# Nuclear Tourism in Post-soviet Sites

## Field of study
Sociology, political sciences, arts, creative industries, educational sciences, anthropology, history, Baltic Studies, Post-soviet studies

## Duration
2 weeks

## Application deadline
June 2

## Dates
July 13 – July 26

## Credits
3 ECTS

## Contact person
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## Maximum number of students
20

## Target Group
BA and MA students of sociology, political sciences, education, anthropology, communication studies, arts, cultural studies, creative industry studies, tourism management

## Entry requirements
Strong motivation and English language knowledge at B2 level

The world has recently been shaken by a dramatized TV rendering of the aftermath of the explosion at Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. Introduced 33 years after the disaster, it is still as relevant as ever, trying to comprehend the fragility of our existence, a chain of actions that caused the disaster, hubris and unpreparedness to deal with the situation which changed in its entirety the destinies not only of people in Belarus, Ukraine and other Soviet countries forced to deal with the situation, but the world as we know it as well.

It is rather symbolic that most of the scenes of the series were filmed in Lithuania: Kaunas, Vilnius and the city of Visaginas, a counterpart of Prypiat – while not as tragic in its destiny as the latter, it is a reminder that the tragedy was possible in this setting as well.

Visaginas is a unique phenomenon in the context of Lithuania, in terms of its history, ethnic composition and challenges to its identity. It is also located in the picturesque part of Lithuania, our “lake district”, and surrounded by lush forests and lakes.

Visaginas is a satellite town of Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant. This monoindustrial town was built in the 70s, constructing one of the most powerful nuclear power plants in the world at that time.

Its construction was carried out by people that arrived here from all over the Soviet Union, including Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and other Soviet states.

The town has been facing a challenge of redefining its identity after decision was made to close the Nuclear Power Plant (the first reactor block was closed in 2004, the second one – in 2009).
# Nuclear Tourism in Post-Soviet Sites

With the town trying to turn from monoindustrial economy to a cultural tourism destination, it has to face many new and already existing challenges: proper representation of multi-ethnic cultural identities, the role of commodification and self-exoticizing, power relations, community engagement. Dominant official and local discourses, shaping politics of identity and memory in Lithuania, because as a post-soviet country, it tends to eliminate those parts of memory and identity which refer to the Soviet past. These dominant discourses create obstacles performing authentic multi-ethnic identities in Visaginas, while also creating place identity to develop socialist heritage tourism.

## Short description

To deepen the knowledge of post-soviet identity and nuclear tourism while observing and participating in interactive educational/cultural activities in Kaunas and in Visaginas. Investigations of the nuclear bunker in Kaunas and the overview of Visaginas as an atomic city are the main points of this project.

## Aim

By the end of the course students will be able to:
- Explore the international history behind today’s nuclear challenges and the world of nuclear history research;
- Comprehend the developmental processes of Visaginas and Ignalina Nuclear power plant (INPP) from both lectures and field activities;
- Apply their newly gained knowledge practically in the final project;
- Consolidate knowledge gained during lectures in field trips and cultural activities in the authentic setting in Visaginas;
- Contribute to the development of Nuclear tourism in Visaginas, while experiencing art, architecture, multiethnicity in Visaginas.

## Learning outcomes

- International history behind today’s nuclear and the world of nuclear history research;
- Transforming city identity: from the Soviet industrial (nuclear) center to the European multicultural city;
- Nuclear media discourses after the closure of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant;
- Authenticity and Performance of Cultural Identities in Tourism;
- Educational Aspects of Nuclear Tourism: Sites, Objects and Museums;
- Commodification of cultural identities and/or empowerment of local communities

## Programme Structure

- Case study and field projects carried out in collaboration with the local community

## Fee

- **EARLY BIRD**: 550
- **FROM MAY 1st**: 600

## Contacts:

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