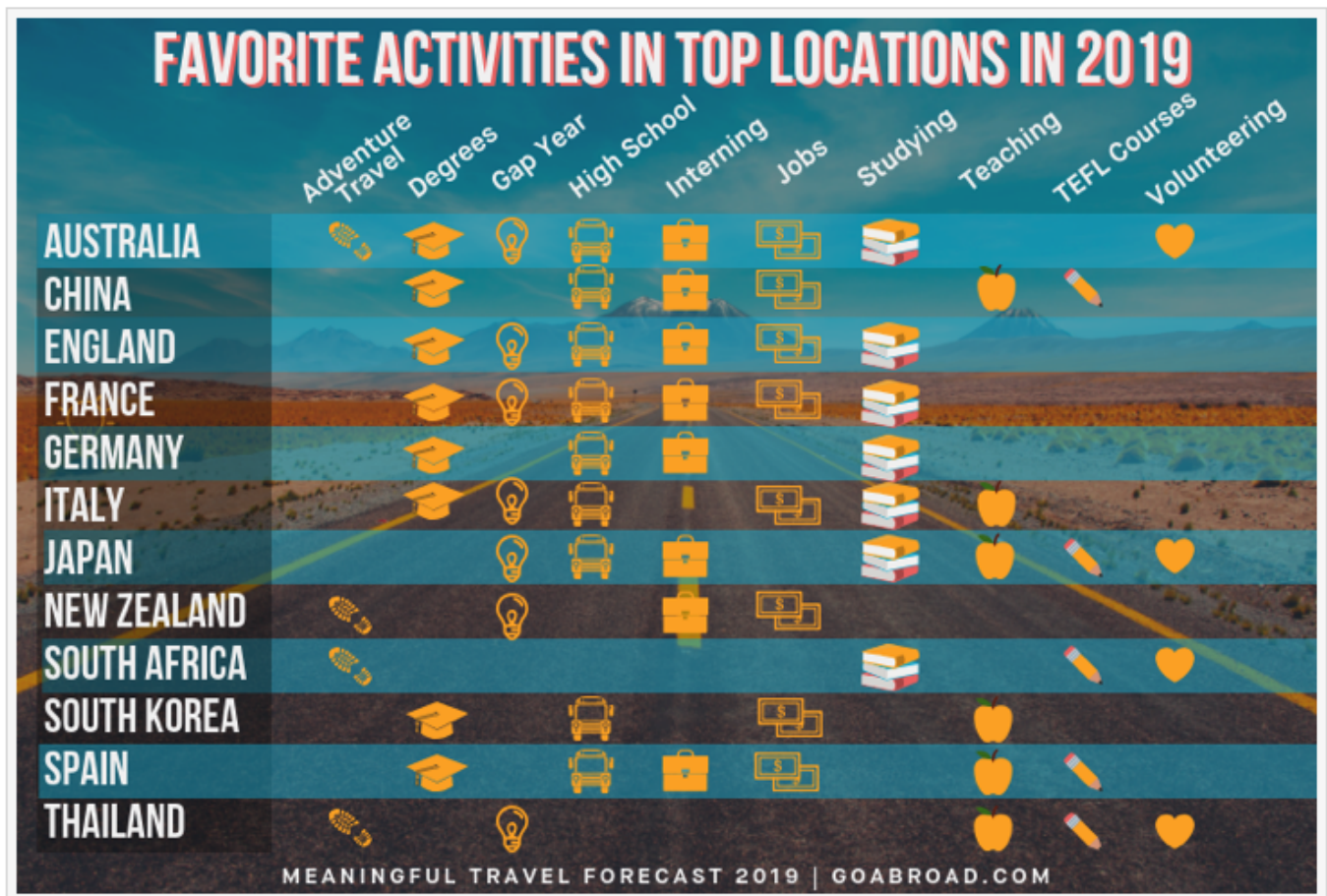
What products are you competing with?

SAVE tourism is a specific travel niche and within the sector, competition is predominantly between the types of experience. This is why most tour operators offer a broad range of experiences, so they can appeal to the widest possible range of SAVE tourists. Research has shown that the most popular types of volunteer tourism today are:

- Working with children – there is a wide variety of opportunities ranging from community work with disadvantaged children, sports coaching, nursery education, teaching a variety of subjects including English, working with street children or those in care.
- Wildlife conservation – closely aligned with adventure tourism, wildlife conservation can give participants a chance to visit remote destinations. Activities involve habitat conservation, reserve management, studying, monitoring and rehabilitation of animals.
- Marine conservation – includes activities such as monitoring marine wildlife, habitats and coastal ecosystems. Typically, volunteers will assist qualified scientists and/or researchers.

In the infographic below, the competing developing destinations of South Africa and Thailand are both top locations for a mix of reasons with both scoring highly for volunteering and adventure.

Chart 3: Favourite SAVE Activities in Top Locations in 2019



Source: [GoAbroad](https://goabroad.com)

Beyond the parameters of the four SAVE profiles, it is clear that the main competition for the SAVE market is the adventure tourism market. Young people are naturally drawn to adventure, and if they cannot find what they are seeking in a SAVE product, they may be tempted to travel independently and forsake volunteering altogether. Independent adventure travel may also be cheaper than SAVE travel through a tour operator (see prices for SAVE travel below). If you can add value to your SAVE product by offering adventure activities alongside volunteering, you will broaden the appeal to your target audience.

Tips:

Consider what additional activities you can offer the SAVE tourist to make your volunteer project stand out from others.

Read more about the adventure tourism segment in the [CBI's Entering the European Market for Adventure Tourism](#).

4. What are the prices for SAVE tourism travel products on the European market?

SAVE travel trips can be expensive. Although participants give their time and skills to a volunteer project for free, there are substantial costs for the tour operators who put the trips together, as they generally make all the arrangements. These will include transportation (with/without international airfares), local travel and medical insurance, induction, training and orientation by experienced staff, accommodation and meals.

A major consideration for tour operators is to provide a high level of care for their volunteers, as many of them will be young and inexperienced travellers. Therefore, it is important that parents (who may also be paying for the trip) are reassured that their children will be safe while under the operators' care. Providing this high level of care is often costly, since staff must have the appropriate personnel and management skills, and marketing and informational materials must be detailed and plentiful.

School and university trips are usually bespoke and priced according to the needs of the group.

This infographic from Projects Abroad provides an example of the distribution of the cost of their trips across key indicators.

Chart 4: Breakdown of Fees Paid by Volunteers for Trip



Source: Projects Abroad

These are further described as follows:

- Cost of the volunteer experience (32%) – costs associated with the in-country experience, such as meals, accommodation, local transport and transfers and insurance premiums.
- Indirect costs of the volunteer experience (24%) – staff that provide full-time support to volunteers, build relationships with local project partners, and local office costs.
- Recruitment and communication (24%) – costs of marketing the volunteer projects and recruiting the volunteers.
- Organisational costs (13%) – costs associated with running the business, such as human resources, administration, financial controls and IT.
- Government taxes (4%) – as required by host countries.
- Excess revenue (3%) – helps fund growth and the ability to respond to unexpected expenditure such as disaster relief efforts (like the Nepal earthquake in 2015).

Of course, level of service can and does vary from operator to operator and there is a wide range of prices for similar experiences on the market. As is shown in the table below, Frontier appears to cater to the cheaper

SAVE travel audience, while GVI's products appear more mid-range. At the top end, Projects Abroad and Natucate's experiences appear to be priced at the high end of the market. However, it is important to bear in mind that choice of destination will also affect the price of trips, and there is no standard.

Table 2: SAVE Travel Products and Prices on the Market

Operator	Country	Trip Details	Duration	*Price from €
Trips from 1 week				
Projects Abroad	Nepal	Support early childhood development in care centres	from 1 week	1,150
Projects Abroad	Peru	Animal rehabilitation in the Amazon Rainforest	from 1 week	2,075
Projects Abroad	Thailand	Diving and coral reef protection	from 1 week	2,075
Trips from 2 weeks				
Frontier	Tanzania	Childcare experience	2 weeks	630
Frontier	South Africa	Baboon orphanage adventure	2 weeks	727
Frontier	Nepal	Children's hospital medical project	2 weeks	750
Natucate	India	Tropical biology	2 weeks	2,150
<i>Trips of varying lengths</i>				
Natucate	Thailand	Animal welfare	4-8 weeks	550
GVI	Peru	Micro-enterprise and business volunteering	2-12 weeks	1,497
GVI	India	Women's empowerment for disadvantaged women	2-12 weeks	1,613
GVI	South Africa	Wildlife research and conservation	2-12 weeks	2,018

Longer trips				
Natucate	Peru	Primate communication internship	6 weeks	2,725

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting; Tour Operators' Websites, October 2019

Note: *Prices quoted are for the minimum duration stated. Prices exclude international airfares

Tips:


When setting your prices, research your competitors' prices for similar products. Only set a higher price if you believe you are offering a better service than your competitor. Read [CBI's Organising your Tourism Services Export](#) for more information about setting prices.

You can do your own research into SAVE trips that are currently on the market and see how they are priced. Consult the [Year Out Group](#) for a long list of approved operators in the SAVE market and see how their prices compare. Although they are predominantly UK companies, they operate in destinations across the world, and many of them have European clients.


This study has been carried out on behalf of CBI by [Acorn Tourism Consulting Limited](#).

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